

of your are asking, I am requesting the Minister to reply to the question put by Shri Ram Naik.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we take up item no. 19, Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways).

(Interruptions)

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Sir, we have a meeting of the IPG at 6.30 p.m. today which is convened by the hon. Speaker. Can the House and that meeting go together simultaneously? How can we attend that meeting?... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, my suggestion is that we can continue this debate and those who want to go there, they can go. As there are many Members who would like to participate in this discussion, those who want to speak can remain here. Let us continue this discussion. This is my suggestion... (Interruptions)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : Sir, I agree with him... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (Chhapra) : Sir, I would like to ask the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs as to when the House will take up the discussion regarding deterioration in the standard of sports in the country. This item has been listed since the 16th of December but this item has not yet been taken up... (Interruptions)

SHRI SRIKANTA JENA : Tomorrow... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : Everyday this has been placed for tomorrow. This is the third day which has been listed on the Agenda and nothing has been said about this. I would like the Minister to tell as to when this item will be taken up... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : The House will be discussing that but we have to complete the other items.

(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY : For the last three days, this item has been listed on the Agenda... (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : We have to follow the List of Business. You are given an assurance that the House will be discussing that and you should be satisfied with that... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sir, I would like to make one point that this item, Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) should be completed today and after that no other business should be taken up... (Interruptions)

SHRI SRIKANT JENA : Okay.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : How long will it take? We can sit tomorrow also.

SHRI SRIKANT JENA : It has to go to Rajya Sabha also. If we will not sit and pass it today, it may not go to Rajya Sabha tomorrow.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : It can go to Rajya Sabha day after tomorrow also.

SHRI SRIKANT JENA : Day after tomorrow is Friday.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I would like to make a request to all the hon. Members that certain things are being discussed in the BAC and we have to flow them. Yesterday also we had postponed certain items which were very very important. These are not the matters in the Government's interest alone and these are the matters which are in the interest of the House. So, I request cooperation from all of you. After completing this item, I think, there are some other important items which we have to complete and these items have to go to Rajya Sabha also. So, I hope, all of you will cooperate.

Now, I request Shri Dhananjaya Kumar to continue his speech on the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways).

18.24 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS (RAILWAYS)—Contd.

[English]

SHRI V. DHANANJAYA KUMAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was referring to an ongoing gauge conversion work between Mangalore and Hassan. The total estimated cost is Rs. 185 crore. Out of which, a sum of Rs. 17 crore had already been spend and in the Railway Budget for the year 1996-97, the hon. Railway Minister has made a provision of Rs. 30 crore for the completion of this work.

Sir, I would like to make a suggestion to the hon. Minister that to justify the proposal made at Item No. 3, i.e. taking up the new Hassan-Bangalore line via Shravanabelgola, if the on-going work between Mangalore and Hassan could be speeded up, then he can very well justify the inclusion of this new work.

Sir, I would also like to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister that Mangalore is a port town. It is fast developing and it requires a direct rail link from Bangalore and also, as I have already submitted, from the East Coast, i.e. from Chennai. So, if an additional provision is made for speeding up the gauge conversion work between Mangalore and Hassan, it will serve the purpose. There is nothing like that. At present, the train which was in operation between Mangalore and Bangalore has been stopped for the last four months. Many of the daily commuters, specially, the daily and monthly wage earners find it very difficult to travel ever

within the district of Dakshin Kannad from Subramanya Road up to Mangalore and back to their places of residence. The total distance between Mangalore and Subramanya Road on this Mangalore-Hassan line is just 90 kilometres. I understand that for completion of the gauge conversion work between these two points, Mangalore and Subramanya Road, the total money required is just Rs. 54 crore. You have already provided Rs. 30 crore in the Budget. So, if you could be kind enough to make a provision of additional Rs. 25 crore and fix a target that the gauge conversion work in this particular section of Mangalore-Hassan railway, could be completed by 31st March, 1997, *i.e.* within the budgetary year of 1996-97, it would enable the daily commuters to have a train service between Mangalore and Subramanya Road.

Sir, I have already made a written request in this regard to the hon. Railway Minister and I hope that he would readily agree to this proposal for which no sanction from Parliament is required. This is already an on-going work. As you have already mentioned elsewhere in the Supplementary Demands, the reappropriation is possible from the grants which are already made. So this is an urgent work and this should justify the inclusion of the new work in the section of Hassan-Bangalore *via* Shravanabelgola.

Then, Sir, I would also like to congratulate the hon. Minister for inclusion of the Hubli-Ankola new line which is 164 kilometres. This would again enable the overall development of the hinterland in the Dharwar District and also in the Garwar District. Sir, with the nearing completion of the Konkan Railway Project, the new railway line between Hubli and Ankola would speed up the development. That would help transport of iron ore. And Ankola can also be developed as a port city so that the hinterland development could be speeded up. So, we lend our full support for taking up this new work, *i.e.* Hubli-Ankola new line.

At Item No. 10, the hon. Minister has made a provision for providing an additional terminal facility at the Mangalore Railway Station. This is also very much required because with the commissioning of the Konkan Railway a direct link from Kanyakumari up to Mumbai will be established. Mangalore will lose its terminal character and it will become a mid-station. That will be a very important passing station along the Konkan Railway, if we consider Kanyakumari to Mumbai as the Konkan Railway itself. As the hon. Minister knows, in the Konkan Railway Corporation, there is an active participation of the State of Kerala also.

The States of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra have actively cooperated in the formation of the Konkan Railway Corporation. They have already contributed their due contribution for the equity of the Konkan Railway Corporation.

Now, Mangalore, that would become a mid station, a passing station on this line, gains all the importance. That is why, rightly the provision of the additional terminal facility is suggested in these Demands for Supplementary Grants.

I would make only one humble request to the hon. Minister. With the commissioning of the Konkan Railway and also with the completion of Mangalore-Hassan and Hassan-Bangalore lines, Mangalore gains all the importance and it will have to be declared as a Divisional Headquarters of the Railways.

Now, Mangalore is in the Palghat Division and Palghat Division is in the Southern Railway. The headquarters of the Southern Railway is at Chennai. Mangalore is a part of Karnataka and it is the only port city in the State of Karnataka. Now, with the sanction of a new South Central Railway Zone, Mangalore will have to be included in that Zone. Mangalore must be delinked from the Palghat Division and Mangalore itself should be made a full Railway Divisional Headquarters. This is my humble submission and this may kindly be examined. I would request the hon. Minister of Railways that no sanction of Parliament is required for that. The hon. Minister may kindly get it examined so that better railway facilities can be provided to the commuters in addition to earning of more revenues for the Railways.

The other suggestions made are really welcome suggestions. Now, Mysore-Bangalore sector has already become operative. The gauge conversion work is complete and superfast train services are being operated on this line. The provisions are being made for the construction of road overbridges at Ramanagaram and at Channapattana so as to enable the traffic movement by road and to avoid all kinds of congestions. These are really welcome suggestions.

Right towards the end of the suggestions, a provision is being made for construction of a diesel loco shed at Hubli. Provision is also being made for setting up a wagon manufacturing facility at Hubli. Now, this would soothen the disenchantment among the people in the Northern Karnataka region who have been fighting for getting Zonal Headquarters itself at Hubli.

Now, these measures are welcome measures. I would bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister of Railways that these would augment the revenue of the Railways and they would further better the railway facilities both for traffic as well as for the transportation of goods.

So, with these words, I really, from the bottom of my heart, congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for making very valuable proposals. I hope that the House would definitely lend its support for the hon. Minister of Railways to not only just make the proposal but to

complete the work during the tenure of his holding the portfolio.

I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak...*(Interruptions)* I would always lend my support for the good work.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It should be appreciated.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI PANABAKA (Nellore) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussions on the Demands for Supplementary Grants Railways for 1996-97.

Though Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, hon. Minister of Railways presented the Demands for Supplementary Grants for Rs. 170.02 crore for the year 1996-97, the maximum was for out of turn works.

It could be seen that Andhra Pradesh was totally neglected in the main Railway Budget as well as in the Demands for Supplementary Grants for the year 1996-97.

Though the South Central Railway is serving six States, namely, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Goa, parts of Madhya Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, not much importance has been given to Andhra Pradesh, in spite of its being the main State.

It is seen in the Demands for Supplementary Grants that a provision has been made for the construction of a diesel loco shed and also for the setting up of the wagon manufacturing facility at Hubli for the sake of political advantage.

My next point is regarding the conversion of the steam loco shed at Bitragunta as an electric loco shed or a coach/wagon repair shop. As the hon. Members are aware, Bitragunta, a railway station in Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh on the South Central Railway, was nicknamed as 'Mini England' in steam traction days. It is a major railway town which is centrally located on Chennai-Vijayawada main railway line in Andhra Pradesh and has got a major steam loco shed and yard, and thousands of railway staff people are living there. But nearly 1,000 acres of railway land is lying under-utilised. This major steam loco shed, after its closure, is not being utilised for any purpose. This could have been converted as a useful electric loco shed or a wagon repairing/manufacturing shop, etc., instead of setting up a new wagon shop/diesel shed, etc. with huge investments elsewhere. It is a total colossal loss to the Government exchequer. Even now, the hon. Railway Minister can consider utilising the existing major steam loco shed at Bitragunta with slight alterations by converting it either as an electric locoshed/maintenance shed or as a wagon/coach repair shop or as a components manufacturing unit. By doing so, the overload maintenance activity, both at Chennai and Vijayawada, can be avoided, which will also result in

the development of this backward region and in the efficient utilisation of the Railway's assets.

Another point that I would like to make is with regard to extension of the Electrical Multiple Unit. Nellore is a district headquarter with 25 lakhs population. Nellore railway station is situated 200 kilometres away from Chennai, on the Chennai-Vijayawada section. Several commuters, passengers, students and business people go to Chennai everyday for their daily work. At present, many commuters are using road as their mode of transport due to non-availability of convenient train facilities. I have been requesting the hon. Railway Minister for the last six months for extension of EMU trains from Sullurupet to Nellore railway station, keeping in view the heavy demand from the travelling public. In spite of assurances given by the Railway Minister several times, the same has not been implemented so far. I also requested him in case of any difficulty to introduce EMU trains immediately, the Main Line Diesel Multiple Units (MDMUs) can be introduced from Nellore to Chennai as was done in other places of the South-Central Railway.

I once again request the hon. Railway Minister to consider this demand and make an announcement for the introduction of the same from 1st January, 1997 at least.

My next point is with regard to the creation of a new Division at Nellore/Bitragunta as the Divisional Railway Headquarters. As you know, Sir, Nellore district is famous for agriculture and also for rail activity. It is situated on the main trunk line between Chennai and Vijayawada. Apart from the Nellore railway station, this district has two major stations of Bitragunta and Gudur. Bitragunta is a railway town with all rail activity. Similarly, Gudur is a railway junction, with one line to Chennai and another line to Tirupati side. Nellore is also centrally situated between Chennai and Vijayawada. Taking these factors into consideration, it is very much essential to create a new Division, with Bitragunta or Nellore as the Divisional headquarters, from administrative and operational point of view.

Besides this, the following are the resources available :

- Availability of 1,000 acres of Railway land at Bitragunta;
- A major Locoshed, Staff Quarters, Yard and other facilities at Bitragunta;
- To develop backward regions;
- Centrally located to take up the jobs in case of exigencies etc.;
- Better utilisation of existing Railway assets without much additional investment;
- Jurisdiction for the proposed creation of new Division can be demarcating Başin Bridge-

Gudur-Bitragunta-Guntur-Nadikude sections; Gudur-Renigunta-Arkonam section and also Renigunta-Rajam sections. The proposed Upland Railway Line as proposed above also can be included in future.

Due to these advantages, the hon. Minister of Railways is requested to consider the creation of a new Division with headquarters at Nellore or Bitragunta.

The next point is about laying of an Upland railway line between Nadikude and Venkatagiri. As the hon. Members of the House are aware, the Railway Ministry has created six more Railway zones and new lines in States other than Andhra Pradesh. There is a long pending demand for laying of a new Railway line from Nadikude to Venkatagiri linking Kanigiri, Atmakur, Rapur places in Prakasam and Nellore districts which is also an alternative Upland railway line for the main line traffic. Nellore and Prakasam districts are prone for cyclone and floods every year between October and December. During this period the total rail traffic is being disrupted causing a lot of inconvenience to the passengers and also loss of revenue to the Railways. Hence the Ministry of Railways should consider the sanctioning of a new railway line between Nadikude and Venkatagiri on the South Central Railway system.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU (Rajapur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways - who is not present right now, but of course, the Minister of State is here - for presenting the Supplementary Demands for Grants. I was looking very closely at this document containing about 19 pages whether the State of Maharashtra finds a place in these 19 pages or not. But I am sorry to say that not many projects, which have been mooted by the State for the last several years have found favour with the Minister. I hope that during the second Supplementary Demands or probably during the intervention he would really come forward to tell us some good news about inclusion of certain projects.

I would like to first start with a very important project and I would like to congratulate not only the Minister of Railways and the Ministry of Railways but also the Konkan Railway Corporation for putting into being a very ambitious project which is really going to benefit four States of the country. When this Konkan Railway project was conceived, nobody ever thought that it would be really commissioned - not only commissioned but commissioned in such a short period of time despite all the odds which were there is the way. I would like to really congratulate all those who are responsible for this. I would like to say that we must probably honour those who are responsible, at least five or ten of them, including the present Chairman Shri Sridharan for the wonderful job that they have performed. I am trying to say that we also reward those who really perform well in the public sector.

Sir, I would like to raise some issues which, I am sure, the hon. Minister would address to. Firstly, this project was not considered as just a railway project. It was a socio-economic project. That is why people fought for it. My hon. friend, Shri George Fernandes, who is really responsible for this and who has put this project into being would vouch for me when I say that this was not just a railway project but a project of socio-economic importance. If that was so, if the local people who have really donated the land, those who have gifted their land on which they used to toil, are not getting jobs in the railway project, I think we are really defying the purpose for which this project was really put into being.

I would like to earnestly request the hon. Minister to at least set up a separate Recruitment Board for Konkan Railway to ensure that the locals only are absorbed into the jobs. Otherwise the railway would be passing on the land which they donated and they would become not only jobless but also landless. Sir, those who donated the land or gifted the land - I would use the words 'donation' and 'gift' deliberately because the price that was given to them was really a pittance - did not mind the price they got. But even now they have not got the compensation for the land. I would really request that we should try to dispose of all the cases pertaining to land acquisition in the shortest possible time.

Now, I would dwell on the names on which various railway stations have been created. If you are going to satisfy the local aspirations, probably you must try to understand the ethos of the local people and try to name the stations appropriately. I would really like to put this thought in the minds of the people who are responsible for it. I think the name of late Shri A. B. Walavalkar, who was really trying to put it and whose idea this originally was, should be appropriately mentioned because if we fail to do that we would be accused of forgetting the real persons who have really mooted this idea to begin with.

Another point is that there are various stalls which are going to come up at the railway stations. There are going to be various peripheral activities. I think if we do not accommodate the locals, probably we would be creating socio-economic tensions in times to come.

The Dadar railway station from where the train has to start should also be mentioned. Actually, it does not start from there; it starts from Kurla. All the people who really come from Konkan into the city of Mumbai have to come to Dadar which is the heart of the city and not to Kurla. I was told that there was a fight between the Central Railway and the Konkan Railway Corporation which prevents them from bringing the railway to the Dadar railway station. I think, it is very amazing that such a national project, when it has been completed, cannot enter the city of Mumbai properly though it can pass through several mountains and rivers! I would

recall that it is a policy of the Government to have linkages between the capital of the country and the capitals of various States. This Konkan railway is touching Goa though it has not yet got into Goa. I would request for the starting of a Rajdhani Express between Sawantwadi which is on the edge of the State of Maharashtra and touching the State of Goa, and Delhi to make sure that the people of the country could go to a beautiful place, Konkan to discover the unspoiled beauty of our country.

There have been certain places through which the Konkan railway has passed. For example, there are school buildings and roads which were damaged and it was promised that the Railways would make good the damage when they would be able to complete this movement. I would request the Minister to make sure that these assurances and promises are fulfilled and the wrong doings are undone with before the project is fully commissioned and handed over to the authorities to run it.

The other point is about the Mumbai Railway Suburban Railways. It is time when the Railway authorities must come out with a White Paper on the income that they get from the Mumbai Railway Suburban Service. This is one area which probably contributes more to the Exchequer. This is one segment of the railway services which probably give money to the Railway authorities and makes revenue rather than drawing the revenue. The Mumbai Suburban Railway Service is giving more to the Exchequer than what it is drawing on it. I think if this is the only reason for which they are burdened with not providing the basic amenities that they are demanding, it will be really doing an injustice to them. I would like to tell the House that we are really sitting on a great volcano. There are almost five to six million people who try to commute through this Suburban Service. They are not getting proper facilities. There is a possibility of accidents taking place on one account or the other. So, we must really try to improve the Mumbai Railway Suburban Service and at least, try to immediately use the excess amount that we are collecting from this Service to offer them better services.

Another issue which I think has been discussed for a long time is the plight of the temporary and casual labourers who have been working in the Railways. It is very shameful that an organisation as big as Railways could not accommodate and regularise the services of tens of thousands of people who have really made the things possible for which we all try to take credit. We have laid lines through the most difficult terrains of the country. We have been providing services round the clock. We have been transporting so many people. We have been taking so many tonnes of cargo every year. There are the things which have been possible only because these people have been toiling, but they are

not getting reward for the services they are rendering. I think that the United Front Government has come to power on the promise of providing a better deal to the labourers. I am sure that during their tenure, the Minister or the hon. Minister of State for Railways would certainly assure the House that their service would be regularised before it is too long a time

Sir, another point that I would like to mention is a suggestion. The Konkan Railway Corporation was created as a special purpose vehicle. This is the first of its kind that a Corporation was created to execute a particular project. There are several engineers who are drawn from different faculties. Some of them were working for the Railways and some of them were never working before for the Railways. So, this institution which has been created should not be dismantled with the project being commissioned. Let us use this infrastructure that is available with us, the manpower, the technology and the systems and try to undertake jobs not only in this part of India, but in different parts of the country where the Railways could not reach or take the jobs on a turn-key basis, charging some fees and do the jobs outside the country and earn foreign exchange for the country. Let us not dismantle the organisation because I am told that several of these people had been served notices that their services were liable for termination on the completion of this project. So, I feel that the Government will, definitely, be able to take a precaution on this account.

Sir, the other two points that I would like to mention are not really necessary for me to mention, but are important. They are about cleanliness and safety which we always try to highlight as one of the missions of the Railways, though they have only remained as a mission. I think that during the year they would be implemented effectively and not remain as a mission.

Sir, I would like to remind the hon. Minister that there was a proposal to use the land around the railway tracks and earn some money to develop the Railways. In the city of Mumbai and other parts of the country we can use that untapped assets to develop railway services.

Sir, I thank you very much for allowing me to speak in this discussion.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH (Aurangabad) : Hon'ble Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the supplementary demands for Grants (Railways). Sir, looking at this supplementary Demand, it appears that it should be passed gladly.

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR (Baramulla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Cabinet Minister is not here, where is he?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The chair is informed that the Cabinet meeting is on. The Minister of State for Railways is very much present here. Please do not disturb.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : The Minister has always wanted to ensure more and more of the backward areas. Respecting his feelings, I also want to mention that the amount of allocation for Railways Budget should be increased because previously it was 75 percent till the fifth Five Year Plan, but now it has now been reduced to just 15 percent. Hence, this amount should be increased to ensure the development of Railways along with the small and backward areas. While supporting this Budget, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister to some problems of my area. I had said that Railway Line between Gaya and Patna is very important railway line. But no provision was made in the Budget and now it does not find mention in the supplementary demands either. Gaya is a tourist place of international repute. People from different countries come to Gaya and Bodhgaya. Although foundation stone has been laid for the Railway Line between Gaya and Patna, but it is still a single line. The provision for doubling the line from Patna to Parsa Bazar, which is within Patna, was made in the Budget, and we had hoped that it would shortly be doubled from Patna to Gaya, and provision would be made for that in the Supplementary Demands but I am sorry to note that no provision has been made in these Demands also.

Secondly, though the Minister of Railways is not present in the House, Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways is present here and therefore I would also like to say that being a famous pilgrimage place of Hindus, Gaya is a very prominent place as 'Pinddaan' is offered there. Besides, Bodhgaya is the place of pilgrimage of Buddhist where people in large number come from other parts of the country and as a result. But no train originates from Gaya till now. We had demanded that new trains from Gaya to Delhi and Gaya to Calcutta should be introduced so that passengers may not take any problems to visit this place.

Now, I would like to draw that attention of the Minister of Railways to my area which is a very backward and extremists infested down-trodden majority area. Extremism is on the increase there. I had said that the train which runs from Gaya to Dehri-One-Sone, remains stationed there for about 10 hours. If it is extended to Gadhwā, it will facilitate the movement of the people of that backward area. Only one passenger train runs there in 24 hours. If it is extended, the people there would get one additional train. The distance between Dehri-one to Gaya can be travelled only in two hours - two hours for going and two hours for coming back — in a hours

it can reach its destination and come back. I admit that Badvadin line is not a busy line like Grant-Trunk line, but there would not be any difficulty in extending this train.

I had drawn the attention of the hon. Minister to many problems of my area and I hope that provision would be made in the forthcoming Budget or in these Supplementary Demands for linking Aurangabad district with Railway line. We have already made a request for laying the new Railway line from Rafiganj to Gadhwā. The Minister had agreed to order the survey to be conducted in this regard. But it has not been conducted so far. I once again reiterate my demand that a new railway line should be laid from Rafiganj to Gadhwā to link Aurangabad district headquarters so that people of our backward area, which are down trodden, exploited and poor, may be benefitted. Although I would have liked to make several other demands, but due to the paucity of time, I support these Supplementary Demands with these words I conclude. Thank you.

19.00 hrs.

SHRI KASHI RAM RANA (Surat) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants presented by the Minister of Railways. I welcome it because he had decided to undertake new projects such as to construct third line, to make unigage and to lay new railway lines in this regard. Sir, I would like to say that keeping in view the Projects mentioned in the Supplementary Demands for Grants, it does not appear that our Minister of Railways have decided to make balanced development of the whole of India. Because there are several such places where there is the need of railway line but that has not been considered. I have not to say anything against the States whose schemes have been included therein. But I would like to say that the Minister of Railways should ensure balanced development throughout the country and I hope that the Minister of Railways and his Ministry would keep it in mind.

Sir, as far as Gujarat is concerned, the Ministry of Railways has always done injustice to it so far. Many members of Parliament have raised their voice in support of the demand for conversion of Kapad banj line into broad gauge many times, but still the Government have not taken any concrete steps in this direction. Through you, hon'ble Chairman, I want to bring to the notice of the Minister of Railways that a provision for gauge conversion of Surendar Nagar-Bhavnagar-Dola-Dhansa railway line and extension of 385 kilometres railway line to Pepapav at a cost of 337 crores rupees have been made in the Supplementary Demands for Grants. I thank the Minister of Railways for this. This is a good scheme and there was a long-standing demand for it from the Saurashtra region in Gujarat, which is very backward.

Sir, I want to say that there are various such schemes. Such 20 schemes of gauge conversion and extension have been shown in these supplementary Demands for Grants and a provision of Rs. one lac each of them have been made. I want to say that a provision of just one lacs rupees has been made for a work which require Rs. 337 crores. Therefore, how, when and in how many years this work would be completed? I have a lot of experience in this regard.

One Morasa-Kaparbanj line is under construction since 1984 and has not been completed even after 12 years. Therefore, I think that the Ministry of Railways should have pondered over the time span in years during which these schemes worth billions of rupees could be completed because from the past experience of all the hon. Members here it appears that all the schemes the hon. Minister announces and lays foundation stones of vanish into thin air.

People are befooled for years together, Therefore, Mr. Chairman, Sir, my contention is that the sum of Rs. 337 crore is reduced to a mere Rs. one lakh and further to Rs. one thousand at the initial stage. Rs. 99,000 will be required for further work. How, then, and within what time will the work of gauge conversion and extension of Surendra Nagar, Pipavrav, Mahua be completed? I feel pained when you make a fool of the people of Gujarat like that. The time of completion of this scheme should be revealed with a time bound programme along with a provision in the supplementary budget. The United Front and the hon. Railway Minister have announced many schemes but people are still devoid of the means and facilities of a proper and convenient train journey. Hence, I would urge the hon. Minister of Railways to expedite the completion of extension work of line upto Surendra Nagar, Bhavnagar, Daula, Dosa, Mahua and Pipwav.

I would also like to repeat that three-four schemes were envisaged in the supplementary budget for the third line. I am amazed over the manner of line selection. It is welcome where it is done but this selection should be governed by some criteria. There is a heavy rail traffic on the two tracks between Ahmedabad and Mumbai. The Ministry of Railways has so far taken no decision on the construction of third track. In response to our repeated requests of running more trains on this section in view of heavy passenger and commuter rush we are told that there is no space available as yet for the movement of trains there. I would like to tell the hon. Minister that in view of the schemes proposed in the supplementary budget, there should have been three tracks in place of two on the Ahmedabad-Mumbai section of Western Railway, the most revenue earning area, yet it was not provided in the supplementary budget. The United Front Government claims to take special care of the poor and the backward and this section includes a tribal, backward and a

scheduled tribe area as well. Hence, the construction of a third line on this track should be considered. The hon. Railways Minister might have forgotten to put it in the supplementary budget but I expect him to announce laying of third line between Ahmedabad and Mumbai in his reply in view of its urgency and importance.

My third point is that there is also a proposed of laying many double lines. 'Tapti valley' running between Surat and Bhusawal and other southward trains run on single track. In view of many trains running on this section, the rail traffic is generally irregular as a result of which people reach their work places late by two-three hours. It is being repeated said that there are not sufficient funds for laying double tracks but there is no provision even in this supplementary budget for doubling this line.

In this connection, many Members of Parliament from B.J.P., Congress and Janata Dal had met the hon. Railway Minister who had assured us that a survey would be conducted and necessary action taken in this regard soon. There is a great urgency of laying the double track otherwise the development of that backward area would be hampered. The tribal people would be devoid of transport facility for employment purposes. Yet, despite assurance, there is no provision for the double track in the supplementary budget. Hence, I would particularly like to request the hon. Minister of state for Railways Shri Satpal ji, who is very much concerned for the poor and the backward to take immediate steps for completion of the long pending double line between Udna and Jalgaon. I am sure that he will definitely make a provision therefor.

A glance through the supplementary Railway budget reveals that there is minimum provision for the Western Railway as if there is no scope for any development in the Western Railway. I would like the hon. Minister to comment upon it.

There is, of course, a provision in the budget for my constituency but the work carried out for years has been halted. There is a provision to widen 451, 441 crossing in my area. For this, SMC has invested 50 per cent share, yet, there is no progress in the work for 1½ years. Work is left half done. The Chief Engineer say that a fresh estimate will have to be made for that before proceeding further. Surat has a population of about 80 lakh today which consists workers in large number. Hence, there is a great incidence of accidents.

In reply to a written question in Parliament this week it was stated that construction 146 overbridges has been taken up but the State agency is yet to completed its work. On my visit to Surat this Saturday, Sunday, I found that even the work of the Railway has not been completed. The SMC has constructed the approach road but the Railway has not done its job. I would request you to ask the official who furnished incorrect reply,

whether the work has or has not been done. It is quite misleading. This should be investigated into.

There is a long standing demand of setting up the headquarters of the Western Railway at Ahmedabad as Dhananjay Kumar ji said right now when headquarters can be set up in Hajipur, why can't this be done in Ahmedabad through which 70 percent lines of Western Railway pass?

19.15 hrs.

(Prof. Rita Verma in the Chair)

A genuine demand should be examined for ascertaining facts. My demand is totally viable that headquarters should be set up at Ahmedabad.

There is another painful aspect. Earlier, while travelling in trains, one could listen to the 'bhajans' of Mira, Kabir etc. including good film 'bhajans'. Now only music is played in place of them. May be somebody had complained that playing *bhajans* tantamounted to communalism. People ask me why playing *bhajans* has been stopped when they have lodged no complaint. If a handful of people have complained, then it should be inquired into. On the demand of the majority in a democracy playing of *bhajans* should be resumed as before, be it Rajdhani Express, August Kranti or Shatabdi express.

Then, there are nearly 3-4 lakh Biharis who have come to Surat in search of employment. There is no direct train for them between Surat and Patna or between Ahmedabad and Patna. They have to face difficulties, even go standing, to their home town. The Bihar Development Council of Surat has umpteen times requested the hon. Railway Minister and the Chairman of Railway Board to run a daily train from Patna to Surat. The Ministry of Railways had recently run a special train their request during Puja days. Why can't a direct train be introduced from Surat or Ahmedabad to Patna for the facility poor workers? The Ministry of Railways and you may look into this matter and I hope you would introduce it immediately.

Alongwith this, Tapti Ganga Express was running from Surat to Varanasi twice in a week and now it runs four days in a week. At the time of introduction of the train Hon'ble George Fernandes was the Minister of Railway, he has told that Tapti Ganga Express train facility has been given to facilitate the lakhs of the people belong to UP and working in Surat and then we were told that this train would be on daily basis. This had not been running daily. Assurance was also given to us that the train would run via Allahabad instead of Naini because most of the people working there are from Allahabad city and they do not have the transport facility, it is, therefore sought to run this train via Allahabad instead of Naini. There is no expenditure involved in it. Earlier it was stated that no platform is

available at Allahabad station. I went there and saw that was not the problem, now two new platforms are constructed there and the promise of the Minister of Railways be fulfilled now regarding running of the trains from there. Therefore, it is also my demand that Tapti Ganga Express to be run via Allahabad instead of Varanasi Naini from Surat. There is no train from Surat to Bombay late in the afternoon. The Shatabdi Express which runs is only for elite class and the poor cannot afford it. A super fast train, therefore, be introduced from Surat to Bombay in the afternoon.

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai North) : I support this demand.

SHRI KASHI RAM RANA : Ram Naik ji is also supporting this demand. Therefore, a super fast train be introduced from Surat to Bombay in the afternoon. The points which I have put before you specially issues related to Rs. 3700 crores out of which a provision of only rupees one lakh has been made, you must reply as to how and when the remaining amount will be provided.

DR. ASIM BALA (Navadwip) : Madam Chairperson, the Indian Railways constitute a very important public sector in our country. It is so large and important that we can even put the Railways on one side and all the other departments on the other side.

But I am sorry to say that no proper development has taken place in our Railways during the last 50 years. We are observing that our railway system is going down. Take for example, facilities to commuters, rolling stock or the provision of new railway lines. It is deteriorating day by day. It seems that the Railways are facing a financial crunch or no resources are available with them. Every Member of Parliament is demanding a new railway line for his area because for the development of an area, better railway facility with more and more railway lines is also essential.

So, I suggest that the Government should frame a policy in this regard in terms of population ratio area. Whatever is the ratio of the population of a particular area, that area should be covered according in terms of providing new lines and other railway facilities.

Madam, as far as Calcutta is concerned, after Rajdhani Express, no new train has been introduced from either Howrah station or Sealdah station. For both Howrah and Sealdah, increase sub-urban train, local train is very much essential. The commuters are coming there from about 200 kilometres distance or even more than that. There is also no proper track. During office hours, it is so crowded that one cannot even enter into the compartment. So, it is very much essential to increase double or triple the railway track there.

About the passenger amenities, the situation is not good. Sometimes the commuters are not getting the proper facilities in terms of toilets, drinking water waiting

room etc. So, it requires to be maintained properly. Moreover, there is no proper system of railway timings. Those who are coming from the villages are not very much aware about the railway timings because the systems are not being manned properly by the railway stations. That also needs to be manned properly.

Railway projects are delayed. Whenever we start a project, right from the introduction it is delayed year after year. Price escalation creates the burden of a huge amount will be on the railway exchequer. So, we should look into this matter also.

Sometimes a new railway line restores regional economic balance. As you know, there is economic imbalance in some areas. If you just introduce a new railway line in an economically backward area, the economic development will certainly take place. Introduction of a new railway line is an instrument to bring about improvement in the economic balance of underdeveloped areas. So, the Railways to look into that aspect also.

Corruption in Railways is very rampant. We know that we cannot prove these things. But corruption is going on in Railways. Against corruption you cannot get any proof. Even in the Railway offices there are some irregular things like corruption from low level to the top level. I cannot give a new suggestion each time. The Railways have to frame some instrument or something, so that corruption could be minimised.

I have heard the experience of the Divisional Railway Manager in Sealdah Railway Station. He told me that when he stands in the Railway Station time, that day the collection to the Railway exchequer will increase sometimes even more than fivefold. But when there is no such checking or when he is not there in the Railway Station, because only on certain days he goes there for sudden visits, the proceeds of the sale of tickets come down. This should also be taken note of.

In my area there are some important railway projects. The Government should take steps to implement those projects. For example, Tamluk-Haldia railway line has remained half done; it should be completed. Diamond Harbour-Lakshmikanthpur line has also remained incomplete. It has been taken up, and should be completed. Eklakhi-Balughat also to be started. Ranaghat-Gede and Ranaghat-Bongaon electrification work is to be taken up. These lines are very near to the border area with Bangladesh. Now there is a good relationship between Bangladesh and India. Goods material Materials, wagons and tracks etc., are all going to Bangladesh. There is a trade agreement also. So, the revenue of that area has increased manifold. This area should be developed. Electrification is a must in that area so the people will get more facilities. They can use the train to go to their office and to their business place.

There new train to be introduced between Kishan Nagar-Karimpur. There is another line between Kalinarayanpur-Kishan Nagar to be made double line as it is the district headquarters.

Everyday, thousands of people have to go to their offices through this route but only a single line is there which cannot cope with the demand of that area.

In the Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railways, gauge conversion between Shantipur-Navadwipghat line from narrow gauge to broad gauge should be taken up immediately as the survey work has already been completed. For the Bandel-Katwa line, the hon. Minister has promised a double line and I would request that work should be started on that soon. It is also very essential to take up electrification of the Krishnagarh-Lalgola line. I would also like to mention here that on the Howrah-Amta broad gauge line, only a portion from Satragachi to Baragachia has been constructed. After that, this scheme has been shelved for a decade. In the current Budget, Rs. 2 crore has been sanctioned but work has not yet been started on this line. I appeal to the hon. Minister to start work immediately on this line. There is another proposed line from Tarakeshwar to Arambagh. That is also a very important line and it has to be completed immediately.

Now, let me thank the hon. Minister because as he has promised, he has already started working for the undeveloped areas in the North-Eastern region. He has already committed for a new railway line for Tripura also. I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways, the authorities and the United Front Government for taking more initiatives for new railway lines coming up and more railway lines will be taken up in the next Budget.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU (Cuttack) : Madam, Chairperson, I am thankful for the opportunity.

Before I say a few words on the Demands for Supplementary Grants, I would start with a supplemental matter which may be quite relevant. A few days after I became a Member of Parliament, I had the opportunity of travelling in a super-fast express. All of a sudden, the train started dancing, fretting and wobbling. I was a little amused as to what could be the matter. I being a politician now, and oddities and incongruities being etched in our minds - in my mind at least, as a politician - I thought that this dancing phenomenon could be due to the inebriate running staff of the railways who were travelling in the train... (Interruptions) Yes, there was music also: the cadence of the train. Then, I thought that this could be due to the innumerable toddy shops which have sprung up along the railway line, being patronised by the railway people and the train could have inhaled lots of alcoholic beverages!

But immediately, the possible reason dawned on me. I was a policeman earlier and I was an SP, Railways 22 years ago. I remembered a very famous person who was Chief of the South Western Railways' Operating Department and later on retired as Chairman, Railway Board. He had told me - or he had given me some tips - when I was an SP, Railways as to how a track behaved and what were the reasons for which a train wobbles, frets or dances. The main reason for the track behaving in this funny manner is, maybe, due to the pulverisation of the ballast or the inadequacy of the ballast or metal fatigue on the train lines or rivets being loose or the nuts and bolts being loose. It immediately dawned on me that the track is not being maintained properly and that is the bane of our Railways.

Nowhere are the tracks maintained properly. I come from the East Coast. There is one train called Thiruvananthapuram-Guwahati train which runs late at least by 18 hours a day, I am told by the authorities that it could go into the Guinness Book of Records. That is very good for the Indian Railways because at least we would have created a record.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha) : The time is correct but not the day.

SHRI ANADI CHARAN SAHU : Yes, very correct. That is what is happening.

I would have been very happy had the Demands for Supplementary Grants had some provisions for strengthening of tracks, for changing the ballasts and for changing the sleepers. I would have been happy if the hon. Minister had made a provision for replacing the rotten wooden sleepers or the rusted iron sleepers with concrete cement sleepers, for putting adequate number of keels and for putting the rings on the cement tracks. That has not been provided yet...*(Interruptions)*

I would have been very happy had the Minister made a provision for strengthening of the tracks. Madam, as you would see from Demand No. 16, there are twenty items. Of which two relate to laying of new railway lines, i.e. Serial Nos. 4 and 5 and two or three relate to gauge conversions.

I am sorry to say that Orissa has been neglected in this aspect. We had been telling, we had been requesting and we had been imploring a number of times that there should be gauge conversion of the line from Rupsa-Bangriposi. In 1995-96, the Government of India had been very kind enough to sanction an amount of about Rs. 74 crore and gave Rs. 56 crore. I do not know as to what has happened to that amount. That has gone somewhere.

It reminds me of an incident. When there is a canal, when there is a tributary, the water never reaches the tail because it gets diverted to another area. Maybe the Railways thought it proper to divert the amount to some other work. Although the tenders were invited, although

the tenders were finalised, the amount was never given. I am told that this is still pending with the Railway Board. I am citing this instance just to show you as to what happens in the Indian Railways. Laying of new railway lines has been taken up and new gauge conversions have been taken up, but our request has not been fulfilled. Maybe it is due to political consideration. Maybe it is because the State Government of Orissa does not belong to the same hue as that of the hon. Minister of Railways. Perhaps that is the reason why Orissa is getting sidetracked. I think, this is one of the reasons.

Madam, kindly see the twenty items which have been listed here. We have a number of items and a number of matters which have been pending for the last so many years. You will agree with me that one-third of the freight of the Indian Railways is being carried by the South-Eastern Railways. About 166 million tonnes of coal and iron ore are being transported. We have the Paradeep port, Calcutta port and Vizag port. Coal and iron ore are being transported in these areas.

We are importing coal from Australia. We are sending iron ore to different places. The tracks require strengthening and doubling. There is an important track between Cuttack and Paradeep which comes in my constituency. Somehow out of this 100 kilometres track, the Railways have thought it fit to double only 25 kilometres. But the amount provided is a mere pittance. I would give the figure later. If the funds are provided in this way, it would take twenty years to double that track.

I would request the hon. Minister of Railways again to think of Cuttack-Talcher-Sambalpur track which was to be doubled earlier. An amount of Rs. 352 crore was provided for the 174 kilometre track. It has to be completed by December, 1997. They have spent only Rs. 181 crore till now. An amount of Rs. 50 crore was provided in the subsequent year's budget. This year we do not find any provision in the Budget. If this happens, I am sure, the laying work of this track cannot be completed within the targeted time and the cost also will go up. It would never be completed in another four or five year's time.

This is an aspect which I would request the hon. Minister to keep note of. I know that this year we would not get; but maybe, we hope that next year he would provide something in the Budget. We are very hopeful. I am not pessimistic. We are very hopeful that you will provide something, maybe a token grant of Rs. 1 crore as it is done in the case of the Rupsa-Bangriposi railway line for which an amount of Rs. 50 lakh is given.

You have given the East Coast zone to us with much fanfare. The Prime Minister, the Railway Minister and many others went to Bhubaneswar and inaugurated the East Coast zone. We were very happy that we would have a railway zone in our area. But till now,

nothing has happened. They had posted one Officer on Special Duty. In this Budget, they have given only an amount of Rs. 1,50,00,000 only; a mere pittance has been given — a lollypop. I am afraid, the East Coast zone would never take up in another four to five years' time. This is what has been happening to us.

Maybe, there are many other reasons also. I had already told about the Paradip line for which the Budget was Rs. 49 crore, but only an amount of Rs. 8 crore has been given. The cost overrun will be there and so, it will never be completed.

We have another important railway line which is coming up, that is, Daitari-Bansapani railway line. Funds have been placed in a very meagre manner as a result of which what has happened is that an important railway line which would cater to the needs of iron ore transportation of Orissa and coal from the Mahanadhi Coal Fields, would not come up in the near future. Funds have not been placed for this. I am only pointing out the instances. There are different instances where it is absolutely necessary to bring it to the notice.

Madam, kindly give me another two minutes' time. I will complete and I will not exceed that.

I would request the hon. Minister to be bountiful to Orissa. We are not creating any problems to you. Maybe, you would be helpful to us. Thank you, Madam.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have got some good news for you all. Dinner has been arranged for the hon. Members and the Press in Room No. 78 and for the staff in Room No. 73, from 9 p.m. onwards.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is for you to decide whether you are willing to have dinner or not.

(Interruptions)

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES (Nalanda) : Madam, Chairperson, going through the Supplementary Demands for grants, it seems that something new is going on in Railway and no lesson has been learnt from the previous experience. The demands put before us for the new works are to the tune of Rupees 2 thousand and 385 crores. Now, the money is being demanded for the works of 2 thousand and 385 crores of rupees, that is Rs. 20 thousand at the rate of one thousand for each work. Above all, the fund is demanded from it with regard to 2-3 works, keeping in view all this works for 2 thousand 385 crores of rupees are specified for the next four months. An amount of Rs. 10 crores are likely to incurred in it. Nearly, the whole amount out of the Rs. 10 crore, which have been allocated for any otherworks, would be spend from the same fund. That is to say, that the matter has reached to the extent that Railway have no new income on the

basis of which we could initiate discussions. Whether it is concerned to any political or any other reasons and with these reasons it is announced that had the works been put forth during the next budget the Railway would have not suffered the losses and there would be no any advantage to persent in this budget also. The Members of Parliament may get an opportunity to discuss it but the railway users on whose tax Railway works and the amount of tax which is given to Railway. I don't think any advantage of it on the budgetary support. The biggest proof of it is that out of these 20 works seven are being executed in Karnataka because it is the house state of Prime Minister. These seven works for the Karnataka related to this matter or not, but it is regretable that when Rupees 285 crores have been announced immediately for these works and why no such announcement was made for Orissa and Kashmir? I would like the Minister to clarify in this regard in his reply about the works being implemented in Karnataka. Three works each for Bihar and Tamilnadu, two for Bengal and one each for eastern region, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh have been sanctioned. You may draw the whatever conclusion you want to draw from it. The Minister must clarify all these points in the House.

Madam, Chairperson, 2-3 months ago, the Minister had presented Railway Budget and if you go through the documents, you will know that Rs. 5300 crores will be spent on the construction works in Railway like laying of the rail lines and other works including rolling stock and if go through the last years budget, the revised estimates of Rs. 5573 crores have been sanctioned. In this way Rs. 190 crores have been reduced. It is not because of devaluation of Rupee and in real terms, 10-12 percent less funds are being spent in comparison to last years expenditure. But the number of works are increasing and the funds are spent on them. How much amount is required and how much they are able to provide it? A sum of Rs. 163 crores is required for traffic facilities, but only Rs. 13 crore have been provided. Rs. 737 crore allocation has to be made for track doubling work and where as only Rs. 18 crore have been provided. Several works of this kind have been started. For this purpose, the Minister was accompanied with the M.P. got their picture printed...

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Certain MPs have been ignored. Even in my constituency, I was not invited.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES : And for doubling of railway lines, a sum of Rs. 18 crore have been allotted instead of Rs. 737 crore. Madam, Chairperson, meter gauge lines are being converted into broad gauge line in this country as if the development of the country depend only in gauge conversion. The country will not progress by merely the gauge conversion but it will progress only by laying of new lines. But some people think that gauge conversion is most important and history

will remember us for this work. The expenditure on one Km gauge conversion is 70-80 percent of the laying of one Kilometer new line. But new employment opportunities are generated by the construction of lines. There is unemployment and it is increasing day-by-day. If the amount which is being spent on gauge conversion, would be spent on laying of one kilometer new rail line, 25 to 30 persons would get employment in the train. Train is such an infrastructure which generates 25 to 30 jobs in introducing one kilometer new line altogether upstream and downstream, both together. How many times this issue had been discussed here? But they could not understand it and the work of gauge conversion was taken up and it is still being carried out on priority basis. As per the announcement an amount of Rs. 858 crores is proposed to be spent on gauge conversion and in the previous budget there is a provision of Rs. 18 crore for the purpose.

Now you talk about construction of new Railway lines. Innumerable foundation stones have been laid. Crores of rupee have been spent on photos and advertisements printed therefor. I had put a question in this regard but I have not received a reply so far and I think the turn of honourable Minister of Railway for giving replies during this work is over. I don't know what happened with that question. No reply would be made now to that question. I wished to know the amount spent on such advertisement? Rs. 6 crores was allocated for construction of new Railway lines as against the provision of Rs. 953 crores...*(Interruptions)*. You are laughing but you are among those who made this demand. I feel anguished to see the damage being done to the country. You invested 5-10 crores, one crore and fifty lacs at hundred of places. But it all proved fruit less. The country suffered the loss this way. You constructed 2 kms of railway line just to gain votes in the next election, but how is it beneficial to the country? How will it be beneficial to the tax payers? After all every penny of this amount belongs to the people. This amount has not been mobilised by mortgaging the 'Rail Bhawan' or the same has not been provided from any personal pocket some persons did try to make money by mortgaging Patna Railway station, but it is not easy to mortgage the Rail Bhawan. It serves no purpose to the country and to the people of that region. If the same M.P. contests the election from the very same constituency again, may be able to gain 10 more votes, but the point is, money of the country should be spent on the development work. It should not be guided by political calculations. We had discussed this matter in the House even earlier. I know that such discussions will not make any difference but I want that such discussions should go on.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to ask two-three questions from the honourable Minister. You have asked for Rs. 170 crores and while making this demand you said.

[English]

For increased expenditure on certain ongoing projects under Plan Head 'New Lines'.

[Translation]

Now, I would like to know about those new lines, whose plan cost has overrun against the already allotted amount. Was there any initial miscalculation at the time of making allotment on the projects, or is there any political compulsion or vested interest that is compelling to raise the amount to the tune of Rs. 170 crore. This must be clarified.

One more thing, I would like to say that you have listed out here 20 jobs and for each of that job you require. One thousand rupees immediately. Balance amount of Rs. 99 thousand would be taken by you later on, because your total demand is for rupees one lac. In some places you plan to take up those jobs by diverting the money allocated for other items. Here I would also like to know as to what is the harm if the idea of taking up this work is dropped. There is no harm if the idea of taking up 20 jobs involving Rs. 20,000 to each of them is kept pending till the budget of the next year. He should let me know if this demand is accepted otherwise we will protest; because such jokes can not be allowed to be made to the people and to the country. When our attention is shifted from the fundamental issues to some vested interests, the country subsequently suffers a lot. I would like to add a few more points. These days there is practice of laying foundation stone even at the commencement of survey. What is this? Mr. State Minister — I would like to say him that their photographs appear in the newspaper. You go to the sites to open up zonal or divisional offices and instead, you lay foundation stone, say, in the stadium of a village. What does it mean? A foundation stone was laid in a stadium at Ranebi and at some place in Rajasthan you did the same thing. What is all this? You don't know as to where the office, head office would be located and you just lay a foundation stone in a stadium which is later on dugged out and is taken away in a procession. What does it mean? I don't know whether this Government will survive or not but if it survives, wastage of money over advertisements must be stopped. There is no need of it. You don't need to let the entire country know that you have laid a foundation stone some where in the north-east. We all are mortals. You claim that a railway line will be constructed up to Srinagar in Jammu Kashmir. Mr. Chairman, Sir, you will be surprised to know that the distance between Jammu and Udhampur is 70-80 kilometres. The work is on progress there for so many years and a huge amount is being allocated for the purpose. Money is being spent there for the last seven years. In just one year we, however, spent as much amount of money as has been spent in seven years. We know it very well that you are playing a joke with the people of Kashmir. You, however,

don't know - that the people are aware that they are being befooled and cheated.

So, the action, which you take politically, politically not in a sense related to one but keeping in mind the whole country; if you think that you are trying to win the confidence of the people of Kashmir and your actions may be a show off for Kashmir people. But you must bear in your mind that the people of Kashmir are not fools, they know that nothing can be done there by allocating two, three or four crores of rupees every year. How many decades will you take to complete the construction of Railway line upto Srinagar. In which era are we living? We had set up a corporation to take up the work of Konkan Railway project. That project must have been completed in three-four years, but we are already in the seventh year of the said project and it is difficult to say as to when it would be completed. Dates are frequently announced, claiming that the work would be completed in three months or the next year. But nothing has been done so far. You are not sure about physical conditions of hilly areas and the areas of Kashmir valley. It is difficult to calculate how to construct tunnels. I don't say that work should not be taken up for those places. But what I want to say is that if there is only a political motive behind making of announcements, that is very harmful.

20.00 hrs.

Moreover, I would like to know as to how much amount would be allocated for opening up of zonal office and divisional office whose work has just been started? If you set up a new zone, it requires 200-400 crores of rupees because you will have to construct all sorts of offices and buildings. These are not productive expenditures. You may do all these things to serve personal interest of certain persons. I don't intend to say that there should be no more zones in the country. I don't object if, if eighteen zones are set up in the country in place of the existing eight zones. Our's is a vast country, railway provides transportation facility to innumerable persons of the country. Therefore, the number of railway zones must be increased. But keeping in view the fact that there is enormous unemployment in the country, youth are dejected, there is no avenue for their employment, what is the sense in sending a clerk from one zone to another zone. It is alright if you promote a retiring assistant general manager or deputy general manager to General Manager by sending him to the newly created zones, but what about the peons, typists or stenographers who are sent there. What else purpose is served except promoting a few higher officers, by creating new zonal office. I fail to understand this. A passenger doesn't go to the office of General Manager for purchasing a ticket. You should rather try to improve the conditions of Railway stations and railway tracks you should release funds for what has just been said by a honourable

member of Orissa. There are so many other works for which the Railway requires funds. Our priorities can not be determined by the persons sitting in the Ministry of Railway. The country has to think over it. The money belongs to the country and the decision in that regard is taken by the Parliament. I don't know about your plans, I would however suggest that you must suspend that work. That money should be spent in Bihar, Uttarakhand, Karnataka or in other places of the country. It would be better if the money spent for constructing new railway lines is spent for such purposes which may provide employment to the loss of people. I would like to request the honourable Minister of Railway that he should try to rectify whatever has been done in the Rail Bhawan during the last six months.

Now I would like to put two-three points. During the latter part of last October and in the beginning of Nov, 1994 the honourable member Brahmanand Mandal sat on fast for the construction of Rail cum Road bridge between Monghyar and Khagaria. During that he met the then Deputy Chairman of Planning Commission. Shri Pranab Mukherji, who intervened in the matter. He assured me in writing that necessary action would be taken to construct the said bridge and that he would also contract the concerned ministry. Now the Government is changed and we have Prof. Madhu Dandvate as the new Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, who had also been Railway Minister and Minister of Finance. A few days back when I met him along with Brahmanand Mandalji regarding that very issue, he, after listening to us, said that the assurance given in that regard earlier would be fulfilled. He also wrote letters to the concerned ministries. One letter was also written to the Chief Minister of Bihar while second and third letter were written to the Minister of Surface Transport and Minister of Water Resources respectively requesting them that the steps should be taken to fulfill the earlier assurance about constructing the said bridge.

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV : Hon'ble Member, Shri Ram Naik has expressed concern over Sugar Export Promotion Repeal Act. We are bringing that Bill tomorrow in the House for your kind consideration. Shri Ram Naik and any other member will have no objection on it. In this country till now sugar is exported only through one company. Now, doing away with this monopoly I am opening this sector for all.

I would like to urge the Railway Minister that since this commitment had been made by the Planning Commission, it must be fulfilled in all circumstances. We are not concerned with the party which is in power and the person who is holding this portfolio.

To conclude I would like to make one more point. It is a long standing demand of the people of Bihar that this rail line should be laid there. When I was the

Minister of Railways, I too had taken initiative in this regard when a delegation of Japan had visited India. Apart from the Pilgrims from Japan, Jain and Buddhist Community from all over the world wanted a special train to the introduced connecting Nalanda, Rajgir and Gaya.

Madam Chairperson, Japanese people were willing to finance the plan. People of Jain community were also willing to make their contribution. So many submission is that Railway network and Railway Development plan for the whole country is a separate issue and since people and tourist from all parts of the world visit this area, so priority should be given to it. So my submission to the Minister of Railways is that if only this work is undertaken in place of all the twenty items of work, then it would help in development of Bihar and country as well, our country would earn Foreign currency and it would be beneficial for pilgrims visiting this area from all over the world. With this, I conclude.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN (Trichur) : Madam, Chairperson, the debate on these Demands for Supplementary Grants was initiated by my learned friend, the hon. Member from Bangalore. He was quite happy with the Railways, the Railway Budget and the Demands for Supplementary Grants. There are ample reasons for that happiness. As far as the Indian Railways are concerned, their world ends at the borders of Karnataka.

There were great expectations and hopes when the ever-energetic, youthful, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, in company with the ever-shining personality of Shri Maharaj, took charge of the Railways. I regret to say that as far as Kerala is concerned, we are utterly painfully disappointed. The Railway officials are here. I think, this message will go to Shri Paswan also that none of the promises made in the Budget are being implemented in Kerala. Twenty Members of Lok Sabha from Kerala belonging to different parties sat together with the Railway officials and the Minister and informed him of the things. Let me recall the promises made to us.

We were promised that a new train from Tiruvananthapuram to New Delhi would be run by December, 1996. It was promised that the Konkan Railway would be completed by December, 1996 and that we would get a train to Delhi from December. I humbly put a question in this connection "Will it be completed by December?" I do not think that the Konkan Railway will be completed even by December, 1997 because new problems and new issues are arising. Why does the Government postpone starting a new train from Tiruvananthapuram to New Delhi till the completion of the Konkan Railway? Why do they not give us a train now?

Look at the records of the stations. For months together, no ticket is available from Delhi to Kerala. You

will not get the ticket. They say that everything is full, waiting list running to over 200-300, how to issue tickets? This is the situation for months together. No, Sir, you must not punish us, the most unfortunate people of Kerala. Not a single new train is introduced. So many new trains are running in other parts.

20.11 hrs.

(Col. Rao Ram Singh *in the Chair*)

As my friend has correctly pointed out there are reasons to be happy for the people of Bihar and Karnataka. Karnataka is always fortunate. Leave the new trains, take the case of the doubling line. It was promised by the Minister and the officials that is would be expedited. But we are facing the harassment to undertake journey to Mangalore from Cochin, from Shoranur to Mangalore. We are held up for so many hours. For years now we were crying for this double line. Will it be completed now? The work is very slow. I do not know, why? The doubling of the line from Quilon to Thiruvananthapuram is also progressing in a very slow pace. The State has got no double line from North to South and they are waiting for this double line for years and years now.

We were promised a coastal line beginning from Tanur to Cochin. Nothing has been done. The promises remain on paper. If you get that coastal line, the heavy traffic on road, the tragedy of accidents apart, heavy rush on the other railways will be, to a great extent, eased. But that important line beginning from Tanur is not taken up as promised by the hon. Minister and the Railway Board officials. I want to know why it is not implemented. Why is this delay? What is hampering them? Is it because of the financial constraints? If yes, are the financial constraints only for Kerala?

Sir, the primary facilities for the passengers in the Kerala railway stations at present is a pitiable sight. I come from Trichur. Trichur, is the financial capital, the cultural capital, and the town of temples. Lakhs and lakhs of people come from every part of India, not only from India but from abroad also. Trichur Railway Station, is in a pathetic state of renovation is carried on very slowly. There is no place for sitting. People are crowded just like in the *Kumbh Mela*. There is no place for sitting.

I wrote to the General Manager of the Southern Railway to just open an enquiry counter in the reservation building, where people gather in larger number. They do not know where to get the ticket and what train is available. No reply has been received. I wrote to the Chief Engineer of the Southern Railways. So many development works are pending and he is transferring the officials, the engineering staff from Trichur. The office is being closed. I wrote to the Chief Engineer, what was the hon. Minister doing? What is

the reason behind it? I am a Member of the Consultative Committee. That too I wrote. Please tell me, what is happening? I am ashamed to say that till now he had no courtesy to write a few lines in reply to me. I am a Member of Parliament representing eleven lakh people. The officials do not reply. They are not serious in renovating the Trichur Railway Station. My hon. friend, Shri P.C. Chacko who represented Trichur before me, had also tried his level best to get the Trichur Railway Station renovated but could not succeed. It is pending for quite some time now. I do not know when it will be completed. It appears that we will have to wait till the Twenty-first Century. Everyone is talking about Twenty first Century. There is no double platform at Pudukad.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you may also be coming to Kanyakumari. You yourself must see the conditions of the bogies there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister of State and the Cabinet Minister are taking down notes.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN (Trichur) : The bogies are in a rotten condition. All the condemned bogies are shunted to Kerala. In this regard, our Chief Minister had written letters. All the Members of Parliament have represented but the rotten bogies are still there. They are not being replaced.

Another most important matter to which I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister is that we are not getting rakes or bogies to bring rice to Kerala. Yesterday, the Minister of Food and Civil Supplies of Kerala was here. He came all the way from Kerala to Delhi in biting cold just to request the hon. Minister to provide some rakes and bogies. The stock of rice has gone down to a dangerously low level. Rice is plenty in FCI. Rice is plenty in Andhra Pradesh. We want to purchase it. But, due to shortage of rakes and bogies we are facing difficulty.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Sir, this is wrong. Yesterday, their Minister came and met me. I asked him how many rakes he wanted. I told him that I was prepared to give him any number of rakes. There is no shortage of rakes. I want to know from him whether he wants them today or tomorrow. I am prepared to give him.

[Translation]

All those who have made a complaint regarding shortage of rakes, we have told them that there is no shortage of rakes. I am ready to supply rakes. The other day one hon. Member had raised a question and regarding transportation of cement, where upon I asked to sent cement dealers to us the Railway Department invites the cement representatives to come and get the rakes. Yesterday, a Minister of Andhra Pradesh had

come, I told him that he would be provided as many rakes as he wanted, kindly do not make wide allegations on us.

[English]

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : I am glad that the hon. Minister is very much interested to give us rakes. Whatever I am saying, there is truth in it. He may see the records of October and November.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I must say that the Minister's assurance is very very categorical. He is prepared to provide any number of rakes that you require or Kerala requires.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, he has promised us before also. We will get them. There is no problem. I must draw your attention to one other important matter. The Railway authorities get more profits for transporting cement, steel and industrial goods. But for food items, they get very less profit. Therefore they say that there is a shortage of rakes. So, they do not want to transport these items on reduced rates.

Sir, I once again humbly submit that our Minister for Food and Civil Supplies came all the way from Trivandrum to Delhi just to present the facts and figures of all these things to the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister of Railways has given an assurance on the floor of the House that any number of rakes required for Kerala for transportation of foodgrains will be made available whenever the requirement is projected to him.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Yesterday Food Minister of Kerala. Mr. Nayar had met me. When he made the same complaint, I immediately called all officers. In fact, I myself know the factual position. Whosoever has demanded rakes, we have immediately supplied rakes to them. The Food Minister is not present here. We have no complaints against him. When I myself and my officer offered him as many rakes as he demanded, he was satisfied. Then he himself reviewed the situation. The officers of his department were also with him. Of course, there is shortage of bogies. We can give you the reasons of the shortage. Our former Minister of Railway, Shri George Fernandes is also present here. There is ever increasing demand for trains such as train between Coimbatore and Delhi or to link Northern and Southern regions. For starting a train there are two basic requirements i.e. a railway line and bogies. There is a shortage of bogies, Thirty percent of bogies in Railway Department are outdated... (Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR (Barh) : There is acute shortage of bogies in Guwahati, the capital of Assam.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Shri George Fernandes knows the situation, Six year's period is not a long period, thirty percent bogies are outdated, twenty percent are on meter gauge. Ten percent of trains are Superfast trains which include Rajdhani Express and Shatabadi Express. Trains are being run with risk factors. People are demanding more and more trains. So the Department of Railways is forced to use the same bogies after denting and painting them. That is why when railway accidents occurs, Railway Minister is the first person who gets worried. In order to avoid accidents twenty percent of the trains would have to be declared unfit for plying but this decision cannot be followed keeping in view the public interest. So the same trains are run and simultaneously new procurements are made. So I will certainly indicate the shortage ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Minister, he has submitted that since the railway tariff for food-grains is less, the railway authorities issues rakes for Steel and Coal on priority and less priority is accorded to supply of foodgrains.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : There is no shortage of rakes if hon. Member feels, that there is shortage of rakes in his state, then he should come to me tomorrow. I can order for as many rakes as the hon. Member demands.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I must say that it is a very commendable assurance given by the hon. Minister.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : Sir, I do realise the constraints of the Ministry of Railways and the Railway Board. But in this context I have a small suggestion to make. The Railways have to rearrange their priorities now for the remaining four or five months. Our financial constraint is our Budget. There is a provision of Rs. 500 crore under BOLT. I do not know if it is a bolt from the blue! Ask the Western Railways! They entrusted the unigauge work to a man under the BOLT Scheme. That is the only experience we have this year. Ask them what the result is. That man is not there; there is no finance; and the man who took the project under the BOLT scheme is missing in Western Railway. That work is blocked there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You will have to wind up now.

SHRI V.V. RAGHAVAN : All these constraints should not be reason for discriminating the unfortunate State of Kerala and the unfortunate people of Kerala. That is what I want to submit. Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, I request Shri R.C. Thomas to speak.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR (Baramulla) : Please give me an opportunity to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your party has placed your name in the lower order in the list. You will be given a chance when your turn comes.

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : Justice should be done with us as well.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am also almost a Kashmiri. I have rendered my fifteen year military service in Kashmir.

[English]

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : Sir, I am happy that in this Demands for Supplementary Grants, new works have also been suggested. I find that five new lines have been suggested and money has been sought for those works. But I find that almost in all, except for one, the reasons stated is that it passes through an underdeveloped area, a backward area or because there is a shorter route or because there is a hardship for other transports, etc. That is why, these routes have been suggested. I also support that but then I would just remind the Ministry that there are some other lines for which some surveys are pending. Whenever reports come on those lines, the Railway Department says that since it is not economically feasible, it cannot be looked into.

Sir, I would suggest that the social aspect has to be taken very seriously and one such railway line, which has been suggested in my State, Kerala, is just like some of these railway lines which have also been taken up apart from the backwardness of the area, also for the purpose that pilgrimage areas are included.

I would submit that there is a place called, Sabarimala, which is known to everybody and which is also famous for secularism, where Muslims, Hindus and Christians all go. They not only go to Mosques but all of them go also to this temple and worship Ayyappa. Ayyappa is the symbol of secularism. So, I would say that a line...*(Interruptions)* I will tell you that story later. There is a legend. The legend is that Ayyappa fought against the evils at that time and Ayyappa was supported by Babar, a Muslim saint. For those reasons it is said that Sabarimala is a place where secularism is practised and it can be shown to the people of whole India that there is a place where Hindus go to the Mosques and Muslims receive Hindus with all splendour, harmony and celebrations.

Sir, a lot of people, not in lakhs but crores of people from all over India go to Sabarimala. I do not find in any of these railway lines that these railway lines have been accepted because there is goods traffic, because

they are more economically viable. So, I would submit that a railway line to Sabarimala may be there, which has been proposed. There was one proposal from Kottayam but it had been found that there was some difficulty in that. There is also another proposal from Angamaly via Muvattupuzha, Erumely to Sabarimala, for which survey has also been taken up and for which a report is pending. It was assured in the Conference of Members of Kerala, which the hon. Minister of Railways was pleased to call, that the report would be submitted by the end of September. But the end of September has gone, the end of October has also gone, now it is December and I got an answer in Parliament as if nothing has happened. But, I think, that the report should be called for immediately.

There is a proposal for a railway line from Angamaly via Muvattupuzha, Erumely to Sabarimala and then to Punalur. That is a railway line, which is feasible, for which the investment ratio is positive and, I think, that should be taken up immediately...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Is that full line from Kottayam-Dignur via Sabarimala?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : The suggested line is from Kottayam-Erumely-Sabarimala. Then, the other alternative is from Angamaly-Erumely-Sabarimala, for which a report is pending.

The report was expected to come before the 30th of September. But the report is not ready and I am sorry that the report has not yet come. The report should be immediately called for. I suggest that it should be made and it should be brought in the Plan and at least in the next Budget, Angamaly-Muvattupuzha-Sabarimala line should find a place as a new rail route. That is my first point. I have only four or five points. I will finish with that.

The second point is with regard to doubling. Regarding the works of doubling, the Railways always say, especially, the Minister of Railways will always say that they are happy when we suggest that doubling should be taken up because it is the work of Railways and the Railways would like to take it up as it will increase the efficiency of the Railways. As already suggested by Shri V.V. Raghavan, doubling is most important in Kerala and we, all the Members of Parliament, together had suggested that doubling work should be taken up. I am happy that the Minister assured in the conference of Kerala MPs that enough money would be given.

Now I understand, from a further study, that money is not the only requirement but there are some other requirements also. The infrastructure requirements are more important. I think, though the money has been allotted, I find that Rs. 67 crore has been allotted for doubling alone but so far only Rs. 17 crore has been

utilised and only with a little more time, that will not be utilised. It will be diverted. Why? I have just thought of it and I have found from the research that it is because the proper offices are not functioning in Kerala.

An office for Chief Engineer (Construction) is urgently necessary and I have taken up the matter with the Railways and also with the hon. Minister and the Minister has been pleased to see that some action is being taken. But I am very sorry that such an office was sanctioned four years back. I put a question in Parliament but I got an answer that no such sanction was given. But I would like to remind the concerned persons in the Railways that that answer was not correct and such an answer should not have been given. It would put us all in an awkward position, especially, the Minister. We are very much happy to have the Minister who is a very active person but the people behind the Minister should give a correct report. The correct report was not given. The problem is this. I have records with me to show. I am not going to read it. But I have records with me to show that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Thomas, the Minister is intervening.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : At last, I will not have much time to go into each and every point. So I just want to intervene.

[Translation]

You have made a reference regarding doubling of two lines. But the work regarding the doubling of Shomum-Mangluu line is in progress. It is, as I have told, likely to be completed by March.

[English]

Trivandrum-Quilon line will be completed by March, 1998.

[Translation]

We have said about it.

[English]

subject to land being made available by the State Government by August, 1996.

[Translation]

According to the figures available with me

[English]

the land has still not been made available beyond Kazhakuttam. In view of this there will be some delay.

[Translation]

We keep direct link with the state Government. As far as Railway is concerned, the Department is ready

to admit its responsibility, but the main question is regarding the land which has to be allotted by the State Government, I would like to urge the hon. Member that he should press upon the state Government in this regard. If the land is not available, the Government would not be able to utilise the available funds. You have rightly observed that we do not sanction funds but if we do not sanction funds, then it is our fault. The funds cannot be sanctioned until the State Government allots land. We have been requesting the State Government time and again to allot land and you are also requested to urge the State Government to allot land for this purpose.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I must compliment the Minister on his very practice and specific instructions and orders that he has given and for the very extremely cooperative and helpful attitude he is showing towards all the Members of Parliament.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : I will also complement him.

[Translation]

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL KAR (Baramulla) : The Minister should reply at the end. The procedure has not been revised yet.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If the Minister does not reply, you say that he should have replied and if the Minister is ready to give reply, you say he should not reply.

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : The hon. Minister should give reply when the debate concludes. Otherwise I could have to wait for speaking.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Thomas, I think, you should wind up now. The hon. Minister has given you some very specific assurance.

SHRI P.C. THOMAS : As far as construction of an office of Chief Engineer was concerned, this was sanctioned four years back. I have got a copy of the record also to show that four years back this was not only sanctioned for Ernakulam but also an officer was posted there. I think, the officer took leave. But, thereafter, the office did not function and, therefore, the Chief Engineer (Construction) has not come. Therefore, to satisfy the hon. Minister's urge to have the work done very quickly. I think, the office of the Chief Engineer must be sanctioned immediately and must be started in Ernakulam.

Sir, I will wind up soon. My third point is about electrification. We have electrification of track from Erode up to Ernakulam. However, the work is going on at a slow speed. Now, an office connected with that is also necessary to hasten this. I would submit that an office

of an electric loco shed - it is not an office, it is a functional structure - may be given in Kerala so that the electrical work can be expedited.

As far as the other points, on which Shri Raghavan has spoken, are concerned, I am not speaking on them. But I would humbly submit that we, the Members of Parliament from Kerala cannot go to Kerala because all of them accuse us saying that the bogies in the trains to Kerala are very old. Now, the hon. Minister of Railways has said that almost one-third of them have to go. It is just like one-third of Members of the Rajya Sabha retiring once in every two years and new Members coming in! So, if one-third of these bogies have to go, let them go, but let them not come to Kerala. Now, I think, that these one-third bogies are coming to Kerala. We, the Members of Parliament, from Kerala are finding it very difficult.

Sir, I thank you very much for the opportunity given to speak. I am also thankful to the hon. Minister of Railways for accepting our invitation for a Conference on 'Development of Railways in Kerala' which is going to take place in the Constitution Club on the 20th December, 1996.

[Translation]

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the supplementary demands presented by the hon. Railway Minister, with a view to complete the development of Railway set up proposed in the Railway Budget.

But at the same time I feel that discrimination made against certain states while presenting these supplementary should be removed. There is no mention of Punjab, Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir in them. Jammu and Kashmir is a border area. So railway setup in this state should be developed. It is a matter of great regret that not even a kilometer of new rail line has been laid in Punjab since independence. But now work on a railway track in Govind Palpur is to commence soon. It should be completed as soon as possible.

The Indian Railway Network is one of the largest railway network in world. It is regarded as an important network. Keeping in view its importance the leader of the House has been appointed as Minister of Railways.

Since it is one of the largest network, its cost of operation is also very high. I would like to submit that if this cost is not decreased it would become too expensive to operate. The Rail freight is escalating day by day. That is the reason for which percentage of railways in transportation is decreasing day by day and it has decreased to 7% from 30%. Corrective measures should be taken in this direction. Our Minister of Railways is a young and energetic person and I hope that he would try his level best to decrease the cost of operation by increasing its efficiency and status of new

projects. But I think the Budget proposals and Supplementary demands do not serve this purpose.

Secondly Railway transportation should be made cheap. Another thing has been noticed, there are not enough passengers in many trains and particularly in passenger trains having ten compartments the number of passengers is just enough for two compartments. Most of the railway coaches remain vacant. Even many rail engines go without any body and jokingly such coaches are called Teja Singh. In this way, trains with forty or fifty coaches run without passengers and goods. This thing should be checked and infructuous expenditure should be avoided.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : Can the hon. Member specify the trains which are run without passengers?

PROF. PREM SINGH CHANDUMAJRA : This thing can be observed even in one day. At least fifteen percent of the trains go vacant. A survey should be conducted in this regard. This situation should be improved. Rajpura is one such station. Labourer from U.P. and Bihar travel by Barauni Express for Punjab but this Barauni Express does not have any stoppage at Rajpura, instead it stops at Sarhand, labourers have to face inconvenience and they come back to Rajpura by bus. So first thing is that there should be a stoppage of that train at Rajpura. Neither Satkhand Express nor any interstate train has any stoppage at Rajpura. The passengers for Bhatinda, Sangrur and Patiala have to go from Rajpura so if there is stoppage there, train travel can be made cheap. In the same way, there is a need for construction of overbridge. We have had a meeting with Chairman of Railway Department. There are problems due to a number of railways lines.

The road traffic is obstructed, and the Railway Department and not the State Government should bear the expenses. Overbridges should be constructed at Rajpura, Sunam, Lahra Patiala and Murinda, overbridges have not been constructed at these places, the passengers have to wait for hours. It is my demand that overbridges be constructed at these places because their Dam, Bhakhra and N.F.L. at Nangal are there. Electricity and fertilisers are supplied to the country from there. The work gets obstructed due to excessive traffic. This matter of overbridges should be paid serious attention.

Department of Railways started a workshop named D.C.W in Patiala. It had been promised at that time that one person of the each family whose land has been acquired would be given job. But that promise has not been fulfilled. One person from each of these families should be given employment. There is no production in that factory.

Patiala is a very important city. The production should also take place in that workshop. This would be profitable for the Railway Department. The people have to go to Ambala for reservation. The Reservation offices should be located at Patiala and Rajpura.

Chandigarh is an important station. This is the capital of Punjab, only one platform has been constructed at that junction. So there is a great rush there. It should have at least two platforms and also a computer system. This would provide information about reservation to the people. Punjab should be given preference in the matter of Supplementary Demands. A Proposal to link of Rajpura and Chandigarh was under consideration. It was mentioned in the Budget also. We had demanded some modifications in it. There is a distance of twenty five kilometers between Rajpura and Chandigarh. But there was a proposal to construct fifty five kilometers by changing the routes. That route should be shortered to twenty five kilometers. To make the proposal economically viable this should be direct link between Sidha and Rajpura. A proposal to construct a railway line between Ludhiana and Chandigarh had been given. But this project has not yet been completed.

The Railway lines in Punjab should be electrified. These lines are overloaded. Some work regarding electrification is in progress. It should be expedited. With this I conclude.

[English]

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Pudukkottai) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the pre-budgetary conference which the hon. Minister of Railways had with the M.Ps. of Tamil Nadu in Chennai, he made some announcements which fed new hopes into the minds of the people of Tamil Nadu. Affirming the same announcements, while presenting the Budget for the year 1996-97 the hon. Minister of Railways assured in this august House that the following works will be taken up and completed regarding the gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu.

- (1) Chennai-Tiruchirapalli-Dindigul by March, 98.
- (2) Tiruchirapalli-Nagore line on high priority.
- (3) Survey on Salem-Cuddalore line.

Though the financial year is fast approaching the end leaving behind hardly three months, it is disheartening to note that none of the above projects have been given the final shape as assured by the hon. Minister of Railways. It may not be out of place to mention here that the people of Tamil Nadu have always been given a step-motherly treatment by the Ministry of Railways though the Southern Railway has contributed a lot to the Indian Railways. A news item which appeared in *The Hindu* gives a clear picture about the work regarding the gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu. It is nothing less than the speed of a snail. I am not able to understand why the schemes of Tamil Nadu are

shifted to the back burner. I must mention here that chord line conversion will serve no purpose unless the Tiruchi-Dindigul meter gauge line is converted with Tiruch-Villupuram section, but the Tiruchi-Villupuram chord line conversion itself is progressing at a very less speed. The standard reply given by the administration is that the project would be expedited after completing the bridge work in the section. So also the administration is not in a position to open the Salem-Bangalore broad gauge line for passenger traffic though the work has been completed. Only minor works relating to passenger amenities are to be carried out before making the project operational. The Railway Minister also announced at the meeting at Chennai that the Chennai-Villupuram main line conversion work would be taken up in the Eighth Plan but it is now unlikely to be taken up even in the Ninth Plan.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : As far as Salem-Bangalore line conversion is concerned, the work is completed. For the last one-and-half or two months we are waiting to make it operational. Since the hon. Chief Minister and the hon. Prime Minister will be there, we are tying up between the Chief Minister and the Prime Minister. I have requested Maranji and other friends also that as soon as the Chief Minister is available, I have no objection. Any time we can go and inaugurate it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have got a senior Minister from your State and your Party.

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA : When the Minister of Railways is responsible, I can only ask him.

It is quite surprising and unbelievable and at the same time disgusting to note that a sizeable amount which had originally been allocated for the gauge conversion work in Tamil Nadu is being diverted to various other projects, some of which do not even find a place in the Railway Budget. The people of Tamil Nadu are so dejected that they have a fear not only about the completion of work within the targeted time but also feel that the work may be prolonged to an infinite period. For the information of the Minister of Railways, we are given to understand that out of Rs. 88 crore allotted for the broad gauge conversion between Chennai-Tiruchchirappalli-Dindigul, Rs. 55 crore have been diverted to the State of Karnataka. Similarly, out of the allocation of Rs. 55 crore for the gauge conversion on Tiruchchirappalli-Nagore line, Rs. 33 crore have been diverted to the Northern India. I am extremely sorry that I could not understand the reason for this. May I request the hon. Minister of Railways to enlighten us on the latest status of the above projects and also clarify about the purpose of diversion of funds to various other projects. The project of gauge conversion in railways are long pending demands of the people of Tamil Nadu and if these projects are allowed to find their own deaths

by the delay in allocation of funds or by diversion of funds, the people of Tamil Nadu will keep this in mind for ever as a general grudge, which I hope the Minister of Railways will not allow. Apart from having in mind all these things, I am also happy that he has proposed a new line between Salem and Karur the survey of which has been over. Let that not be kept aside as other projects.

We are reposing much confidence in the Minister of Railways, as Shri P.C. Thomas has told that our Minister of Railways is enthusiastic and actually interested in making many schemes effective. I once again bring to his notice that the broad gauge conversion from Chennai via Tiruchi and Dindigul must be expedited which is a long pending demand of the people of Tamil Nadu.

We have developed new hopes after you assumed power that we shall not experience the same step-motherly treatment which we have experienced in the past. I hope that the Railway Minister will inform us about the actual and present stage of these projects and that he would also inform us about the purported diversion of the funds which are already allocated.

With these words, I thank you for having given me this opportunity. I wish the Railway Minister would facilitate Tamil Nadu with the necessary demands which we have been putting forth so far.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS (Kalahandi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, while supporting the Supplementary budget proposals of Railways. I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways towards few points...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR (Begusarai) : Independent Members would be given the chance to speak in last...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Please keep the list of Congress Members also in view...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have gone through the list of Congress Members.

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Please see the BJP list also...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : I would like to request the hon. Members that I am duty bound, I have no authority to change the list of names given by any party. The time allotted to each party for the discussion has also to be adjusted.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Independent Members have to be given time to speak...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Some of them would be adjusted.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Please give me the opportunity to speak. You gave Shri George Fernandes

20 minutes time to speak though he is the leader of the group of three members. Please give us the opportunity to speak...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Sir, first you satisfy yourselves, we will be satisfied.

[Translation]

The Debate has been going on for the last four hours but only two Members of the Congress Party have spoken although it is the second largest party...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Two Members from B.J.P., two of Congress and one from Kerala Congress have spoken. As per the list with me, only two, Shri Dhananjay Kumar and Shri Kashi Ram Rana of B.J.P. have spoken for forty or fifty minutes. I would request the Members that they should complete their speech within ten minutes because the hon. Minister has to give his reply also.

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : It is already very late today If you agree when I would request that we can have discussion tomorrow for two hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is not in my hands.

SHRI BRAHMANAND MANDAL (Monghyr) : This is very important question. All the members should be given time to speak on this matter...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Bhaktacharan Das, Please continue.

[Translation]

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : While supporting the Supplementary Demands for Railways, I would like to make a few points. Proper attention is not being paid towards Railways in Orissa. I would like to thank the hon. Minister of Railways because he has set up zonal office in Bhubaneshwar. But neither there is staff nor it is functioning fully.

21.00 hrs.

It has not started functioning effectively because there is skeleton staff. This office has perhaps been started with so that a large number of rural people could go to the Railway authorities. But its full benefits cannot reach the people until it starts functioning properly. In south-eastern parts people have to go to Calcutta. So I would like to request the hon. Minister to see that it starts functioning effectively.

Sambalpur-Jalchar railway line is a very important line. The target time for its completion is being extended again and again. If it is completed, people would reach

the capital in 4 to 10 hours. These days the journey takes from ten to sixteen hours. Western Orissa is very backward area. If this railway line is completed the journey hours would be reduced. So I would request the hon. Minister to complete it as soon as possible Lanjigarh-Junagarh railway line falls in my constituency although work has been going on for the last four or five years yet only four crore rupees have been spent on it. We had requested the hon. Minister. Shri Narsimha Rao Ji and Shri Chandra Shekhar Ji had also requested in this regard. He assured that rupees five crore will be provided for this year but till today nothing is said in writing. I do not know. I have no knowledge that whether rupees five crore have been provided or not.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : One crore rupees were provided earlier but after your request it has been increased to rupees five crore.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Thank you, Mr. Minister...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : First turn is of B.J.P. after that your turn will come.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Work on Talchar Sambalpur section will be completed in December 1997.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Sir, there is no staff for this railway line. Now the question arises that how rupees five crore will be spent. Staff working there do not want to live there, so the staff been withdrawn from there. Now there is insufficient Staff. Hon'ble Minister, would you like to give your attention in this regard that ~~if~~ sufficient engineering staff would not go there then the work could not be completed. When the money is not likely to be spent there then how the work will progress. Kindly look into this matter also. During the last budget session, we had raised two-three small demands of Orissa. Rajdhani Express which starts from Bhubaneshwar run once in a week. Bhubaneshwar is the state capital and if any one of us want to reach Delhi from there then the time likely to be spent in the journey is not less than two days. Rajdhani is the only train which reach in less time and that it also run once in a week and also it is very difficult to get a seat in it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Whether it start from Ranchi?

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : No Sir, it starts from Bhubaneshwar. All the members of Orissa had requested that it must run twice a week. This is a small issue so please accept this demand. One more train is there i.e. Samta Express which run three days in a week. This train links Orissa to Delhi. It does not has a pantry Car. This train had been plying there for the last six years but pantry car has not been provided therein so far. Last time also we had raised this matter but it is not yet provided so it is requested to try to provide a pantry car in this train. We had raised a demand to extend Sambalpur-Howrah section. Hon. Minister had accepted

that extension. Now a days Sambhalpur-Howrah ply upto Raigarh. But only half train ply upto Raigarh and half train remain at Sambhalpur. A.C. coach also remain at Sambhalpur. I would like to request the Minister that the extension which has made upto Sambalpur-Raigarh. Please try to ply whole train upto Raigarh. Sir, there is a train Ahmedabad Express we demand its halt at my constituency Narla road and Rupra Road because 40-50 thousand people from there work in Surat, Ahmedabad, etc. Daily these people has to reach Raipur and take their ticket from Raipur. Therefore I request to make it's stoppage at Rupra Road - Narla Road.

The condition of Lanjigarh, Narla, Rupra Road, Kandel and Kesinga Railway Stations in very bad, because no staff is there. Whenever we enquire about the train on telephone, no reply is given. I would like to demand that sufficient staff must be provided there. These are very small stations therefore heavy expenditure is not required. I request that Hon. Minister must give attention towards the development of this stations.

I would like to submit that whenever we travel in trains then people from the labour class Complaint about the shortage of general compartment in trains. You are aware that a lot of rural people are migrating, to cities. There are only one or two bogies for general compartment in which it is very difficult travel, moreover and army personnel also used to travel therein. If you ask only poor person then he always has this Complaint that there are only one or two general boggies in Express trains which are usually occupied by the army personnel, poor people do not find any berth. If we want that our nation must progress, even if railway bear some losses it must not hesitate to accept this demand. At last country will progress with this, country will develop. If we run train in a backward region of the country then the railway may have to bear loss but in the near future by utilisation of resources country's development will take place.

I would like to request about the Express trains, generally passenger train ply for the poor people, there is no doubt it, but there must be 50 percent general compartments in all existing express trains so that poor people could travel in those Compartments and reach their destination early. I would like that Hon. Minister should examine this proposal. I would like to request specially because at every station maximum the majority passenger are poor. Now a days I had travelled in trains, people used to tell me that only rich people travel by Shatabdi, Rajdhani, these trains ply only for them. We do not get any seat in these trains. Therefore, I request you Hon. Minister to consider these proposals.

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Damoh) : Hon. Chairman Sir, you have given me time to speak for which I thank you. For opening new avenues of progress

in Madhya Pradesh by establishing a Railway zone at Jabalpur I thanks him for this. But geographically Madhya Pradesh is a very large state therefore it is very necessary to establish a railway zone at Bilaspur and I would like that you announce the setting up of this zone. You have included Jabalpur-Gandia-Balabhat-Katangi city line for gauge conversion in these demands for grants, I thank you for this also. I request you that work on this line should also be started. It must not happen that you only made only national provision for it.

I would also request you that you have not selected any other place other than Jabalpur and Gondia for this purpose. You have given promise to us that work of Lalitpur-Singrauli route will be completed, you have finished the work of it's one part, Completed the survey work, but that is a backward area. Bundelkhand region of Madhya Pradesh, in which Chattarpur, Tikamgarh, Panna and Damoah are included, in a most backward region and that is why it has been declared a zero-industry area there is not mode of transport is available there but when we ask about the transport then it is said that there is no industry there - it is the irony of this state.

Hon. Chairman, this is the irony of that village and besides that there is very big scope for tourism. If transport facility is provided there then Khajoraho to Chaumukh in Panna district, Kalindi and Chitrakoot etc. all places will be connected to each other. Tourism be developed in that region very well. Therefore it is my request that it is very necessary to construct the Lalitpur-Singrauli section immediately and we have full faith that you will surely consider it.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : It's survey has been completed in time.

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA : Hon. Minister Sir, we have already given our thanks for that and we are grateful to you for that.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Now the survey report has been sent to the Planning Commission. The duty of railway is over. We will see, when we receive it from the Planning Commission.

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA : No. Mr. Minister, please do not say like this. Railways duty and responsibility has been increased now because you have to got it sanctioned from the Planning Commission and only then you can start the real work.

Mr. Chairman, there are so many other things to which no consideration has been taken.

Two Mahamaya Express have been introduced in our state which ply to and fro Nagpur which runs for two days to Nagpur and goes to Jabalpur for three days. My request is that you start a separate train from Jabalpur and start a separate train from Nagpur because three-

four hour time gap is there between them and passengers are to wait at Beena. The objective of plying this train is not being fulfilled and passengers have to suffer a lot. This train start from our state with eight boggies. If 16 boggies are added to it then facility for the public can be increase. The reservation quota fixed in it is insufficient. Likewise Hirakund express goes upto Sambalpur. Provision of reservation is not available in that also. That one also ply for four days only.

Mr. Chairman, through you I would like to request the hon. Minister that recently Reewanchal train has been introduced. That one also ply through Damoah-Sagar-Beena. The railway administration there also feeling that if this train is run through Katni-Beena-Damoah-Sagar then it would be more profitable and people will get more facility. A lot of trains already run through Jabalpur and in addition you have constituted Jabalpur zone so it's development is inevitable. But if your want to provide this civic facility to the people then it is better to ply this train through this route. You examine the reaction of your railway officers in this regard. There it is absolutely necessary.

21.14 hrs.

(Shri P.C. Chacko in the Chair)

Mr. Chairman, through you I would like to request the hon. Minister that Shipra Express ply through Ujjain-Indore-Howrah. That too only for three days. In this way all trains which you are plying from our state that all are plying partly. Therefore, my request is that you must ply any of the train from there completely.

The Kurla-Patna train was introduced but covered only half distance. Earlier we had the facility to travel upto Mumbai from Katni. A bogie for Mumbai used to be attached from this station but the facility has been withdrawn for the last two years. I would like to say that this facility has virtually been matched from the people of my constituency. At present, there is no direct facility to travel upto Mumbai. Hence I request that if the Kurla-Patna Express, which, at present, is running via Jabalpur, is allowed to run via Bina-Katni, we would get the facility to travel upto Mumbai and we will get a direct train for Mumbai. If this proposal is accepted, a major problem will be solved. Every time, we are told that it is only a goods track. Since it is a goods track that is why we should be punished and people do not get the facility to travel, then what is the use of this rail section? If we are bearing this much rail section in our area, then we expect to get same travelling facilities as well. Hence we request you to pay attention to such minor points and make provisions for the same. Similarly a demand is being made from our area to lay a new rail track from Damoh to Panna and Chhatarpur. A survey had been conducted in this regard in 1955-96. If the Government lays this rail line, the entire area of Bundelkhand will be connected with the transport facilities and area would

also be developed. With these words, I thank you once again for the Jabalpur zone and hope that the Government would set up a zonal office at Bilaspur and start the Lalitpur-Samroli railway line.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I do not mind sitting late to speak on the Demands for Supplementary Grants on Railways because we are also used to wait like this in the railway platform to board trains. I support the Demand for Supplementary Grants amounting to about Rs. 170 crore for the expenditure of Railway during the current financial year. This is the first expenditure of Railways during the current financial year. This is the first Demand for Supplementary Grants of the present Minister. In a Railway Budget of our size, Demand for Supplementary Grants of about Rs. 170 crore is just natural.

The Minister has done some good work. One such major good work is setting up of six new zones. It was a long-pending demand.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Hon'ble Member, please do not get offended. Earlier there was a constituency for Muzaffarpur but now it has been changed. That is why he has opposed Hajipur.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : This might be because George Sahib himself was the Railway Minister.

[Translation]

The Members from Bihar may decide why it has happened? But the fact is that all these proposed six zones are necessary, because development and expansion is taking place. There was a long standing demand to set up these six zones. Now these six zones have been set up for which I would like to congratulate Hon'ble Minister.

[English]

One such zone has been set up in Orissa also. What is the problem of Railways? I will not speak much on this general aspect. I will straightaway move on to some genuine demands, pressing demands of our State and my area. The only serious matter which is disturbing collectively all our planners, thinkers and everyone of us is the slow pace of growth. No doubt, railway is moving forward, but the growth does not commensurate with the demand. The demand is moving faster than the growth. So how is to go about that?

I can give some instance also about the freight movement. Since 1951 by now, the freight movement has grown manifold, by even more than 600 per cent

but wagons and other things have grown only to 250 per cent. That is the growth. A huge gap is there. So, we require a huge amount of money to meet the requirement of track renewal, new lines, electrification, wagon replacements and all such things. Otherwise, why do these fatal accidents take place? On the contrary, what happens is this.

Here, even when the need is more, the budgetary support has been reduced. At one point of time, it was as high as 75 per cent but now, it is as low as 15 per cent. Therefore, it has got to be raised. The finance has got to be arranged from different financial institutions, the Railways internal resource generation has got to be improved and the operational expenditure has got to be reduced.

It is also seen that some corporation which is there in the Railways, is not functioning satisfactorily. The loan which we want to get, is not there. So, collectively, we have to see to it.

Sir, today during the Question Hour there was very much *halla gulla* and I also was very much dissatisfied because I could not get the chance to put my question which was relating to regional imbalance in and fixation of Plan outlay. The backward States are not able to generate internal resources and thereby they also lose the Central assistance.

The Railways is a part of our main infrastructure. The Railways is the catalyst for development. And, that way, there should not be any imbalance so far as the development relating to Railways is concerned in the country.

That way, I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways because he has laid emphasis in his Budget Speech for the railway network to be expanded in backward areas, in North-East, in Andaman and Nicobar, in hilly areas and like that. We wish him success in his endeavour. I put it very straightaway that this is all good thinking by him. But the point is, how to do it, how to achieve the goal? We are fast approaching the 21st century and if we do not achieve our goal, we will be left behind.

Nowadays, we see that the freight movement is being diverted to road transport from rail transport. The passengers are also preferring bus transport. So, the task before us is gigantic and a huge amount of money is necessary to accomplish complete it.

Sir, I would like to quote from one article. It says :

"The setback to the Railways would not have come at a worse moment, straining as it is, to somehow keep services running. The operational efficiency can be gauged from the fact that even the prestigious Rajdhani trains are running late.

So, there is a lot of scope for improvement. Even the fares go up and services go down. Services provided by the Railways are not commensurate with the fares. The computerisation scheme is in the doldrums.

Although, some new zones have been created but I do not find anything in the Supplementary Demands about providing necessary facilities, about the money required for the proper functioning of new zones.

One officer on duty has been posted by you everywhere. At least about Bhubaneswar, I know, he is there.

They have set up new zonal offices with one officer!

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : No, no. Now he is a full-fledged General Manager, not an OSD.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : He is a full-fledged General Manager without proper staff etc.!

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We are trying to get in touch with the State Government and the Chief Minister. There is a very big building. As soon as the proposal for it is finalised this ready built building will be purchased and an office will be shifted there.

[English]

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : We will offer Kerala if he is going to set up one there!

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : I am coming to the Demands for Grants because the importance of Railways cannot be overemphasized. We all know how it is the largest public sector undertaking, the largest commercial enterprise and the largest caterer. It plays a pivotal role in strengthening national integrity. It is the main media for transportation of passengers and goods. The only thing is, sufficient funds will have to be arranged for carrying on different railway activities. Otherwise Railways will be derailed. Railways as a whole is being derailed. It will go off the track unless we rise to the occasion.

It is rather a paradox. I have also discussed it with you. Now there is one zone for Orissa and some parts of Andhra Pradesh. But a major portion of Orissa - look at our plight, Mr. Chairman! - which is very close to Sambalpur Division, is coming under Chakradharpur Railway Division. However hard we protest against it, nobody listens to us. I do not understand why this is happening. Now even people from Orissa and those nearer to Sambalpur will have to come to Garden Reach and not to Bhubaneswar to get their work done in zonal offices. Kindly, on priority, see that the whole of Orissa comes under the new zone. For that purpose the portion along Bombay-Howrah main railway line starting from Bungomunda, Rourkela up to Brajrajnagar, Belpahar, that portion should be brought under the jurisdiction of Sambalpur Railway Division.

Sambalpur-Talcher railway line is the heartline of Orissa. This railway line is rescheduled and now they say that in 1997 it will be completed. Its foundation stone was laid in 1984 by Rajivji. Then it was boldly stated that within a period of five years it would be completed. All right, as per our standards, let us take ten years. In 1995 December also it was confirmed on the floor of the Parliament that it will be completed. But now it has been deferred to 1997. With the present rate of funding even during this country it will not be completed. As I understand, the Engineers there require Rs. 50 crore more this year so that they can stick to the schedule of completion of 1997. Another Rs. 50 crore during this financial year is the need for Sambalpur-Talcher railway line.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Allocation for this year is for Rs. 40 crore.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : The Government is giving Rs. 40 crore for which I am thankful.

[English]

The demand of your engineers is for another Rs. 50 crore so as to enable them to stick to the targetted schedule.

[Translation]

As you have fixed the target to complete it by 1997, hence the additional allocation for Rs. 40-50 may be sanctioned for this year.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I have telling already told you about this year's allocation.

[English]

I am giving you Rs. 40 crore out of this Rs. 170 crore.

[Translation]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : As per the demand, the details have not been given herein. In the details, the allocation is stated to have been made for new line. The project-wise details have not been given.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think now you can conclude.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Please give me five more minutes, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your major demand is met.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Not just that; we will give more than that.

This line is very important. I agree with you on that. I have fixed the minimum target as Rs. 40 crore; it might even go up to i.e. 50 crore... (Interruptions)

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Sir, on the Jakhpura-Banspani line, there is an Exim Bank proposal ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Such charges are made against us that we merely lay foundation stones and hold inaugural functions to start the survey work. We do not do that. We also complete the work that has been inaugurated.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think, you can conclude in view of this generous offer.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : You should be very grateful to the hon. Minister of Railways.

[Translation]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : I have already stated that talks are being held with the Exim Bank and the Chief Minister of Orissa himself has held talks about it. We require the support of Hon'ble Minister for the Jagpura Banspani mining belt. The Railway authorities should pursue it. We do not have funds. A loan is expected to be received on liberal rates. Please make arrangements for the same. It should be finalised. Priority should be given to the Exim Bank. It is for the progress of the entire nation.

[English]

Then, we have the Angul-Duburi line. The internal revenue receipt of this line is 23.5 percent which is the highest in India.

[Translation]

By completing it, all the money invested in these two years will be recovered.

[English]

There is also the Talcher Bimlagarh line, which passes through forest area, tribal area, mining area, a survey for which was conducted long ago in 1970. This needs to be implemented.

All the projects which have been referred to by hon. Members, Shri Anadi Charan Sahu and Shri Bhakta Charan Das have been moving at snail's pace and they should be accelerated.

Regarding the Rajdhani Express, there was a demand that the frequency of the Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express should be raised to from three days a week from everyday. The Utkal Express should have two new stoppages at Garposh and Bagadihi.

Sir, I am closing my speech by making a request to the hon. Minister. No money is required to agree to this

request. I do not know how the people in the Railway Board have changed unilaterally and arbitrarily the timings of the Sambalpur-Nizamuddin Hirukud Express. The old timings should be restored. In a normally peaceful place like Sambalpur, there have been agitations like 'rail roko' because of this.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am ready to change the time but you should not ask for the train to run on four days instead of three.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Mr. Minister, Sir, when you raised the frequency, there was no condition attached on the timing.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am aware that the timings are not correct. I fully agree with this point. I am ready to restore old timings. If you wish, I can make an announcement even tomorrow in this regard. Under the new timing, the train is run for four or five days instead of three days. If you are agreeable to have the earlier three day schedule, I can have it implemented tomorrow itself.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon'ble Minister, please give you reply afterwards otherwise they get provoked.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Four days and the old timings will be O.K. You have done good work for Patna. It is true that Bihar was a neglected state even when we have had several ministers from Bihar. You gave two Rajdhani Expresses for that state. But allow us to have four days instead of three days and the old timings. Please do not be unjust to us.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We 'll think about it.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : You may please left out those trains which are originating from Madhya Pradesh. Please make arrangements to have them run via Ranchi and via Bihar for the rest of the three days. From there, they could be run upto Ranchi, Gaya etc. Just as a bogie was available four travelling from Jhabura to Allahabad, a bogie should be made available for Allahabad.

[English]

Sir, I am closing with this topic on the construction of an overbridge at Belpahar. This, again, is on the main line. It is an industrial belt. The presence of Tatas and Birlas is very much there. There are the Oriental Paper Mills, Tata's refractories, collieries, coal mines and so on.

The construction of two overbridges is very very essential. I would request the Department to construct an overbridge at Gaharchuda Jharasugudah town in Chokipada. Sir, everybody knows that Jharasugudah is an old and important railway junction. A lot of space is there. It is the correct place for building up the divisional

headquarters. But for some reasons it could not be done. The people of that area feel neglected.

I would request the Ministry of Railways to think in terms of building a factory or some loco-shed or workshop at Gaharchuda. It should come up in a bigger way...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, it is the right time to take steps for taking India into the 21st Century. For placing India prominently on the world map, we have to do so many things. In this connection, infrastructure development centering around Railways has a very top place. For that we have to do so many things, like financial reforms which was one of the aspects I have analysed. The Government, the Planning Commission and Parliament, all together should rise to the occasion to see that there is balanced development of all the Departments, including the Railways. Otherwise, there would be discontentment and it is fast growing up already. In a country of India's continental size, there are a number of problems and national integration is at the top of it. I am afraid that it may be weakened and that position may be threatened.

With these words, I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants.

[English]

SHRI BAJU RAM RIYAN (Tripura East) : Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants. I thank the Minister of Railways and the Prime Minister on behalf of the people of Tripura. In the last Budget, it was decided to extend the railway line from Kumarghat to Agarthala. The distance from Kumarghat to Agarthala is 119 kilometres. The distance between Kumarghat and Kalkolghat is 63 kilometres. It took about fifty years to undertake the work of 63 kilometres.

I request the Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of Railways to fulfil the assurance given by this Government regarding the completion of work of 119 kilometres up to Agarthala.

In a meeting held on 23 October 1996, the Prime Minister and the hon. Minister of Railways have assured the people of Tripura that this project would be completed within next five years. We hope that this project would be completed within the next five years. In the current year's Budget, only Re. 1 crore has been provided. We would like the Government to see that the work is started and completed soon. But until now, there is no sign of the Government starting this work. I request the Minister of Railways to start this work immediately.

There was a decision to set up one computerised reservation centre in Agartala. That centre should be opened as early as possible...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : The Agartala proposal is ready. We'll visit there with you some day.

[English]

That is done already — a week earlier. We will go on any day.

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : We may fix up our programme and we shall see that facility.

Railways is one of the important infrastructures for developmental works. The people of the North-Eastern States such as Mizoram, Meghalaya, Manipur, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh should get the railway extension facility. I would request the hon. Minister to take such a courageous and progressive decision to connect the capital towns of those States. If it is not possible to do it during the current year, at least this Government should do it next year.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Which line are you talking about?

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : I am talking about the line to connect all the capital towns of the North-Eastern States.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : But the North-Eastern Governments do not want to connect the capital towns. Does the Meghalaya Government want it?

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : They may not want. But we want.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We can go up to Dimapur. But after Dimapur, what can we do? I am ready to connect; whatever money is to be spent, we would spent. But the State Governments are not ready.

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : If you connect it, the people would be happy.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I will also be happy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister says that you should also persuade the State Governments.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We also want all the capital towns to be connected.

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : I would request the hon. Minister to introduce one Express Train from Kumarghat to Lumding. There is a metre gauge train running now. Passenger trains are running between Kumarghat and Badarpur and between Kumarghat and Lumding. But it is not enough. It takes too much time. So, people of these States used to take a bus journey. Since this is very much necessary I request you to do this.

Some wagons are necessary to transport the essential commodities to Tripura, Mizoram and other States. There is also a decision to extend this BG line up to Badarpur. This work should also be completed as early possible. From Badarpur, all the three States can transport the essential commodities. During rainy season due to some unavoidable reasons like landslide, etc., the road from Lumding to Badarpur is getting closed. So, it is necessary that all the stations of the North-East should be improved.

Earlier there was a practice to invite the zonal MPs for a meeting where they used to raise the problems of their zones. Earlier, even in the Eastern zone also, they used to hold such meetings. I request the hon. Minister to restore such meetings so that we can raise our problems and get them resolved.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member is requesting for the restoration of meetings of the Zonal MPs.

SHRI BAJU BAN RIYAN : Such meetings were there earlier.

With these words, I conclude...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : Sir, my name is also there in the list.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : We will come to you also.

(Interruptions)

SHRI E. AHAMED : Mr. Chairman Sir, at the outset, I pay compliments to the hon. Minister for the hard work he has undertaken to make the Railways function efficiently and effectively. The style of functioning of the present Railway Minister is a matter of appreciation for the hon. Members of Parliament as he finds much time to hear the grievances and requests of the Members of Parliament. I hope the Minister will try to continue this style of functioning without any interruption.

I would also like to mention to the hon. Minister that he being the Minister of Railways, his writ should prevail in the Railway Ministry and no outside agency or the source, whoever or whichever might be, shall be there to guide the Railways. I do not want to say further. The Railway Minister's writ should prevail in the Ministry and if I will just go to a little narrow sense, at least, in the Southern Railway, I wish the writ of the Minister prevails. I do not want to elaborate.

I would like to ask one thing to the hon. Railway Minister. He is the Minister of the United Front Government and I am representing a supporting party. They have given to the people of this region a Common Minimum Programme. I would like to ask the Minister whether he is really serious about the Common Minimum Programme so far as the Railways are concerned. You were also the champion of social justice of the people of this country. I would like the hon. Minister to please make a soul-searching of his soul.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kindly give specific suggestions. Otherwise, you may not get time.

SHRI E. AHAMED : He may see whether this has been implemented in his Ministry or not. As far as my information is concerned, there are 30 posts of General Manager and above in the Railways which post is

equivalent to a Special Secretary to the Government of India. Could you please say whether any member of the SCs or STs or minorities is there amongst those 30 posts? Even for the last seven years, the Minister or the Ministry could not implement the very same programme they have mentioned in the Common Minimum Programme with respect to social justice. I would like to present this before you with humble humility.

I am coming to my State of Kerala. You know that Kerala has been neglected in the matter of railways for the last so many years. The Minister was pleased to convene a meeting of the Members of Parliament. We made several suggestions but those suggestions were not implemented so far. There was a proposal for a new train but that has not been implemented saying that it is to be linked with Konkan railway does not come, we will not get it. Is it so? This is not correct. I would like to put one question. Why not a Shatabdi Express be introduced in Kerala from Cannanore to Trivandrum? Why not a Shatabdi Express be introduced? Let the people of South have the benefit of a Shatabdi. What kind of compartments and bogies are given to Kerala? All are dilapidated and overused ones. Such bogies are sent there. Mr. Chairman Sir, you know the present position there. You know that the train from Kerala is always running late. The Railways had introduced superfast trains but so far as trains from Kerala are concerned, they are converted into superslow trains! Train No. 2617 running from Mangalore to Nizamuddin is to depart from there at 11 o'clock. For the last so many weeks I thought this is because of the position in Andhra Pradesh but it is not like that. The train is now leaving after four or five hours and it is reaching at midnight. That should have reached here at four o'clock and the passengers are going helter-skelter. Then, I am told on enquiry - this is subject to correction - that this special rake has been utilised for some other political purpose which is quite natural.

But the AC coach and other coaches have not been sent back again. Now the AC coach is being used between Delhi and Indore with the result that there is no AC coach. There is no full complement. If they are to send the full complement, they will always have to wait for another train with the result that those passengers already spending 56 hours there will spend another eight or nine hours in the train! Therefore, it is a matter to be attended to.

The other request I have is about doubling of our railway lines. The Minister was very much pleased to sanction more money. We are thankful to him. But this money is not sufficient. Unless there is doubling of the line between Mangalore and Shoranur, there is no use of the Konkan Railway. The Konkan Railway, whatever may be the reasons, has been delayed.

There was a survey of the Feroke-Nilambur new railway line. Of course, I wanted to avoid all the built-up area. Otherwise, the Railways have to pay a lot of money. In Feroke, there are a lot of buildings that have to be demolished. But there is a route avoiding the built-up area. The proposal to connect the Feroke-Nilambur line is in cold storage. I do not know the reasons.

The Railway Minister's predecessor had visited the Feroke railway station. But re-building and maintenance of that railway station have not been taken up. I have seen that many of the railway stations in the coastal area from Kasargod up to Ernakulam have no facilities. There is nothing.

Another railway line, Guruvayur-Tanur, has not been taken up. It will be very much to a number of constituencies in Kerala, if it is taken up.

In my constituency, the Nilambur-Shornur railway line has not been strengthened. Therefore, the trains cannot move faster. These are all small matters.

I do not know what happened to 'Push-Pull'. There is no pushing nor pulling. A commitment has also been made in the Budget. Therefore, I would like to bring these things to the notice of the Minister.

I do not want to waste the valuable time of the House. But I do not know why the benefit of having the best compartments and bogies has been given to the people of Malabar area. The Malabar area has the oldest line of the Southern Railway. When it was South Indian Railway, it was more than a century old. The Railways have completed only one century. But even before that, that area had come into existence. That area has already neglected. The Railway Board should see that their writ should prevail in all these things with the Minister.

With these few words, I again support the Supplementary Demands for Grants and wish the Minister all success in handling the voluminous and unwieldy Ministry of Railways.

[Translation]

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA (Ujjain) : Mr. Chairman, we are discussing the Supplementary budget of Railways which is indeed a very important discussion. Having such a discussion itself indicates that Railway is a very important and essential means of transportation. So far as the style of functioning of the Minister of Railways is concerned, it is quite encouraging and indicative of his good intentions. Over all, a lot of hard work is required to be put in to improve the functioning of Railways to the desired level. Very little time has been allotted for discussing the supplementary budget demands of Railways. All of us have been waiting here to act as a medium to voice the grievances and difficulties of the people in this limited time discussion.

I would like to congratulate the Minister of Railways for having undertaken the gauge conversion of Ajmer-Udaipur-Chittorgarh section. It is a very good start. Upto Ajmer, the conversion work has been undertaken and it should be extended upto Neemach as sanction has already been given upto Ratlam and Neemach in the Ratlam zone. I would like to draw attention towards the fact that this work should not be stopped. Some new projects have been taken up and some have been left out. There should be a continuity so that the cement factory, Alpine plant, oil mills set up in that area are benefitted. My area is very backward. Due attention should be paid to it so that it may be developed. I would like the conversion work to be extended upto Neemach-Ratlam. It has been noticed that no one has had the time or the inclination to pay attention towards it. The Ratlam zone has been the most neglected zone in the Western Railways. Hence gauge-conversion should be undertaken on Ratlam-Neemach section. There was a narrow gauge Rail line between Ujjain and Aagar and I had been an M.L.A. from that area. However after the track was removed, no development work has been undertaken and nobody has cared about it. The authorities should have cared about it. If the Ujjain-Agar track is extended upto and joined with Ghatia, Ghosla, Agar, Susnain, Soyai, Jhalawad and Ramganj Mandi, the distance between Indore-Kota will be lessened and this area would be developed. Hence the 214 Kilometer length should have been included in this project. Earlier a survey was conducted, which was already completed. I wish that some concrete action would be taken.

Now a days the outlook towards the metre gauge line has changed. It seems that this is not the part of the railways and maintenance of trains, engines plying on these track is considered useless. It has become a dumping ground for waste railway equipments and none is these to look into it. After phasing out the steam engines from Ratlam section we were hoping that a new rail service would be introduced but no new rail service has been introduced sofar. Ratlam is the main station of broadgauge lines but there is no railway service between Indore and Ratlam which has created and resentment among the people. The remained steam engines are likely to be piled there but nothing is being done about metergauge. I seek your attention on this point as you listen to the grievances and suggestions of public regarding Railway Ministry. My submission is that a train should be introduced on the metergauge section. I doubt that due to scarcity of resources the total gauge conversion cannot be done in near future so I would like to stress the need for introducing trains on metergauge lines. Ratlam is metergauge section and several big cities are situated on it. Diesel trains can be introduced on it. Steam engines have been phased out as they were not functioning properly. Indore-Ratlam section should be improved.

Ujjain-Fatihabad - Indore section has metergauge line which is not being used. Indore and Ujjain, both are important cities; Indore is an industrial centre and Ujjain is headquarter of the division. There are several academic institutions in this area, some diesel train or push and pull train should be introduced for this stretch of 67 kilometer. Electrification of broadgauge sections has not been done. Signal system is not proper in this section and it lacks public amenities, therefore frequency of train between Indore and Ujjain should be increased. I had been raising the issue regarding train facility for 10-20 thousand people for a long time but it has been said in the reply that new trains cannot be introduced because road transport is sufficient but it will be better if rail service is improved. I request the hon. Minister to consider the proposal of gauge conversion of Indore-Ujjain line.

22.00 hrs.

This work should not be ignored as the distance is 68 and 78 kilometer respectively. It will be beneficial if the boggies, engines plying on metergauge lines are maintained property.

My requests for providing for halt of trains at some stations were rejected on the plea tht it was an express or superfast train. I have given a chart showing distance between halting points of superfast and express trains. How these trains halt at so many stations? For example Dehradun express starts from Godhara and come to Pipaldah via Sant road. Distance between it is just 12 km. Pipaldah to Limkhera is 8 km and Limkhera to Mahodi is 16 Km. This train halts at a distance of 14 km. 8 km, 11 km, 4 km and 6 km. But when I requested for stoppage at Thuriya station, it was rejected on the ground that it was an express train. This train is being called an express train and at the same time being provided haltage at a distance of 4 and 6 km.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Should we converted in into an express train and get all the stoppage removed.

DR. SATYA NARAYAN JATIA : We are not expecting this from you. Please introduce some more trains and provide facilities in existing trains. I would like to say that a stoppage should be provided at Thuriya village which lacks road transportation. Distance between this station is 13 km. I have given a chart showing distance between various stations, please consider it. All the Members of Parliament should be treated equally but some influential Member get the schedule changed and consequently all these halting points also get changed. The Intercity Express 4005/4006 is plying between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Indore. Since long a demand for providing its halting at Mahidpur road is being made. Distance between Nagda and Mahidpur is 17 km. and Mahidpur to Vikramgarh is 23 km. Aalot to Choumeta is 22 km. Distance between Choumeta to Sumathara and

Sumathara to Shyamgarh is 16 and 13 km. respectively. This train can halt at a distance of 13 km and 16 km but a halt cannot be given at a distance of 23 km. There is a great anomaly in it. Therefore halts should be provided for facilitating the public.

In the same way a train has not been provided halt at Tarana road and stops 8-10 km away.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : It has not been done during my tenure only but since long. Your suggestion would have been given priority if this halt was provided now...*(Interruptions)* We can only do that much that express, superfast and passenger trains would run as per the norms.

DR. SATYANARAYAN JATIA : As we are aware of the fact that it is not the time to implement all these suggestions but priority should be given to facilitating public even if it is an express train.

A demand has been raised for providing a halt at Vikramgarh Aalot to 2955/2956 train. A Halt has been provided at Choumela but it is not stopping there. There is the famous place of pilgrimage Nageshwar. People will be benefited if this halt is given here. Some trains have been clubbed in such a way that time of all the trains would be disturbed. Malwa Express plying between Indore and Jammu via Bhopal, Jhansi and Delhi had been a goods train but now its timings have been disturbed. A train plying between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Indore via Kota, Nagda has been given the name Malwa on the plea that racks of intercity train and Hazrat Nizamuddin-Indore would be linked with it. This has delayed other trains also. Racks should be linked with their proper trains so that other trains could run properly. The racks of Indore-Nizamuddin train should be loaded in itself. Its wagons are in very bad condition, flooring of the First Class Coach is in a dilapidated condition. The concept of first class has been withdrawn but its capacity could be raised by providing three-tier A.C. facility and people would be benefited by it. Indore-Nizamuddin Express which is also called intercity express has not been provided any rack. Trains plying in this area are provided with racks in bad condition I would like to draw your attention towards it that these useless racks could be exchanged and we could thank Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and Shri Satpal Maharaj for it. The bedrolls provided in these trains are very dirty and not sufficient in number. Railway authority charges full fare for it. It would have been better if these bedrolls are provided in Indore and Jammu itself. Only 25-30 bedroll are available in a train having 46-47 seats. In absence of bedrolls passengers face great difficulties especially at times when a family boards the train. It would be better if condition of racks is improved. The timings of this train has improved but it reaches Indore at 12 PM and in this way a lot of time is wasted. It would be better if it is changed to 9.15 or 9.30, then people would not be compelled to waste

time in waiting. Mumbai-Delhi is the main rail route and no one pays attention towards it. The Ratlam station falls in between which is also headquarter of D.R.M. It is rated as the best Station for its functioning. But this station also require some facilities. There are three platforms on broadgauge line, other trains have to stop and not get time whenever any train passes through this station on the main route for Mumbai. It would be better if another platform is constructed for other trains. You have sanctioned a platform for Nagda but so far this work has not been started. I request you to take out some time for it to start the work on this project. The pedestrian overbridge is also in a dilapidated condition. Such works should be taken up at zonal or D.R.M. level but those officers are not capable to make any commitment in this regard. We would certainly not come to you for such insignificant matters, if they get the power to dispose such matters of the zonal and D.R.M. level. Problems regarding drinking water and foot overbridge would not be brought to your notice. But the officers are not competent to solve those problems. If you would give the instruction. They would certainly think of some remedy. I would finish my speech in another two minutes. If S.T.D. facilities are provided on the platforms near by station this would provide employment and would benefit the travellers also. At present, the booths are outside the station and passengers cannot use this. If you provide S.T.D. booths on the platforms, it would provide employment as well as facility to the travellers. You have formed two committees - ZRUCC and DRUCC. We are Members of Parliament. People have expectations from Vs. Formerly, there used to be 200-250 people on such committees. And calling a meeting of such committed was avoided. My submission is that you organise them. They have been doing a good work. Their experience could be utilised. With these words I support the supplementary demands for Railways and request the Minister of Railways to implement the suggestions made by me. With this I conclude.

SHRI GULAM RASOOL KAR : Sir Col. Ram Singh had said that you were to speak after the Bharatiya Janata Party member had finished. But my turn did not come.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please take your seat. You cannot question the chair like this. Your name is not in the list supplied by your party.

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL (Buldhana) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I regret to say that this time also the hon. Railway Minister has neglected the new projects of Maharashtra.

At the time of the main Budget discussion, the hon. Minister had promised to consider a railway project, that is, Shegaon Jalna in the Supplementary Budget.

But unfortunately he has forgotten the same. I would like to bring to the kind notice of the hon. Minister that in his introductory speech of the main Budget he had mentioned that there was no industrial or other developments there. It is said that it will not be viable and unless railways and other means of communications are there, industrial and other developments are not possible.

My constituency Buidhana in Maharashtra East is totally an undeveloped area. There is no industrialisation, there is no irrigation because of which there is a big problem of unemployment. The project Shegaon Jalna of 176 kilometres will connect seven districts of Marathwada and nine districts of Vidharba because of which crores of people will get an opportunity to travel and it will be a great means of transportation by which industrialisation will be possible. So also to visit. Lonar Lake, which is a world famous miracle, Buldana.

Secondly, Shindkhed Raja, the birth place of that great lady, Jija Bal Mata, mother of the great Raja, Chatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. Thirdly, the holy place of Gajanand Maharaj Samadhi, are in my constituency. Taking into consideration the importance of the above mentioned places, I hope that the hon. Minister will consider this project in the Supplementary Budget.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Which project are you referring to?

SHRI ANANDRAO VITHOBA ADSUL (Buidhana) : It is Shegaon Jalna. Primarily, it was called Khamgaon Jalna. But Khamgaon is an odd place. Shegaon Jalna is 20 kilometres away from Khamgaon and it is on the railway line. That is why it is called Shegaon Jalna.

Fourthly, I had requested the hon. Minister that Geetanjali Express should halt at Shegaon instead of Akola because Shegaon is the holy place where lakhs of people visit Gajanand Maharaj Samadhi. But unfortunately, no action has been taken. I request that it should be considered.

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA (Tezpur) : It is always a pleasure to speaking in the debate on the Railway Minister. It is presided over by a very responsive and a popular Minister. Especially so far as the North-Eastern Region is concerned, his popularity is soaring higher and higher. It is not an exaggeration to say that in terms of popularity, he is not less than Amitabh Bachchan at the peak of his career! Having said that, I again would like to compliment the Minister for what he has done during his visit to Assam accompanying the Prime Minister in October last. They have announced a package not only covering the Railways but various aspects of the economy of the State of Assam and the other States of North-Eastern Region.

A certain booklet is being distributed here also containing "the new initiatives for the North-Eastern

Region." Now, this is the package announced by the hon. Prime Minister during his visit to the North-Eastern Region in October last. In booklet one item is: "Additional funds of Rs. 55 crore would be provided in 1996-97 to complete rail-cum-road bridge at Jogighopa. Rs. 120 crore for 1997-98 to fully complete the project." I presume that this amount is not included in the original Budget. Therefore, I do not know how this is going to be taken care of. If it is already included in the Railway Budget, it amounts to hoodwinking the people of the State by announcing such a package, because there is no additionality in what has been announced. If it has been otherwise taken care of, then, I would request the hon. Minister to clarify the position.

Then, the second point incorporated in this booklet is a proposal for road-cum-rail bridge at Bogibheel. I quote Rs. 1000 crore will be sanctioned this year and the work to be commenced next year and completed within the 9th Five Year Plan. Originally, an amount of Rs. 2 crore was sanctioned in the Budget for survey, investigation and preliminary works. But what about the rest of the amount? How will it be taken care of? It is not made clear here. I am mentioning all this because there is a tremendous amount of admiration and respect for the Railway Minister. So, people in the North-Eastern region should not misunderstand him. They should not be in a position to say that all these things have been announced as a part of the economic package but nothing much has been done. There is no seriousness in implementing the promises and commitments made by the Prime Minister.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : According to this booklet, already we have given Rs. 50 crore for N.E. railway and out of that Rs. 50 crore, I think, Rs. 20 crore had already been given to the project which you are mentioning. So, we have already given.

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : What has been circulated to us, in that, the project does not find a mention. I am grateful to you for informing me.

In this booklet, there is another paragraph which says that all Central Ministries/Departments will earmark at least 10 per cent of their Budget for specific programmes in the North-Eastern States. They will also ensure that the programmes will be speedily implemented. In other Ministries we have not seen any sign of this additional 10 per cent being provided for the North-Eastern States during the current year. But we are hoping that this would be reflected in what Railways would like to do for the State. I think it might have been done in some form or other which might not have been reflected in the papers circulated by the Ministry.

Sir, I would like to mention about Harmutty-Itanagar line. It is a welcome step. This would connect the Capital of Arunachal Pradesh with the railway system. This is

a very welcome development. Only a lakh of rupees have been provided. But since it is a line for which Rs. 156 crore has been sanctioned, I hope work on this line will be taken up expeditiously. But simultaneously, the same Budget made a reference to Balipara-Bhalukpung line also. It is a small line. Perhaps, in due course, steps would be taken to effect improvements in this line also. It is because right now, it is not all that satisfactory.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Which line did you mention?

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : Sir, I am referring to Balipara-Bhalukpung line. It is a small line.

A new Railway Division is going to be opened at Rangia. The foundation stone of that Division was laid during the tenure of the last Government but we have not seen much happening there.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Are you referring to BJP Government?

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : That was a non-Government. I would not call that a Government. In the matter of this new Division we do not see much progress. So, I would like the hon. Minister to clarify whether, at least, the territorial jurisdiction of Rangia Division has been finalised. If it has not been done, then we would like to know why it has not been done. I would like to know whether there is any reservation in the Railway Ministry regarding opening of this new Division. Right now, not even an OSD has been appointed. To look after the work relating to the construction of buildings etc. of the new Division and recruitment of additional staff.

I made a reference to Bogibheel bridge for which Rs. 2 crore has been sanctioned in the Budget. I would urge upon the Ministry to expedite the work on the bridge. It would be a very welcome idea if the hon. Minister fixes and announces would be early date for, at least, laying the foundation stone for the bridge. It is such a big occasion for the entire North-East that we would be very happy if the Prime Minister himself comes and lay the foundation stone. In his reply to this debate, I hope the hon. Minister of Railways would announce a date to allay the apprehensions and suspicions in the minds of the people that although a thousand crores of rupees have been announced, finally this bridge may take a very long time as the Jogighopa Bridge has taken. The people of the North-East would be very happy indeed if a date could be fixed and announced for laying the foundation stone for the Bogibheel Bridge.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Third week of January, for Bogibheel and Lumding Silcher both.

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : Thank you very much. Our Chief Whip would be very happy for this Lumding Silcher line.

We are happy to note that in the last Budget, the hon. Minister had announced the sanction of a project for conversion of the Rangia Murkong Chelak line. It is a very important line. We have got this rail line in the north bank of Assam, thanks, not perhaps to our Government but to the Chinese Government because China had chosen to invade our country and probably the intention mainly was to give us the rail line and not to acquire any territory of our country. They have retreated and vacated the territory which they had occupied. But at least the Government awoke at long last and gave us this line. Now conversion of this line is very important, not only for the economy of the north bank of Assam but also for guarding our frontiers with China. Unless we provide for faster movement of troops and the armaments, etc. we might have a repeat of the history of what happened in the 1962 War. Therefore, I am glad, that this project has been taken up. But I hope enough funds would be provided in the Ninth Plan to ensure that the project is completed in time.

Sir, I come from Tezpur constituency, one of my Assembly segments is Rangapara North. This town is physically divided by the rail line. There is no overbridge, and people in Rangapara say that if I could get this overbridge constructed, they would see that I got elected again and again in all the future elections. So I have a vested interest in requesting the hon. Minister to take special note of this overbridge which is near the *Thana* in Rangapara North Junction.

On the one side of this rail line are the people residing there and on the other side are hospitals, schools, courts, *thana* and all kinds of facilities. The gates of the crossing remain closed most of time and people are put to enormous inconvenience due to the absence of an overbridge there. I would be very grateful and the people would be really saved of a lot of time and trouble if the overbridge is constructed expeditiously.

Another point that I want to mention is that there is a concessional freight for foodgrain movement especially to the North-East. I think, six per cent freight concession is given. There are reports in the Press in the North-East that this concession is being withdrawn. I hope these reports are not correct. Therefore, some clarification from the hon. Minister would be welcome that this concession is not being withdrawn.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : That will not be withdrawn.

SHRI ISWAR PRASANNA HAZARIKA : Thank you for that, Sir.

The Ministry of Railways have a number of undertakings under their administrative control. RITES is one of them.

Of course, the RITES is an autonomous organisation and, therefore, formally and openly we cannot ask the Ministry of Railways to intervene and interfere. But this company has undertaken a lot of contracts for construction specially of Navodaya schools in Assam. This company is actually an engineering consultancy organisation and they have undertaken contracts and jobs mostly abroad. I do not know why they have taken interest in constructing those schools in the remote North-East but they have taken the contracts. They have taken the mobilisation advances and yet. They have been sitting over it for a year. They are not even issuing the tenders for congenial sub contract on the pretext that the law and order situation in the North-East is not very good and, therefore, they would not like to commence work. So, I request the Minister to use his good offices to prevail upon the RITES to see that these contracts are not delayed and that they undertake, commence work and complete the construction of these schools as early as possible.

Sir, I have, perhaps, exhausted my time but in the Congress Party's list of speakers, there is another speaker, my colleague from Dhubri. He had to leave early because he was not feeling well. So, I would seek your indulgence for a couple of minutes extra to highlight one small point that he wanted to make and that is about the broad-gauge line from Fakiragram to Dhubri, which is a very backward region and it is only about 60 to 70 kms...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR (Bareilly) : Please disclose his name.

[English]

SHRI ISWAR PARSANNA HAZARIKA : He is Shri Nurul Islam, MP from Dhubri. His name is on the Congress Party's list of speakers.

Well, he claims - and I am also aware of that - that the hon. Minister and even the Prime Minister committed to him that this project of conversion of this line of broad-gauge would be provided for in the Supplementary Demands to be placed before Parliament in November-December. But he was quite disappointed to find that it is not a part of these demands. So, if it appears under N.F. Railway in some form, the Minister may like to clarify, perhaps, later in his reply.

Finally, about the Advisory Committees, mention has already been made by one of my predecessor speakers. I hope that these Committees will be formed as early as possible and there would be a more frequent interaction between the Ministry and the officials on the one side and the representatives like the Members of Parliament and the MLAs on the other side so that even if their demands cannot be fulfilled in totality, at least

there will be a feeling that they have been given due opportunity of being heard.

Finally, Sir, before I end my speech, I would again like to compliment the Minister. I cannot help saying that he is doing very well in the Ministry of Railways and he is very responsive and effective in his performance. If at all we form the Government next time, which, I hope, will be very soon, I hope, he comes over to us as the Minister of Railways, of course with one-third of the Members of Lok Sabha from his party!

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : Respected Chairman, Sir, first of all I would compliment the hon. Minister of Railways for having the patience to hear all of us and also to have a favourable response to the issues which are highlighted before this august House.

Now, the hon. Minister has moved for an additional Demands for Grants for Railways for an amount of Rs. 170 crore. The reasons for this additional Demands for Grants are two, which are stated in the Memorandum of Reasons.

One is the unexpected increase in the expenditure which is anticipated. It is for the on-going projects. The other one is those new works which have to be taken up or which are proposed to be taken up this year. So the total number of works which are stated are 20. What I would like to highlight is that out of the 20 projects which are mentioned in the Demands for Supplementary Grants, none of these works belongs to Kerala.

Sir, most of my colleagues have already stated regarding the pitiable position of the railway sector in Kerala. When the Budget was presented in the month of July also, strong protests had come from the Members of Parliament, from this House. Also a conference had been convened and the issues were discussed. Regarding new trains, in the Budget also, no new trains were allotted to Kerala. There was no change in the frequency of trains. There was no new line. There was no gauge conversion. What was allotted was related to doubling of lines. For doubling, from Quilon to Thiruvananthapuram, the amount allocated was only Rs. 21.47 crore and for the line from Mangalore to Shoranur, an amount of Rs. 37 crore was allotted. This is the picture of the allocation to Kerala in the entire Budget of the Indian Railways. After this conference, so many of these grievances were put forward before the Minister and also before the Railway officials who were present. So many assurances were also given. The point about new trains has also been elucidated.

According to my knowledge, there was a commitment for two trains. One train from Thiruvananthapuram to Delhi will be allocated immediately and another train from Thiruvananthapuram to Mumbai will be allocated when the Konkan Project is completed. So that assurance is still in the proposal stage. It has not been fulfilled.

There has been a mention about doubling also. I do also agree with the views of the hon. Minister. It is to be seen that the amount allocated is meagre. The point of argument made by the hon. Railway Minister is that you spend the money, the rest we will pay or the rest we will give. So what is the difficulty in completing the work? I do agree that there is a land acquisition problem. That is agreed. But the Railways should take the initiative to complete this work, to convene the representative of the people or to contact with the people. It should take the initiative to complete the work at the earliest. I hope that the Railways are not very much sincere or committed to complete the doubling of this work. These two works are the dreams of the Keralites. Especially, capacity augmentation is the main problem which we are facing now.

Regarding gauge conversion also, an assurance has been given. That is for only one railway line. It is a metre gauge. It is from Quilon to Virudhnagar, that is in the Quilon-Senkottai route. That has been assured that this will be taken up in this year itself. All these reports will be completed and it will be taken this year itself. But nothing is done regarding this. It is the only railway from Quilon to Virudhnagar and also it ends in Virudhnagar. To go to Senkottai, it is very difficult. From there, it is a broad-gauge line. So the metre-gauge conversion has not been fulfilled. The assurance is not fulfilled. I hope that a reasonable favourable response will come the hon. Minister.

Sir, regarding the new line also, it has been stated that the survey report is over regarding the Sabari hill railway line. It is to be approved by the Planning Commission. It is waiting for the approval. It is stated that it will be approved within the month of September and it will be started. So I urge upon the Government the hon. Minister to include this in the 20 projects. This has also to be included.

Regarding the total share of Rs. 170 crore, the share of Kerala has already been stated. For Orissa, it has been Rs. 20 or Rs. 40 crore. Each and every State has been distributed but no allocation has been made to Kerala. So I request that appropriate and adequate representation should be given to us also.

I, once again, strongly demand the conversion of the metre-gauge line from Quilon to Senkottai to broad gauge. Another thing is, there is a huge traffic in between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasaragod, i.e. from South to North. In order to avoid this huge traffic, new trains or new shuttle trains or inter-city expresses or push and pull trains have to be introduced. By way of introducing these short term trains, we can avoid the huge traffic.

I have also got a suggestion about Diesel Multiple Units. The doubling work has already been completed between Quilon and Kayankulam. According to my

knowledge, there is no DMU in the Southern Railway Zone. It is plying only in other parts of the country and nothing has been given to the Southern Railway. So, it is necessary to provide these DMU in between the short distances so that we can avoid traffic congestion.

I would like to say something about my constituency. There is an old loco-shed which is located at the Quilon Railway Station. My humble suggestion to the hon. Minister is to convert it into a depot for wagon repair and maintenance. So, adequate representations have to be given to new works, that is, the conversion of metre-gauge in Quilon has to be taken up.

As far as the hilly railway line is concerned, it has to be taken up and some new trains have also to be introduced at the earliest.

It is anticipated that the Konkan project will be completed during the next year. So, without waiting for this project, a new train has to be introduced between New Delhi and Thiruvananthapuram.

It has already been mentioned that the passengers have to face a lot of difficulties and they have to wait nearly for two to three months for getting the reservations. The traffic congestion is very huge there. So, all these issues have to be sympathetically considered. The assurances made by the hon. Minister in the M.P. conference as well as on the floor of the House have to be fulfilled.

With these words, I support the Demands for Supplementary Grants.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways). The Minister of Railways has given attention to the backward and neglected regions. And some work has also been done. For instance, the demand for the conversion of Lohardaga-Tori line, from Ranchi, into Broad gauge, was considered by the Railways. This was a long pending demand. This region is adivasi dominated and a backward region. The Minister had given an assurance and worked to fulfill it.

Divisional offices have been opened at several places, as in Ranchi. This was inaugurated by the Minister. But even now it is yet to start functioning. The reason given for this was the lack of land. I said availability of land was no problem. Over fifty crores of land is lying vacant in the Railway colony, where the office can be opened. I had a talk with the Minister, I told him that hundreds of rooms in the H.E.C.L.'s Russian Hostel are lying vacant there. The office can be opened there by hiring the rooms there or after purchasing them. Since, they have talked of selling them. Regarding the question of constructing the office, after purchasing the land, there is no shortage of land. And construction would take time.

Ranchi is the second capital of Bihar. It is rich in minerals. If Jharkhand or Vananchal is formed, Ranchi would be the capital. There is no fast train from Ranchi; which would reach Delhi in 12 or 14 hours. There is one train from Hatla from Pathankot. But it takes as much as 36 hours to reach here. At times it reaches at 1 a.m. I had suggested to change its time. However, its scheduled time of arrival is 8 p.m. If it arrives at its scheduled time, people would not be inconvenienced. If it has to arrive late, it should arrive in the morning. Because when it reaches at one in the night, the people have to spend the entire night on the platform, and at times their pockets get picked.

He had agreed to start this by December, 1996. After the Minister took over the Ministry the people there have high hopes that the Minister would start a super fast train between Ranchi Delhi. But this is yet to be done. I would request the hon'ble Minister of Railways to start such a train soon. I would be much beholden to him. There is a demand to extend the Ranchi-Hazaribagh line upto Gaya. Similarly, Chaibasa is a adivasi dominated area. There is a demand to link it to Calcutta and Patna. This has not been done so far. I want it should be connected. There is no A.C. coach in the Purshottam-Neelanchal Express. I demand that a second class A.C. coach and a general coach be attached to this train. The demand for a Ranchi-Bombay train has been voiced repeatedly. Only two-three bogies are available from here, causing inconvenience to the people. The number of bogies should be increase or a new train should be started. There is a place, Bakarpuri. Earlier, it could be approached via Chadil Dam. But now it is submerged. There is no facility for travelling. Passenger train is available for Tatanagar and Barkakhana. The demand for a two minute stoppage of this train has been repeatedly made. For this people had lunched an agitation and stopped the trains. This train is usually 3-4 hours late and hardly on time. The people have made a demand for a two minute stoppage of this train at Bakarpuri. There is no other route to reach this place. But is not available. Hence, the demand is for providing a two minute stoppage of this train there. I demand that Hatia-Pathankot Express should be punctual. A large number of workers have been retrenched at Murre. Electrification is being done there. I demand that these retrenched workers should be reinstated. There is one counter at Ranchi station, which is very crowded. I demand a V.I.P. counter be opened there. It would entail no additional cost. I request the Minister that this should be opened soon. The Bokaro-Madras train is a very long distance train. There is no pantry car in this train. Nor is there water available. The Minister had regretted the lack of these in such a long distance train. I demand that these facilities be provided immediately. A Demand has been voiced for a train between Ranchi-Tatanagar. This

demand had been raised earlier also. The Ludhiana-Sutlej train remains for 16-18 hours at Dhanbad. If this train is extended upto Ranchi, it would take only 4-5 hours in up and down journey and would generate income to the Railways. I demand that the Ludhiana-Sutlej train be extended upto Ranchi. There has been a persistent demand for the stoppage of 8183 UP and 8184 down Tatanagar-Patna Express at Chandil. As before a train should be introduced for Asansol via Kotshila. Its route has been changed. Therefore, it should be routed via Chandel. And a DMD train be introduced on the Chandel-Murrie section. The reserved quota at Chandel junction, for South Bihar Express be increased. And it should at least be 10. Reserved quota in 316 down Chakardharpur-Howrah train be increased to six, from only two, at present. Traveller shed and staff quarters, at Hesalong station are yet to be constructed. And drinking water is also not available. The Minister had assured to start this work soon. Therefore, these facilities should be provided soon. Travellers have to face a lot of inconvenience during the rains and in the summer season. The Minister and all the officials of this department had met in this regard to complete the construction soon. But, I regret to say that this work is yet to begin.

Sir, Khelari and Rai are coalfield areas. At Khelari trains halt for 5-6 hours and in the absence of a foot overbridge the people suffer a lot of inconvenience. It is necessary to construct a foot overbridge at Rai because each year 2-4 persons die in train accidents. Day light dacoity and robbery are taking place in trains at Ranchi, Patna and Howrah. Only one or two days ago an M.P. was looted. The door of the A.C. bogie was broken down and the passengers were beaten up and looted. Such incidents are common between Tatisilway and Ganga Ghat. The administration is absolutely incapable of stopping such incidents. The people, there, live in fear. Steps should be taken to stop this. I wish the Minister was present here to make a reply...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : We will take steps to check it.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : There was talk of introducing a super fast train from Ranchi to Delhi in 1996. Now, 1996 is coming to an end. I would be much beholden to you if this is introduced in 1996. I reiterate my thanks to the Railway Department, the Minister of Railways and Mr. Chairman, and on this note, I conclude

SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ : We will reconsider this issue.

[Translation]

SHRI BRAHAMANAND MANDAL : Mr. Chairman, Sir, while supporting the supplementary budget of Railways, I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble

Minister through you towards three-four points. There is a very big Rail factory in my constituency, Monghyr. When India became independent, twenty two thousand workers were working in the factory and at that time only 13 lakh workers were working in the railways in the entire country.

Twenty two thousand workers were working only in Jamalpur. It is because of the policies of the Government that whereas 19 lakh workers were working in the Railways, the number has now come down to a mere 16 lakh and a half lakh. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to ask the Hon'ble Minister and Railway Board through you, that the Jamalpur factory which was a locomotive factory where repair of steam engines was undertaken and which was the most famous factory in Asia, its strength has been reduced from 22 thousand to ten thousand. Whereas the man-power has increased in this department throughout the country, the number of workers has gone down in Jamalpur from 22000 to 10,000. Some of the Members, and the Chairman of the Railway Board were appointed from the staff of the Jamalpur factory, however it is painful to see the factory is becoming idle. My submission is that Jamalpur factory has to be saved, and a wagon and coach factory should be set up there.

Secondly, at present six diesel locos are being manufactured in the factory. Some blocks are also produced there. A crane having carrying capacity of 140 tonne load began to be assembled there in 1993-94 on the orders of Railway Board. I had raised this question and I was told that the Railway Board is importing 80 cranes from Germany having the capacity of carrying load of 140 tonne whereas these cranes could easily have been manufactured in the Jamalpur factory. The parts imported from abroad could easily be assembled here. You are going to purchase 80 cranes by spending valuable foreign exchange whereas the workers of Jamalpur are manufacturing such cranes. Why don't you spend the same money on Jamalpur and why don't you allow the people of Jamalpur to be credited for this work. Firstly you would float a tender, then they will ask for some time and then those cranes would reach here. In this much time, the Jamalpur factory can manufacture these cranes.

I would like to say one more thing that work load should be increased in the Jamalpur factory. We already have a diesel loco-shed there. Hence I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister that electrification is being taken up from Mugalsaral upto Sita-Rampur and Kayool would also be included which is 40 kilometer away. Electrification should be taken up between Bhagalpur and Kayool section and it should be taken up because a loco-shed is available there. Today if we have a diesel loco-shed, tomorrow we will have an electric one. Then P.O.H.O. work will be taken up there. Hence I would request Hon'ble Minister to take up electrification from

Bhagalpur to Kayool section. On this section, doubling of rail track is required to be taken up from Kajra to Kayool. The Railway board gives very funny reply. There is 17 kilometer distance between Kajra and Kayool which is not profitable for Railways. Whichever trains run upto Bhagalpur are profitable upto Kajara. The trains running upto Patna are profitable and those running from Howrah to Kayool are profitable but this 17 km. distance is not profitable. Hence double line can not be laid here. I fail to understand any logic behind it. Doubling of rail track of this 17 km. section is left out. Kindly get this work done. Hon'ble Minister has said that if the stoppage point of any train has been cancelled, he would get it re-introduced. Vikramshila train had a halt at Dharhara. When a Minister from Bihar took charge, that stoppage was withdrawn. There is a station by the name of Mananpur which has a population of 40,000. The people of the area have been demanding for years that Toofan Express should halt at Mananpur station however this demand has not been fulfilled so far. The Poorva Express should have a stoppage at Jamui station. City counter should be set up in Jamui bazaar. The station is at a distance of 10 kms. Jamui is also the district Headquarter. A large number of people have to travel to and fro. Those travelling by bus are looted. Many crimes are also committed. Hence there should be a city counter in Jamui.

With these words, I would like to thank Hon'ble Minister. Whenever someone praises Hon'ble Minister inside or outside the House it gives me great pleasure. I hope that the bridge would be constructed over Ganga to connect Munghyr and Khagaria. Hon'ble Shri Fernandes has also raised this matter. Shri Pranav Mukherjee had also assured us that our demand will be fulfilled. I wrote to the Vice Chairman of Planning Commission on 13 December in this regard. I had also written to the Chief Minister of Bihar and the Minister of Surface Transport as well. I hope that you would get the work started as per your promise. With these words, I would like to thank you and Hon'ble Minister to support the supplementary demands.

[Translation]

SHRI YELLAIHA NANDI (Siddipet) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, my constituency is Siddipet which includes the District Medak. Medak was the constituency of Shrimati Indra Gandhi. Shri Paswan is present here. Prior to his taking over the charge as a Minister, I had already requested two former Railways Ministers for laying of a rail track in my constituency. 12 kilometer long rail track was laid from Telapur to Pattanchuru. Now approximately 12 years have passed. From Pattanchuru to Sangareddi, Sangareddi to Akanyapet, Akanyapet to Siddipet, 95 kilometer long rail line is to be constructed. Meanwhile I raised this matter many a times with the Advisory

Committee and wrote to the officials of the Ministry of Railways in this regard.

23.00 hrs.

I had told Hon'ble Minister that there are two backward districts in Telangana area viz. Medak and Karimnagar I want that the rail track should be laid between Pattancheru and Sangareddi to cover the 22 kilometer distance between these two areas so that I may be able to tell the people of my constituency that some progress has been achieved in the matter of laying rail track. Mr. Chairman, till date I have been unable to comprehend whether the Railway Board has any plans or not in this regard? The Minister may come and go, the ruling parties may change but the Railway Board should have some planning as to which area is a backward one. It has been noticed that whenever a Minister takes over the charge, a new style of functioning is observed in the Ministerial affairs. The policy of 'might is right' works here. If the work gets done in Ministry by putting pressure, people would wonder whether their M.P. is not strong enough. If an issue remained pending for 13 years and no new rail line has not been laid then does that mean that M.P. does not have the political clout? My submission is that our Hon'ble Minister has in mind the interests of the backward area. Hence there should be some planning for the backward areas in my constituency also. Akanpet and Siddipet are 50 kilometers apart. This is a revenue Headquarter. It has a rice and oil mill and this town has a population of one lakh. Shri Ram Vilas ji is my friend and before he became a Minister, we served as members in 2-3 committees together. So whether the Hon'ble Minister does not feel even the slightest sympathy for us?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : If the matter was only for to Pattancheru and Sangareddi, we would have had no objection at all. Sangareddi is quite closer to Pattancheru. But if we extend the line up to Sadashivpet road and do not take it Pedapalli-Uppal via Karimanagar - which is about 150-200 kilometers apart - it would be of no use constructing that small stretch.

SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : I am giving you the old as well as latest information that is a rail line already exists at Akenpet.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Whether there is any rail line from Pattancheru to Sangareddi.

SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : A survey has been conducted for the area from Sangareddi to Akanpet via Medak.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : A new survey has been conducted, it means that there is no rail line...?

SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : There is no rail line. It looks as if Hon'ble Minister has softened. Hon'ble Minister and the Railway officials should know as to

which are the backward areas in the country where rail line is required to be laid, be it in Kanyakumari or Kashmir. If development can be ushered in by laying the rail tracks, I would request the Hon'ble Minister to get the rail track laid on the 22 km. stretch upto Sangareddi. Although it costs Rs. one crore for one kilometer stretch but at least take up this work in Parts upto District Headquarters at least. Hence I would request you that get the survey work should be conducted at district headquarter. Akanpet and Siddipet.

There is a Allped bridge in South Central Railways, having heavy traffic load. Whenever you will visit Hyderabad, I'll take you to that point for a breakfast. There the traffic remains jommed for an hour. The State Government has already contributed its share of money and a tender was called. When Shri Suresh Kalmadi was the Minister of Railways, foundation stone was laid there. The stone is still there but the work has not been started so far. Shri George Fernandes has also spoken about foundation stone. I don't wish to see only file work in Rail Bhawan. Whenever the stones have been laid, work should be taken up there. There is no problem of finance. A tender was called and finalised. I request you to issue orders for getting the work started there without further delay.

Recently the M.Ps had discussed with you. A.P. Express and Dakshin Express run from Hyderabad to Delhi. These are not sufficient, as the population has increased many times. Hence I want that a Rajdhani Express should be introduced to run from Hyderabad to Delhi.

There is no safety in Railways now-a-days. Robberies have increased. There is no cleanliness as well.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : These are things which you can discuss with the hon. Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : There should be safety as well as cleanliness on the railway lines. The Catering system is in a very bad condition. I request Hon'ble Minister to make a surprise visit and travel in IInd Class. You should go incognito so that no one comes to know that you are travelling. The quality of food served is very poor. People used to travel by planes and by cars but the food served in trains is of very sub standard quality. You may increase the price from Rs. 5/- to Rs 10/- but it should be of good quality. The Catering system is also very low unhygienic. Please pay attention towards it. I have also raised this matter in the Standing Committee on Railways. The drinking water too has been commercialised. Everywhere mineral water is being sold. If a poor man travels alongwith ten family members and has to dole out money for drinking water

also besides food, it becomes very difficult for him. Such a practice should be stopped and free drinking water should be provided by the Railways.

There is one more very serious issue. Guntukal Division is attached with the South-Central Railways. Now it is alleged that this Division will come under the jurisdiction of Bangalore Division. You may be aware that the Members of Parliament have met him many a times in this regard and the rail traffic has also been stopped many a times in this regard. Then there are also regional feelings and language problem. The four areas of Cuddapah, Kurnool, Anantpuram and Tirupathi are the areas of stalwarts like S/Shri Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy, Vijay Bhaskar Reddy, Venkat Reddy and Subramaniam. This is a very serious problem. Please do not worsened this situation. Some agitation has also taken place. Hence I want that the Guntukal division should be retained under the South Central Railways and should not be attached to the Bangalore division. Already a controversy is going on over the Almatti dam and now this would be another bone of contention. No one knows what would happen. Hence I request Hon'ble Minister to let the Guntukal division remain under the South-Central Railways.

[English]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : No decision has been taken about the jurisdiction of any Divisional Railway or Zonal Railway. He will have to take a decision but till date no decision has been taken.

[Translation]

SHRI YELLAIAH NANDI : With this, I conclude my speech. In the end, I would like to say to the Minister of Railways, Shri Paswan that I have been elected to this House four times and have not been able to extend the rail track in my area. Now that you are in charge, at least you should do something for us. Please sanction a mere 20 km. length. I am not asking for much. People would say that at least 20 kilometer stretch was sanctioned during Yellaiah Nandi's period.. At least give us this much. I am grateful to you for having given me the opportunity to speak. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi) : Sir, what happened to the Ranchi-Delhi Superfast which was supposed to be introduced in our area in 1996?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is all conveyed to him.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : The longist, Ranchi-Lohrga has already been sanctioned for your area.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY : You have done a great favour to us.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR (Begusarai) : One party comprises of three members and out of them two members have already spoken...(Interruptions) There should be some norms.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Time is allotted like that do not tell like this, please. You will be accommodated. The Parties are allotted time. I am calling according to that please understand that.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Please allow everybody to speak for ten minutes.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Take your seat, please. What is your problem?

[Translation]

SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH (Balia) (Bihar) : Our names have been forwarded by our party. There are 13 C.P.I. members, Samata Dal had three members. Shri George Fernandes and Shri Mandal have already spoken. Hence I request you to kindly allow us to speak for one minute.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : From your Party also, the first speaker has already participated. From your Party, two names have been given. The first speaker has already participated. You are the second Member to speak. You have to wait. Each Party is allotted time. The CPM has got more time. So, I am calling Shri Syed Masudal Hossain to speak.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is not the way. You should know that. This is not the way of participating in a debate. You should understand that. We want to accommodate everybody. But you should be a little more patience.

[Translation]

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Sir, earlier when Hon'ble Minister and I were in the official Language Committee, he used to talk a lot about the use of Hindi. Now that he has become a Minister this time, I thought that if I write to him in Hindi, my work would be done. But I committed such a big mistake. I was not aware that you are speaking in English and I am writing to you in Hindi, that is why I am not getting any reply. Sir, I would like to submit only two points. There is Syealdah-Lalgola section. The person who is appointed as Chairman holds the post of General Manager of Eastern Railways. He used to travel in a saloon wherever he comes over to visit Murshidabad

Nawab palace. This is one section under which a double line is immediately required to be laid from Ranagarh to Lalgola. We are repeatedly requesting you but you are not paying attention at all. Okay let us leave it because the electrification work would cost too much. But then there is the Narsipur section. Where the rail line is very old. A bridge is required to be constructed over the Ganga. If the Hajimal station of that city is connected with the main track, a direct train could be operated from Syealdah to North Bengal and Bihar and this track can be used for transportation of goods. Only a bridge is required to be constructed.

The second point is that the Bhaya-Bardwan-Bolpur line in Howrah running towards Bihar also runs through North Bengal. Then there is the Bhaya-Katwa Ajimganj line. Hon'ble Minister went to Katwa to lay the foundation stone. Did you come across any. Bihari there? There are many people from Bihar in my constituency, Murshidabad who regularly visit their houses in Bihar. But you have not introduced even a single direct train on this line. There is one Gaya passenger train but it is difficult to say when it would leave the station and when it would reach its destination. There is no guarantee about its timings. Would the Hon'ble Minister pay his attention to it. About the trains running via Howrah on Bolpur-Shantiniketan-Bhaya line, I would like to say as to why have you kept this rail line open for traffic. It is better to close it which would save you a lot of money. If you want to keep it open for traffic, maintain it properly which would help Railways earn same profits. Thousands of people belonging to Bihar and U.P. live in that area and whenever they have to travel to their nature places, they have to go via Calcutta which is 200 Kms. away and only after then they can reach Bolpur. I fail to comprehend this system. The poor people do not have that much spare money. I do not wish to go on and on lest you may get alarmed. It could be possible that it may slip out in of your memory that's why I have raised only two issues and I would request you to pay attention towards them and tell us something about them in your reply.

[English]

SHRI P. SHANMUGAM (Vellore) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me a chance to speak on this Demand for Supplementary Grants. I am thankful to hon. Minister for allotting a new railway line of 85 kilometres length from Karur to Salem. I want to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister to put a new railway connection from Madras to Kanchēpuram and Kanchēpuram to Thiruvannamali. Kanchēpuram and Thiruvannamali are two famous temple cities of India. Kanchēpuram is a tourist centre as also the silk centre. Kanchēpuram should be connected to Arani. I hope our hon. Minister will get the survey done and thereafter send the proposal to the Planning Commission.

Arani is a backward area. Even after fifty years of our Independence, it has not been connected to Polur or Thiruvannamali.

I want to raise one matter. In my maiden speech also, I had raised the matter about the renovation of Katpadi station. The construction of road over-bridge at Katpadi is going to be completed within three months. So, I request that Katpadi Railway Station should be renovated before the road over-bridge is opened. There is no seating facility in the platform for passengers. Water facility is not available for passengers. There is no lavatories for women. There are no sleeping rooms. I want the Railway Minister to take care of all these things. I had written a letter to the Southern Railway Manager Mr. Agnihotri, but I have not got a reply in this matter. I do not know why we do not get any reply to this. People in my constituency keep asking me questions as to what is happening. I request the hon. Minister to look into the matter and provide facilities to the public.

I would draw the attention of our Minister to one aspect of Shatabdi Express. There is a CMC Hospital at Vellore. We find patients coming from North Eastern areas particularly Guwahai, West Bengal and Bihar to this hospital for treatment. They get down at Katpadi Railway Station to go to Vellore. I want that a stoppage be introduced of the Shatabdi Express trains running between Chennai and Coimbatore and Chennai and Bangalore at Katpadi.

I would also like to draw the kind attention of our hon. Railway Minister about the Kanyakumari-Nellai Express train. This train starts from Madras and goes to Kanyakumari. We want that it should also stop at Gudiyatham.

I have already made a mention about the construction of ROB at Pachhakuppam, in my maiden speech delivered in this august House in July this year. Since the railway gate is closed at Pachakuppam for longer time, the traffic on both the sides of the railway crossing is getting blocked for long hours. I am very sorry to say that even after 50 years of our Independence, no over-bridge has been constructed there. Please construct a new ROB at Pachhakuppam at the earliest. And, I hope that our hon. and passionate Railway Minister will definitely look into this matter and a new ROB will be constructed there soon.

With these words, I support the Demands for Supplementary Grants in respect of Railways.

[Translation]

SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to congratulate Hon'ble Minister of Railways for having set up a zonal office in Bihar for the first time in the history of Railways.

Kusheshwar, which was an inaccessible place even for those going on foot, is going to be linked with rail. The place where Ram Vilas Paswan, the messiah of the poor was born, the village Shaharbanni of district Aloli would be linked with Khagaria by laying a rail track and when the trains will actually run there, it would be said that this has been the birthplace of the great son of the nation who contributed a lot for the betterment of nation. Now just one area has remained untouched. In the Bachchwara district at Sahibpur Kamal and Barauni-Gadahara, there is Railway land measuring two thousand acres. Recently our popular Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowda, whilst having a meeting with our delegation, called the Hon'ble Minister of Railways and told him that Railway land is lying vacant at Barauni-Gadahara elements are trying to grab this land and steps should be taken for setting up of a Rail factory on this land. With this, I hope and expect that the Minister of Railways would make an announcement to this effect during his reply.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Kurla express running from Mumbai to Barauni has been withdrawn as a result of which the facility to travel upto Mumbai and Gujarat is no longer available. Hence that train should also be re-introduced. Besides, a demand was made to connect by computer the Barauni junction with Howrah. This request was also given to the Hon'ble Minister of Railways in writing. Then there was a demand to improve and upgrade the Bachchwara, Sahibpur, Kamal and Lakhan Lakhminian and Begusarai stations. I hope that you would surely take action in these regards.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, with these words, I extend my thanks to the entire Ministry of Railways. I hope that an announcement will be made to set up a Rail factory in Gadahara and I submit that Hon'ble Minister of Railways should make this announcement right now. Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg your pardon for the unpleasant words exchanged because we had been waiting for a very long time. Without the ringing of the bell, I am concluding my speech in the hope that the Minister of Railways will make an announcement right now.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I request the Hon'ble Minister of Railways to mention something on this issue as the Hon'ble Prime Minister has himself said it...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : He will mention that in his reply.

[Translation]

SHRI SHATRUGHAN PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, if the Hon'ble Minister of Railways does not act upon the announcement made by the Prime Minister, then who else's announcement he would act upon?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Prime Minister had asked him in front of us, still there is mention about it in the supplementary...*(Interruption)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is a fact that Shri Chaturanan Mishra and the two Hon'ble M.P.s. had met the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister called me and asked me to do something in this regard. I am consulting the officials in this regard as to how this work could be undertaken. Right now, it is under consideration. At one point, I said that this is one case and if the similar case comes from West Bengal, Calcutta, we would have to take that up also. Secondly, I have stated that I am consulting to the officials of Ministry of Railways in this regard. They are facing certain difficulties but I assure you that we will sort them out.

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : The Prime Minister has assured us. Please give us an assurance at least in this regard?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : The order given by the Prime Minister is certainly an order which one has to abide by. I'll abide by his orders.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can discuss it later on.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary demands for Grants for Railways presented by the hon. Minister of Railways. I would like to thank him for admitting the need of gauge conversion of Ajmer, Udaipur and Chittorgarh routes. The Government of India has been very benevolent for Rajasthan for the last two-three years but the work is being taken there in an unplanned way. The gauge conversion is being done from Jodhpur to Udaipur but section from Ajmer to Chittorgarh is being left while there are mines of Abuja near Vijaynagar from where the largest quantity of silver and other metals are being mined besides many cements plants are being set up on this route. If the conversion is done from Ajmer to Udaipur only then the area can be benefited. If it is done from Ratlam side but, it is not linked with Ajmer then there is no use because north Rajasthan can be linked only via Ajmer. I hope, he would try to complete Ajmer, Jodhpur and Chittorgarh since there is no mention about these cities.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : it has been mentioned in it.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Only 300 k.m. has been mentioned.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Surendranagar and Bhavnagar have been mentioned.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : It is not Surendra Nagar and Bhavnagar. I have said Udaipur and Jaipur.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Ajmer, Jodhpur and Chittorgarh have been mentioned on Sr. No.8.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : I do agree that Ajmer, Jaipur, Chittorgarh have been mentioned but the amount shown allocated is not sufficient. It seems that you did not mention Chittorgarh. In my opinion, the gauge conversion of entire area should be done at a time and not in piece-meal. I hope, the hon. Chairman would also agree with me in this regard. Secondly, due to broadgauge conversion work being in progress in Ajmer, all the trains running between Ajmer and Ahmedabad, have been cancelled, resulting in great difficulty on metre gauge from Ajmer onward. All the trains running between Delhi and Ahmedabad via Ajmer like Ashram Express and other mail trains, have to cover Udaipur, Himmatnagar Chittorgarh then Ajmer, Fulera and Jaipur and come back again. Thus, much time is wasted. Now, the route, after spending crores of rupees has been converted into broad gauge. Therefore, Shatabdi Express running between Ajmer and Delhi should be run daily. At present, it is run only for six days a week. When Lucknow bound, Bhopal bound and Chandigarh bound Shatabdi Trains run on 7 days a week then why it is not run on Sunday while the Hon. Members of Parliament and other VIPs come back to Delhi on Sunday and due to not running of this train on Sunday, they have to face a lot of difficulties because then they board Jodhpur mail and metre gauge which starts in night and which reaches Delhi via Jaipur, Ringus and Revari. Two second AC coaches of the train have been reduced to one and first class coach has also been removed. Due to it we have to face a lot of problems. I, through you, would like to demand that Shatabdi Express should run on all seven days of the week and one passenger train should be introduced between Ajmer and Delhi for the facility of the passengers. It is very essential because all the passengers of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Bali, Abu and Nagaur go to Delhi via Ajmer. Satpalji and Paswanji, the ticket of trains on broadgauge is very costly so much so that a common man cannot afford it. Therefore a cheaper train between Ajmer and Delhi should be introduced which may depart from Ajmer in the evening and reach Delhi in the morning and another may depart from Delhi in the evening and reach Ajmer in the morning. We had demanded to extend Jammu tavi from Jaipur to Ajmer but the hon. Minister did not do so. A new train 'Link Express' has been introduced which has been named by the people as 'Deve Gowda Express' because the hon. Prime Minister had assured to extend Jammu tavi up to Ajmer but instead of it he introduced link express which is stationed the whole night in Jaipur. If that train takes two-three rounds of Jaipur and Ajmer, the people may get some facility on broadgauge. It only links Jammu tavi and thereafter coming from their rests the whole night. Even if it goes to Ajmer in the night and comes back in the morning, it may provide some facility to the people. I would like to thank the hon. Minister for the creation of a new zone in Rajasthan. A committee of experts was constituted in 1984. It recommended

that the headquarter of new Railway zone likely to be created in future, would be Ajmer. Ajmer is known as Railway City. There are many big factories and Railway property worth crores of rupees besides many acres of vacant land. I have come to know that the zonal headquarter was inaugurated by the hon. Prime Minister in Jaipur but it has not been provided land so far. They are still in search of land. Millions of rupees would be spent in buying land. But Ajmer has hundreds of Acre of land lying and the distance between the two cities is just 76 mile. This land of Ajmer will also be put to use. After spending crores of rupees in Loco carriage, it has been made ready for the use of broadgauge and it has started doing repair and overhauling works. This work should also be completed. My demand is that trains should be introduced between Delhi and Ajmer and Ajmer should be made zonal headquarter since it is the heart of Rajasthan and falls in its centre. The freedom struggle was fought here. Ajmer would be benefited a little by this move. The people of Paigambar dominate the city.

I would like to add one more point. One train should be introduced between Ajmer and Bikaner since important offices like Revenue Board, Education Board and Public Service Commission's office are in Ajmer and the people of Bikaner come to Ajmer after changing 3-4 trains. Therefore it would be better if direct train is introduced between Ajmer and Bikaner. Several trains have been introduced from Jaipur and trains have also been introduced from Jodhpur on broadgauge. But I demand that atleast one train should be introduced from Ajmer which is known as 'Tirthraj Pushkar' and abode of lord Brahmaji, where Khwaja Sahab's Dargah is also situated and which attracts millions of people and thousands of tourist every year, to Calcutta or any big city or even Haridwar so that Pushkar and Haridwar could be linked. There should be something.

One more point regarding Bandikui-Agra Fort line. It was in priority. It has not been told whether work is in progress on this route or when will it be completed? It was to be changed into broadgauge. That was the only route to go to either Agra fort, Western Uttar Pradesh or Ahmedabad via Ajmer. But it has not been converted from meter gauge to broadgauge so far. We have been hearing for the last one year that this work is in progress. Therefore, it should be completed soon. Likewise, the route from Fulera to Revari via Ringas should also be taken up.

Another problem is that all the metregauge trains stop at Sarai Rohilla. One broadgauge train from Bareilly to Ajmer via Delhi runs only once in a week. If its frequency is increased, it would facilitate the people to some extent. Its time-table should also be amended. All the metregauge trains stop at Sarai Rohilla and passengers have to pay some more money to reach old Delhi. The taxi fare in Delhi is beyond common man's

reach and he finds himself unable to catch a bus. Therefore a new train should be introduced between Ajmer and Delhi and it should stop at Delhi junction so that the people could do marketing in Chandni Chowk and Khari Bawli. It is very essential.

I want to say something about Martindal bridge. Ahead of Ajmer, the conversion work of a bridge, more than hundred year old, constructed by Railway, is going on. It is to be made higher so that trains on broadgauge should pass. If it is made higher, it should also be made broader. I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to a work for which he has sanctioned Rs. 3 crore. If the road to Byavar is made more open towards Nasirabad, Shrinagar road and Bihar, the traffic problem of Ajmer city will be solved. It is necessary because after one year around 15-20 lakh people will gather in 786th 'Urs' of Khwaja Sahab. Due to flooding of Anna Sagar, this year too people had to face a lot of difficulties and they had to be shifted to some other place. Therefore, if the said bridge is reconstructed, the half traffic problem of Ajmer can be solved. It is an ancient city and congested and there is only one main road. There special attention should be paid towards Martindal Bridge. The hon. Minister of Railway had assured to man the Railway crossing. The villagers have to face a lot of difficulties because the gateman is there in the day time but he closes the gate in the night. If any emergency arises in the night or any villager falls sick, how would he go to hospital in a taxi? Due to closure of the gate in the night, he has to take a long round and in this exercise, many people, specially pregnant women lost their lives.

People have to suffer a lot. Therefore I request you that at four-five places I will not mention the names of the places in view of the paucity of time, gates should be kept manned round the clock.

Special attention should be given on Bandikui Agra fort issue. Capacity of Loco and carriage factories should be increased. You have established in Hubli, it should be set up in Karnataka and that too with this much cost. If it is to be set up somewhere else also then you should set it up there also but at the same time you should pay attention towards modernisation of those old Loco and carriage factories which are still equipped with 100 year old machinery. These factories performed very well during the two wars and created records in the history of the railway. Attention should also be given towards manufacturing of boggies in these factories. These factories have such highly skilled technical staff there which can make good trains like Palace on Wheels and give a new look to an old train. I would like to request through you that the work of manufacturing boggles and wagons there should be increased.

With these words I thank you for the work you have done. But if crores of rupees of railway have to be

saved then Ajmer should be made the Zonal Headquarters. Ajmer should be linked with Delhi by the broad gauge line. I want an assurance from you with regard to laying of Ajmer-Ahmedabad line as per the timebound programme. Nowadays the traffic is closed there due to which the people are facing a lot of difficulty. So I would like to know the time by which the work of laying of a line linking Palanpur, Mehsana, Marwar junction, Ajmer is likely to be completed. Whether it will be completed before 31 March, 1997 or not. I want a clear cut assurance from you in this regard because the passengers are facing inconvenience. You had earlier agreed for broadgauge conversion of line from Marwar Junction to Jaipur, but now perhaps some change has been made in it. It is not mentioned in it so please give clarification for that also.

With these words, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to express my views.

SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA (Jhabua) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I thank you that you have given me an opportunity during the debate on the Railway's supplementary budget to raise the problems which are being faced in my constituency with regard to railway. I give my thanks to the Hon. Minister and I support this Budget.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Hon. Minister has covered the issues raised by all other Members but he has not said anything, positive or negative the issues raised by me.

SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA : Mr. Chairman, I would like to speak specially about Madhya Pradesh. Actually the entire Madhya Pradesh is almost tribal dominated area, just now our Satyanarayan Jatia Ji has said, Paswanji has set up several new zones, sanctioned many new railway lines, but our Dahod-Indore rail line is being mentioned in budget for the last ten years. It is passing through the tribal areas of Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh connecting Dahod with the important city Indore and thereafter it passes through Gwalior and links Ujjain. I would like to request Paswanji to prepare programme and lay of it, so that this work in tribal areas may be started for the benefit of our tribal brothers who have not so far seen a train! Similarly Dalli-Rajhara-Baster line in Madhya Pradesh has also been included in your budget, both these rail lines are in tribal area. Dahod-Indore, Dalli-Rajhara-Baster. Work should be started on both the lines because that area is rich in mineral resources. Many fast trains are plying there but the local passengers and workers who have to travel short distances have to waste a lot of time railway at Ratlam, you have stopped plying the Parcel train and Local train. I would like that the E.M.U. train of 3-4 boggles should be plied on. Ratlam-Baroda, Ratlam to Kota, Ratlam to Indore and Ratlam to Bhopal line for the facility of short distance passengers which

include poor and the people of working class. Bhopal is the capital of Madhya Pradesh. There are five to seven districts in that area put if we have to travel from one district to another district we prefer going via Delhi because it is difficult to reach Bhopal from there. Earlier 111 and 112 used to run there and it used to reach Bhopal in morning and from the people used to depart from Ratlam in the evening, please restore plying these trains. As Jatiaji has also said, Ratlam is the central point between Mumbai and Delhi. Rajdhani stops there. August Kranti takes eight hours to reach Kota from Baroda. Many Accidents have taken place there. I have written many letters suggesting that if it is stopped only for two minutes at Ratlam where water could be filled, Driver and operational staff of the train could be changed and thus accidents could be avoided. But the railway would not consider these suggestions. Therefore it is requested a stoppage may be provided for August Kranti and Rajdhani Express at Ratlam. The platform should be expanded there. There is a plan for gauge conversion of meter gauge line from Neemach to Indore. Lay broadgauge line upto Neemach and start it from Indore-Khandwa. If this plan is completed it would be beneficial for the people of tribal area.

Shatabdi Express should be plied in the morning between Delhi and Mumbai, which must run simultaneously from both the direction. It should complete its journey within 17 hours. There must be a stoppage at Ratlam so that we can reach the Delhi in Seven-eight hours. Your's is a Dalit Manifesto therefore you must accord priority to poor areas. With this I support this budget and thank you for giving me time to speak.

* SHRI THAMMINENI VEERABHADRAM (Khammam): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have already given notice to speak in my mother tongue, Telugu.

Sir, we are discussing the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways. I want to speak about certain important issues. The Railway Budget should be such that which treats all parts of the country equally. All the regions should be treated impartially. Justice has to be meted out to all. But unfortunately neither the original Budget nor the Supplementary Budget presented now appears to be impartial.

Certain parts of the country have been shown favour while other areas continue to be neglected. As was pointed by some hon. Members, huge amounts have been allocated for certain areas and regions. It has been pointed out during the discussion that Karnataka has been blessed with seven projects amounting to rupees one thousand crores. Some other chosen States have been allocated two projects and so on. Sir, we are extremely disappointed to find that there is not even a single project to be taken up in Andhra Pradesh. Andhra

Pradesh has been neglected both in the main and Supplementary Railway Budgets. In fact, I allege that our State has been meted out step motherly treatment by the Ministry of Railways. I appeal to the Hon. Minister to look into the matter and do justice to Andhra Pradesh.

Sir, many Hon. Members have pointed out that the foundation stones are being laid liberally and generously for surveys. In many cases assurances are also being given that the assurance would be implemented soon. In this connection, I want to bring one important issue to the notice of the Government. I invite the attention of Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, our Hon. Railway Minister, to this particular problem. A survey has been conducted 26 years back for an important railway line in Andhra Pradesh. It was for Bhadrachalam Road to Kovvur line. The survey was completed. The report was submitted to the Railway Board. But it was not followed up with any action at all. Nobody knows what happened to the findings of that survey. I appeal to the Hon. Minister to look into the matter and take up the construction of Bhadrachalam Road-Kovvur railway line as early as possible. Sir, the benefits of this particular railway line are not just confined to my constituency. The entire Railway Department would reap the rich dividends. Sir, if this line comes up, the distance between Howrah and New Delhi would be reduced by 100 to 150 kms. Not only that, everyone knows that there is a steel plant at Vizag. This line can serve the needs of Vizag Steel Plant. It is also helpful in transporting raw material and other goods from Bailadilla to Vizag. This line can serve as an important link to the port cities of Visakhapatnam and Kakinada. That is why, I request that this particular railway line should be constructed on priority basis. The entire stretch passes through the area which is totally tribal. It is a known fact that tribal areas are the havens for extremist activities. Extremist activities are taking place because this area is extremely backward economically. Hence, for reducing the distance between Howrah and New Delhi, for controlling the extremists, for doing justice to tribals by developing the area, for serving as an important link to the port towns Vizag and Kakinada, it is very much necessary to take up this railway line for construction.

Sir, I have to raise some more important demands pertaining to my constituency, Khammam in Andhra Pradesh. Khammam town is the headquarter of my constituency and has a population of two lakhs. This railway line passes through the heart of the town cutting it into two parts. There is an urgent need for an underbridge at Khammam. For the past 15 years citizens of the town and many organisations under the banner of DISF, SFI, etc. have been agitating for the construction of this underbridge. Yet, nothing has happened. Very recently we met the General Manager. He asked the Municipality to deposit Rs. 40,000/- for the survey. As was demanded by the General Manager, the

Municipality has deposited the required amount. But no survey party was sent there. The survey has not been taken up so far. So, I appeal to Hon. Minister to look into this matter too.

I have some other demands pertaining to my constituency. There are level crossings with the gates where the people require them and there are gates where people do not actually require them. I have spoken to the General Manager about one such level crossing at Patralapadu. I have also brought it to the notice of the Hon. Minister also. He has agreed to have it changed. But there is a condition stipulated to it. The entire expenditure should either be borne by the State Government or the local administration. How is it possible? It is the responsibility of the Central Government and Railway Ministry to provide safe level crossing facility. It is Central Government's sole responsibility. There are certain railway level crossings at Dendukur and Allapadu. They should be upgraded. These problems should be looked into. I request the Hon. Minister to initiate appropriate action.

Sir, I want to mention about Railway halts. Some important trains do not at present stop at some important stations. There has been a long standing demand by the local people for a stop of Mangala Express at Khammam Station. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to give Mangla Express a stoppage at Khammam. Similarly, there is a demand that Link Express should stop at Garla. The Railway Ministry should agree to this demand. There is also a demand that Satavahana Express which happens to be a local express should stop at Madra. I hope and trust that Hon. Minister would consider these long-standing demands of the people favourably. The Hon. Railway Minister has responded admirably to some of the suggestions made by the Hon. Members. I request that he should respond promptly in the same vein to my requests for Bhadrachalam Road-Kovvur railway line and underbridge at Khammam.

[English]

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (Birbhum) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I am responding to the Supplementary Demands for Grants for the Railways for 1996-97. I support the proposal and while supporting, may I put forward some suggestions for improvement of the Indian Railways?

Indian Railways is the biggest public sector undertaking in our country which has immense potentiality but the direction of the Railways in development works has been shifted long back and as a consequence, there is non-fulfilment of the targets of various projects even after the completion of eight Five Year Plans. Extension of new railway lines in newer areas, specially in the backward areas of our country, is very unsatisfactory and much below the target level. Employment generation is radically cut ignoring the

social, economic and political responsibilities. The main thrust should be extension of new railway lines and a balanced approach should be there to minimise regional imbalances.

It is a welcome gesture on the part of the present Government. Recently, when the Budget proposals were passed in this House, the Railway Minister in his Budget speech had given a positive and a welcome direction. It had been changed from the earlier one.

Many railway projects in various sectors are pending since long. All the projects are under implementation but many of them are being delayed. If these long-pending projects are not implemented in a specified time-frame, the cost escalation will make the Railway Board a loser. As a consequence of that, the country will lose on that ground. So, my suggestion is that all pending projects should be completed within a specified time-frame.

I make a few other suggestions for implementation of these projects. In our State, so many projects were declared in the past. But very few of them have been taken up. The rate of progress in respect of all the projects is very slow. The doubling of Khana-Sainthia railway line in the Sahibganj section of the Eastern Railway should be taken into consideration. It has been sanctioned. The 71 kilometre long railway project for doubling was taken up five years back. But I am sorry to say that the progress of work is very unsatisfactory. It has, time and again, been pointed out to the Administration. Very little work has been done so far. But phase-wise programme is going on merely on paper. If the projects are going to be implemented in this manner, the cost escalation will go up year after year. The main objective of doubling this project has been given a go-bye. My suggestion is that the doubling work should be taken up as a time-bound programme. It should be completed within a time-frame. And electrification should also be taken up.

The Andal-Sainthia line in the Eastern Railway section is also an important link between the industrial belt and the North-Eastern States. These States are being connected by this link route. The survey was done. But no amount has been sanctioned so far. It is a very important railway route. Therefore, I suggest that this project should be taken up in view of the changing context.

There is no railway bridge at the district headquarters, Suri. The people are facing a lot of problem. So, an over-bridge should be constructed there. And upgradation of that station should also be done... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAY (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : What you have said this from where and upto where.

[English]

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (Birbhum) : It is about Andal-Sainthia. It has already been surveyed ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Yes, that's o.k. What is the Problem.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME (Birbhum) : Problem is this that Asansol is the industrial belt of Dhanbad.

[English]

That is going to the North-East. It connects that route. That is why it is commercially important.

Then, there is Eklakhi-Balurghat line. It is pending since long.

Sir, this is a long pending issue. Though allocations had been made for this project in the last Budget yet work on this project has not yet started. Speedy implementation of this project is very necessary. Similarly, the work in the last two phases in the Howrah-Amra section has remained incomplete. Rupees two crore have already been spent for the implementation of the railway line from Bargachia to Mushirhat. But after eight months having elapsed since the presentation of the Budget, work on this section has not started. So, I demand that this work should be taken up immediately.

Sir, let us take the case of the Darjeeling district. You know presently there are problems going on in that region. Nowadays, the divisive forces are very active there. Particularly the Darjeeling town is very important from the view point of tourism. Transportation is a problem there. Toy trains are, of course, there but only small trains are running there. There is a need for Upgradation and modernisation of this section with introduction of new trains in order to upgrade and promote tourism facilities in Darjeeling.

Sir, no survey has been made for the proposed Tarakeswar - Arambagh rail route. Immediate survey work for this project should be taken up and final allocation should be made for implementation of this project. Similarly, you know the issue of the BDR railway project and the Bankura-Damodar railway project have been raised in this House many times. The people there are agitating for this. The Railway Department is proposing to close down the railway line on the plea that this is non-economical and non-viable. This is a very important railway line and this should not be closed down and steps should be taken for the Upgradation of this railway line.

Sir, next comes the question of upgradation of the Ahmedpur-Katwa narrow gauge section. This is an important railway link. We are observing this year as the centenary year of the great novelist Shri Tarashankar

Bandopadhyay. The residence of this great novelist was in Labhpur which falls in this section and moreover, this is also the home constituency of Shri Pranab Mukherjee.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please come out only with the suggestions. Do not give explanations. Only give the proposals.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Sir, I would be brief. The issue of upgradation of this section is a long pending one. The Labhpur station should be upgraded and one new train in this section should be introduced immediately in the memory of that great novelist Shri Tarashankar Bandopadhyay. That is my suggestion.

Sir, then there is one railway line between Mollarpur and Panchami Hatgachia which is in the stone quarry belt. It is a backward area and many stone quarries are also located in that area. There is no alternate source of earning for the people living there. So, this commercial railway line project in the Mollarpur and Pachmi Hatgachia section should be taken up immediately. The Dumka-Rampurhat railway line has already been sanctioned but work in that section has not yet started and it should be taken up.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think, this is sufficient for today. Leave something for the main Railway Budget also. This is only Supplementary Budget.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Sir, a new fast passenger train should be introduced between Asansol and Nalhati junction via Andal - Sainthia loop line. This is a very long pending demand. Another fast passenger train between Howrah-Rampurhat via Andal-Sainthia loop section should also be introduced. The rail services between Andal to Azimganj have been cut off. Two districts are suffering on account of this. The rail services have been disconnected after the introduction of the DMU services. The railway services between Andal to Azimganj should be restored.

24.00 hrs.

It causes inconvenience to the people of two Districts. Azimganj to Andal is the oldest railway line and it should be restored. My next point is about renaming of the newly introduced Howrah-Rampurhat Express train as Ganadevata Express. The proposal has already been sent to the Railway Board. Ganadevata is the most popular novel written by the late Tara Shankar Bandopadhyaya and that is why it should be renamed as Ganadevata Express.

MR. CHAIRMAN : That is a good point to conclude with.

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : Reinstatement of the victimised railway workers should be done immediately along with provision of employment to the casual labourers retrenched due to the closing down of loco sheds. The issue of the employees of coal and ash

handling plants should be taken up and due consideration should be given immediately.

I hope the whole House will agree with my suggestion that the railway service from Calcutta to Bangladesh should be restored immediately as a goodwill gesture. This project should be taken up immediately. With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR (Bareilly) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to felicitate the Hon. Minister that he is getting applause from the people of Bihar since he presented the last Budget. I urge the Minister of State in Railways that he must take care of the Uttar Pradesh also in the budget or next year. I would like to say this because the Hon. Minister of State in Railways is treated with respect in the entire North India and he has many supporters there. He must take care of their feelings. I have one request and I would like to have an assurance from him in that regard. Many facts have been mentioned here. Your supplementary budget is very limited but here we must get reply to our queries concerning the facts mentioned in it. We have this much expectation from you. The points mentioned by us can be included in the next budget, if found worthy for inclusion. Perhaps all these facts have been mentioned here so that when next budget is introduced this could be covered in that. I would like to give a suggestion that practice of attaching Saloon should be stopped, you must consider it. It is not very useful practice. The previous Hon. Railway Minister had suggested that meetings of M.Ps and public representatives will be held on Divisional and zonal levels. This system has been discontinued. You must consider reviving of that system. If this practice is revived, so many things would be solved at that level only without bring them to your notice.

Hon. Minister has been very much concerned about the backward and scheduled caste dominated areas. Now reservation is also being provided to O.B.Cs. What arrangements are there for providing reservation to them in your Department of Railway. You should take care of it. We should be kept informed about the recruitment of O.B.C. candidates on reservation basis in your department. I think that there must be some proposals for Uttar Pradesh in the new budget. Recently I have read in newspaper that you have accepted in answer to the question that rail tracks are overaged and bad condition at certain places. On that very day the train in which I was travelling, met an accident. Delhi-Moradabad route have become a very busy single track is not enough to cater to the need of increased traffic on it. Doubling of this line had been accepted. This work must be started on priority basis there and it should be completed in twentieth century itself. Hon. Minister must give an assurance to this effect. Daily passengers

have to face lot of difficulties. If chair car is provided then certainly it would benefit the passengers and the probability of quarrels taking place for seats would be reduced. I request Shri Satpal Maharaj to take up gauge conversion work on Agra-Kathgodam line at the earliest as the train running on it is beneficial for the public as well for the exchequer.

Without taking much time of the House now I would like to bring the problems of Bareilly to your notice.

In Bareilly, there is a depot of North-Eastern Railway, a divisional office and a rail factory. If you go through the figures you will find that with the reduction in the work assigned to this factory, the strength of employees in it is also being reduced. There is huge railway property in Bareilly so it was selected for setting up a coach factory. Illegal encroachment is going on as this property is not being utilised properly. As per my information two-three proposals were sent in this regard. It will be better and local public would get employment if these proposals are implemented. I think you were told earlier too that if the idle lying railway property is utilised properly the proposed project would require low expenditure. You can take decision in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I come from Bareilly. There is no proper arrangement for rail travel between Delhi and Bareilly. The Minister of State in Railways has introduced a train from Kathgodam to Ramnagar. It would be better and facilitate Delhi bound passengers if timings of this train is changed to 9 O'clock and the three boggies are linked to it at Moradabad. Just now Shri Rawat has mentioned that the 'Ala Hazrat' train from Bareilly runs once a week in the morning. I request you to increase its frequency to twice a week and its starting time should be changed to 8 O'clock in the evening. Public of Bareilly will thank the hon. Minister for it. It is a good proposal and would also increase railway revenue, consider it and you will see that it is a good proposal. I do not know that any project announced by Minister has not completed. Former Railway Minister Shri Kalmadi visited Bareilly and with a view to link Kumaun with railway network announced that he would contemplate introducing a new train from Bareilly to Delhi. Three Rajdhani express and one Shatabdi train have been running via Kanpur but not a single train runs via Moradabad. It would be better and increase railway revenue if one train is introduced for Delhi via Moradabad, Bareilly and Lucknow. There is no need to introduce such a train via Kanpur. I hope that my proposal would be considered.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Bareilly is situated along an important rail track. Trains from Hawra to Jammu and Amritsar pass through this track. Perhaps you may be aware of the fact that there no pantry car has been attached to these trains. Passengers face great difficulties because the food stuff sold at railway stations is of inferior quality and they have to travel for more

than 10-12 hours. I request you to think over this issue and make necessary arrangements.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the 3009/3010 train plying between Hawra and Dehradun is always late on studying the records for the last 1000 days, you will find that there is not even a single day when it started at proper time. This is the only train for Dehradun and passengers face great difficulties. I request the hon. Minister to pay attention towards it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the 'Shramjivi Express' should be extended up to Delhi by increasing its running distance by 250 km. Bareilly is its terminal at present I hope that it would be considered.

There is IFFCO factory along the Bareilly railway line. People would feel relieved if an overbridge is constructed there. I would not take much time and request the hon. Minister to consider these proposals and make a clearcut reply to these proposals so that local people would be benefited.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Mr. Minister.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I think most of the replies have already been given.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, firsts of all I thank all the Members who have taken part in this debate and presented their views before the House. As Minister of Railways I assure them and would like to tell them that most of the points raised by them have been personally monitored by me. We consider all the points and suggestions made by the Members and apprise them of entire position but we have to take them Priority wise. Hon. Sanat Mehta is not present here now. I would like to say that he was not aware of the fact that allocations for Bhavnagar-Surendernagar was to be increased. In view of the backwardness of the area it was done on the basis of priority. Bihar is a tribal dominated area. We have tried to improve the railway infrastructure in tribal area of the State. It is a 164 km. rail track from Ranchi to Tori via Lohardaga. This time we wanted to do something for the tribal area which includes Kodarma, Giridih and Hazari bagh. Unfortunately this backward area has been ignored for the past 50 years. As a result of it even if a little work is done in this area that is considered achievement and as a result of this whatever little prosperity is seen then that is given lot of publicity. We have taken up just six or seven items this time. The railway projects regarding N.F Railway, Southern Railway, South-Central Railway, Southern Railway from Hasan to Bangalore, Karur to Salem in Southern Railway, Hubli to Ankola in South-Central Railway, Ranchi to Lohardaga Southern-Eastern Railway and Jabalpur railway line various projects under N.F railway, Southern Railway, South-Central Railway,

Eastern Railways have been included. Gauge-conversion projects from Khagaria to Kushal Saharsan under N.E Railway, Harmudi to Etahnagar under N.F Railway, Hasan to Bangalore under Southern Railway, Karur-Salem under Southern Railway, Hubli-Ankola under South-Central Railway, Ranchi-Lohardaga under South Eastern Railway Jabalpur-Godia under Central Railway, Ajmer-Udaipur under Western Railway and Surendernagar-Bhavnagar via Dhola, Dhaka, Mahua etc. have also been taken up.

[Translation]

You will observe that whatever was possible we have done. It is a supplementary budget, not the General Budget. It has its own limitation as to how much allocations can be made therein. I was listening to Shri George. He had been a Cabinet Minister. However we took note of his observation. On one hand we presume that no work is being done and then we say that work will not be done. On the other hand, when efforts are being made to do some work, we criticise it. He was reading out the statistics that the Minister of Railways presented a budget of so many crore and released this much many under this head. The Budget was of so many crores and so much lakhs of rupees were given out of them. Every Minister of Railways does the same. If we make an allocation of say Rs. 300 crore or Rs. 150 crore for laying a new rail line, not even one and a half crore out of that is spent in the first six months. Firstly, the talks have to be held with the State Government for land. Then the land has to be purchased and payments are made. Thereafter the work is started. It is not as if he has never been a Minister. I was studying the budget presented in 1990-91 by him. What had he done therein? The total allocation for the Shohnur-Mugalsarai line was Rs. 165 crore, Rs. 15 crores were spent. Then the work of gauge conversion was to be undertaken in the Northern Railway. Rs. 267 crores were allocated for Veerangaon Jodhpur line, six crores were released. Similarly Rs. 15 crores were allocated for Kashipur to Lalkaun Section and Rs. one thousand was given. We also completed the Chhapra-Aunihar Section costing Rs. 85 crore. Hence to say that this is one budget and this much allocation has been made is not good. It is a system of Parliamentary democracy. When sanctions are given, the succeeding Minister comes under pressure to get the work done. There are several projects for which we are making every efforts to clear them. Shrimati Girija Vyas is not here right now. She had raised the issue of a project, we got it passed somehow and now that Project is the part of the budget, and work would be started on it. Shri Rajesh Pilot is also not here. He had raised the matter Dausa-Gangapur line, for which we are making every efforts. But it is not in our hands. It is a matter which has to be decided by the Planning Commission, Expanded Board and C.C.A. Our officials are not members in the

Expanded Board. The Secretaries of various Ministers are the members of this Board. They pass the proposal and then it is forwarded to C.C.A. where it is further scrutinised. It has been for the first time in the history of the country that we have said that Railway is not merely a profit oriented institution, instead it should be an instrument of welfare of common people and we are trying to do so. I have to tell my friend, who perhaps have left the House that in the current year we have tried to link the north east area with rail network. For example Meghalaya Government does not want to allow people of other states to visit Meghalaya because they have a separate system. But somehow we provided funds to them to link the State with railways. We have given Rs. 50 crore for north east.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Hon. Minister why are you replying to the question of Members who have left the House

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Reply must be given...*(Interruptions)* I would like to say that developmental work should be done in every area. One of my friends from Kerala has said that coaches of trains in their area are in dilapidated condition. We receive such complaints from almost every state and it is not that only coaches of Kerala are in a dilapidated condition. Though we are trying to replace the outdated coaches in Kerala. We have got a report from Kerala in this regard and according to it six rakes have been provided for Kerala.

[English]

Six rakes of Kerala Express are being replaced in the course of next few months. Recently, we have given a few coaches to Kerala which have come out from the shops.

[Translation]

We ourselves want to do that. I had gone to Ranchi for inauguration of the Divisional Railway office. I suspended an employee there. I have punished the employees and officials found guilty. We need funds for various projects. One of my colleague had raised the issue of rakes and wagons here. I accepted that challenge and in spite of shortage of funds the target was achieved. Last time we had a target of 10 thousand but this time we are going to manufacture 25-30 thousand rakes and we are trying to do so. I am not only making speeches here but work is also being done. The matter regarding regularising casual labourer was pending since long. Several revolutionary political leaders had been Railway Minister before me but they did not regularise their services. I would like to say that I have not only made announcements but also fixed a target of regularising 30 thousand casual labourers out of total 56 thousand upto March. We are going to regularise 30 thousand in the current year before

presenting next budget. Services of at least 25 thousand casual labourer will be regularised though later on this number can be increased to 30 thousand. We have introduced 32 new trains, apart from the several other trains were started for small distance. I would not like to waste your time by telling about them all. The Janata Express plying from Delhi to Howrah has been started since 1st October, just now one of my friends has raised the issue regarding Kokan railway which has been commissioned upto Ratnagiri. I myself wanted to visit that area and planned to go there but I had to cancel my visit in views of the directives of Election Commission. Similarly one and half month ago elections were held in U.P. and Election Commission came in way and work had to be stalled in U.P. before that I had planned to go to Goa and Bombay to find out the reasons for stopping this work. This whole work has been stopped for a tunnel of 600 meter. Engineer of this project has told that due to natural calamity it has been stopped as seepage is going on there. I wanted to look into it but Election Commission stopped me as elections of local bodies were going on there. Later on Session of Parliament was convened and I could not go there. I myself want to speed up the work.

In context of coaches and railway line, I would like to say that a target has been fixed for next five years and we would require approximately additional 4000 km long railway line beside renewal of existing tracks. We are trying to do our best with the available funds - inputs affect the production. We have to look into it. Our country is not US or U.K. where fencing and other facilities are on both the sides of track. This is the only reason that why with the same engine our trains run at a speed of 100 km. per hour and their trains run at a speed of 200 km. per hour. We are making efforts to improve railway facility and it is the outcome of our efforts during the last six months that delegations of Bangladesh, Australia, France, Malaysia and Russia are coming here for holding talks with us. We have received invitations from South Africa and several other countries, but it is large department and due to paucity of time we cannot go there to see and know about their railway system.

We are trying our best to improve the Railways.

In respect of telephone I would like to say that telephones have been installed on Bombay - New Delhi route and they are functioning properly. In matters of accidents I would like to say that incidents of sabotage, like the one in Jhelum Express which is being investigated by Home Ministry, cannot be prevented but we are trying our best for prevention of incidents our best prevention of incidents of derailment. As you know that the number of accidents increased last year but I would like to say that this number has decreased, except the incidents of trolley and accidents on un-manned gates. We are trying to deploy men at unmanned

crossings. I would like to say that drivers driving buses, tempos and other vehicle through such crossings are also responsible for these accidents. Trains cannot be stopped like cars and other vehicles. Only three passengers died during last 7 months. We have a large railway network which have about 62,000 km. long railway lines, even then I feel that casualty of three passengers is a matter of sorrow and we are trying to avoid such casualties.

As Shri Santosh Kumar Gangwar has mentioned, I would like to say something about the special recruitment drive for SC/ST and backward classes. There are total 19 Railway recruitment boards and each of these board consists of 9 un-official members - three from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and three from backward communities. We have deployed these people for protecting the interests of these communities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, in case of Scheduled Castes, I would like to say that we have appointed a Chairman from Scheduled Castes community. We have given representation to all the communities, whether it is the area of Bhuvaneshwar or in Allahabad, or whether it is the area of Sarju Prasad or Siddiqui. We have tried out best to provide representation to people of minority community or backward classes and Upper Classes so that all the Classes and groups of society could get satisfaction. We have also made efforts for reinstating C.R.P.F. personnels. Now a days sophisticated weapons have been developed in every field whether it is matter of R.P.F. or Police Force or any other regiment and now height and other physical parameters made no difference. Though soldiers of our Gorkha regiments are small in height but they are brave. We cannot do justice to the area of North-East by fixing the physical standard of 5" 7" height. There should be practical and humane viewpoint in this regard. As law of this country care for human values in the same way we are trying to make Railways an instrument for Public Welfare. Railways cannot function without funds so neither we can make it totally for Public Welfare nor solely for earning profit. Therefore, we have tried to get funds from the Government for Railways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, i am happy that to day Shri H.D. Deve Gowda is our Prime Minister. It is not so because he belongs to United Front Party.

That is why I am praising him. Infact he deserves to be praised. It has happened for the first time that development is taking place in the Railways because of his good intentions, otherwise the Baramulla-Katra Project costing Rs. 2500 crore would never have been taken up and the Railways would never have taken up this project if the Prime Minister had not taken keen interest in this project. That is why I say that the Prime Minister is like the engine of the rail. We have allocated Rs. 20 crore for this purpose in the present budget and

it is not that we will just make a speech about it and leave it. We will complete it within five years. We have included it in the national budget. We will definitely complete it.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, similarly in the case of Agartala-Kumarghat rail line or Bogibil bridge, we are likely visiting Silchar on 19th, we will try that the matter of Bogibil bridge is also taken up alongside. As for the north-east, we are trying our best that if we get the funds through the General budget, we will try to complete it as soon as possible. Hence I want to say that as far as is possible, we are sparing no efforts to do the work. I would like to tell that there is no such part of the country where work is not being done. We are trying to take up projects throughout the country. As far as was possible, we have tried to connect the North-east.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would also like to tell the House about the allocations made under each head. We have allocated Rs. 20 crore for Udhampur-Katra line, Rs. 20 crore for Guna-Etawah, Rs. 30 crore for Deemapur-Dibrugarh, Rs. 20 crore in Jogibala, Rs. 40 crore for Talkat-Sambalpur and this is for the remaining three months of this financial year. Then we have contributed Rs. 15 crores for new lines in South-Eastern Railway. As our colleagues were asking, wherever sanctions have already been made, for example, in Howeah we have increased the allocations for those projects also. Similarly we have increased the allocation for Deegha Tamalu section. One of our friends was asking about Eklakhi Balughat, Rs. three crores have been allocated for that project. Shri Bhakta Charan Das from Kalahandi was saying that only Rs. one crore had been allocated for Laljigarh-Junagarh line. It is not so. As soon as he met me, I increased the allocation in this regard to Rs. five crore.

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR : Hon'ble Minister, please send your reply to the concerned Members in writing.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Whatever, I am saying is going on record. This is as good as a reply. What else is there in a reply.

Similarly, initially one crore was given for Hardaspur-Paradeep. Now it has been increased to Rs. 2 crore. Rs. 20 crore were allocated for Detari-Banspani and now the allocation is also being increased. Similarly three crores were given for Terappali-Karimnagar Nizambad, now we are allocating five crores more to it. We are allocating Rs. five crore for Nandyal Erargutka line from Miraj to Latur, which are the areas of Shri Chavan and former Speaker, Shri Patil, Rs. 10 crores are being sanctioned.

SHRI DILEEP SINGH BHURIA : Hon'ble Minister, have you forgotten Indore?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am coming to that.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : It is good that you are allocating funds but please pay attention to the demands of such members also who are not present here.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Just now our colleague from West Bengal was saying something. Shri Somnath had written in this regard. It was a matter related to the contract from Thana to Sathia. The matter has been sorted out and the work has been started which will be completed as soon as possible. Whatever we can do, we will definitely do it. You had asked for introducing a train from Howrah to Ajimganj via Katwa. We are getting the proposal examined positively. Similarly I am personally looking into the matter of Lalgula-Ajimganj line. The Railway Board has submitted a negative report in this regard which means that it does not appear to be feasible.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : Hon'ble Minister, there is a rail line on one side and also on the opposite side. Only a bridge is to be constructed. If the bridge is constructed, the two lines will be connected.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Okay, I will look into it. I'll also invite you in the Railway Board for a meeting.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : You need not to call me at all rather, I have to take you to that area. You take him also along with you...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We are doing that. Gangwarji, you have made a very good suggestion. Whatever points you have raised or whatever points have been raised by other members, we will be sending you point to point reply thereof. This will make us feel happy. We all know that nobody here is forever. Neither we are permanent Ministers nor M.Ps. It is also not necessary that, we are going to sit on this side permanently therefore, whatever work we do dispose of, it gives us that much satisfaction and benefit thereof also reaches to our people. We know that everyone is our friend...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : There are matters of urgent public importance and I would like you to take them up on priority basis.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : That is right. That is why I have said that all the points have been noted down. Just now one of our colleagues was saying that priority should be accorded to the work between Jodhpur and Marwar. We have fixed a target in this regard - and we will complete it by the month of September. There is another line upto Mehesana via Ahmedabad and we will be completing it by March, 1997.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : From Ajmer to Ahmedabad is also there.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We will complete it from Ajmer to Ahmedabad - by March, 1997. We are

completing the line between Jodhpur and Marwar by the month of September what else you want. What more than this can we do?

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Whatever you are doing, we extend our thanks for that but there is another project in respect of Ajmer, Chittorgarh and Khandwa.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : The route from Maksi to Devasthakhand is under construction...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Minister, the point which we have raised in respect of introducing a train...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : As of now Indore Project is not with us. We will see it later...*(Interruptions)* Tomorrow we will call you also...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we have requested Mr. Minister to introduce train on broadgauge between Delhi and Ajmer and to run the Shatabdi Express daily...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I may tell you that Shatabdi is running from your city of Ajmer.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Why don't you run it daily?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Presently, how many days it is running in a week?

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : It is running six days in a week.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : It is good if it is running six days. Now, we are trying to clear his proposal which is in respect of Bhuvaneshwar.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Mr. Minister, I would say that Shatabdi Express trains to Bhopal and Lucknow other Shatabdi Express Trains are running daily, on all seven days...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to assure the hon'ble Member that...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. RAM CHANDRA DOME : What about the Bangladesh connection?

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : People from Bangladesh also approached me. As you know, on the very first day I had said here that the length of our border with Bangladesh at Agartala-Tripura is stretching in 3 kilometers. Railway track is available only after a distance of 3 kilometers from there and people have to reach either Guwahati or Calcutta for their rail journey. That is why we have accorded top priority to Kumarghat and Agartala. Now, our relation with Bangladesh are improving. The day our relations are fully improved...*(Interruptions)* We have in our mind the

restoration aspect of that. Before you say something we have to take up this issue with the Ministry of External Affairs...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMCHANDRAN (Quilon) : What about gauge conversion in Kerala? It was an assurance give by the Minister last time.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : We will into that...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : There is no onward train service from Ajmer. In such a situation, you should introduce at least a broadgauge train. You have spent crores of rupees but that is yielding us no result...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have got projects from Kerala and every other State and I have done my best to get them cleared during my tenure. I want to assure you this much that ...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT : Please introduce one train at least. People are facing a lot of difficulties. You have already given an assurance...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I would like to let the hon'ble Member know that whatever assurances have been given, will be fulfilled. I will not go in individual projects. Even if we have to say 'no' on certain things, we would call you and place the entire situation before you and convince you, then only we will say 'no'. I would like to urge upon you that this is a supplementary budget. After two months, in February, the Government will present General Budget. The point you have raised last time is in our mind. We have made efforts to include some of them in the supplementary budget and this time also we will try to do the same ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Rasa Singh, please do not disturb like this. Please take your seat. You have get the reply.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I have said that whatever assurance I have given, I will make all out efforts to fulfill them...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right I think you are going to write separately to all the Members.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I will reply separately to all the points raised

[English]

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

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. 2 and 16."

The motion was adopted.

00.39 hrs. (19.12.96)

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) No.4 BILL*

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move that leave be granted to introduce *the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from the out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1996-97 for the purposes of Railways.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1996-97 for the purposes of Railways."

The motion was adopted.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I introduce** the Bill.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I beg to move: "That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1996-97 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from

* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Pt II Section-2 dated 18 12 96

** Introduced/moved with the recommendations of the President