approach on this matter. This is a very serious matter concerning the lives of lakhs of workers and their families. Therefore, I would urge upon you to kindly look into it.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Statutory dues are also not being paid.

(vi) Need to sanction the proposal of Government of Maharashtra to increase the amount of Grant for construction of latrines under rural Sanitation Programme.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai-North) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, for construction of each latrine under the Rural Sanitation Programme, the Central Government had fixed an amount of rupees 2500 during 1992. It was decided that 40 per cent of the cost of production i.e. rupees 1000/- would be provided to the State Government by the Central Government as grant. During the last five years the cost of labour and building material has increased tremendously. At present the cost of production of each latrine has gone upon 4000 rupees. Therefore the Government of Maharashtra has urged upon the Central Government to increase this amount of grant of 40 per cent i.e. 1000 rupees to 1600 rupees.

The Government of Maharashtra has launched an ambitious scheme to construct 5 lakh latrines per year. Accordingly, during the next four years 20 lakh latrines would be constructed. My submission to the union government is that the increased cost of construction should be accepted and release the amount of grant which is 27.78 crores according to the state government for the latrines constructed till date...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Kanshi Ram ji, you would get a chance tomorrow since once your name was called and at that time you were not present.

(vii) Need to Recognize Tamil as a Classical Language

[English]

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Pudukkottai) : Sir, it has been a long pending demand that Tamil language which is as ancient as Greek, Arabic and Persian should be recognized as a classical language by the Government of India.

Way back in 1920 itself, efforts were made and resolutions were passed by the "Karanthai Tamil Sangam" and simultaneously by the then undivided Madras University to declare Tamil as a classical language. Irrespective of the time that has lapsed and the unique qualities that the Tamil Language possesses,

the demand is still not yet realised by the Union Government.

As Greek and Latin reflect the European Community's culture and social values, Tamil is as important to understand the ancient tradition, culture, religion, fundamental and more values and philosophy of Indian Community.

Mr. Suneeth Kumar Chatterjee, the famous linguist has asserted that the Indian Culture is a congregation of various communities among which the major contribution is that of the Dravidian families, in general and Tamil culture, in particular.

Many eminent and distinguished Tamil and Western scholars have stressed the need to recognize Tamil as a classical language.

We, of course, realise that our heritage and traditional values have to be preserved and celebrated, as such things cannot be earned by any nation or community as and whenever it wishes. These could only be inherited over a period of centuries.

I, therefore, request the Union Government to take necessary steps to declare Tamil as a classical language.

12.37 hrs.

THE RAILWAY BUDGET — GENERAL DISCUSSION - 1997-98

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT (RAILWAYS) 1997-98

DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS — RAILWAYS 1994-95

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS — RAILWAYS 1996-97 - *Contd.*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, we will take up further discussion on the Budget (Railways), 1997-98. The time allotted for this discussion is nine hours; and the time already taken is one hour and 21 minutes. So, the balance time is seven hours and 39 minutes.

Shri Sriballav Panigrahi to continue his speech.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK (Mumbai-North) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, perhaps the discussion goes on the railway budget for the whole night. I want to know whether it would be today or tomorrow, because if it is known then it would be easy to inform the speakers. It is just a suggestion that if previous trend is followed then the