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**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON RAILWAYS
(1997-98)**

ELEVENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

**REDRESSAL OF PUBLIC GRIEVANCES
BY INDIAN RAILWAYS**

*[Action taken by Government on the recommendations/observations
contained in the 2nd Report of the Standing Committee on Railways on
'Redressal of public grievances by Indian Railways']*

TENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

August, 1997/Bhadra, 1919 (Saka)

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CORRIGENDA
TO THE 10TH REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (1997-98)
ON ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON RECOMMENDATIONS/
OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN THE 2ND REPORT OF 'REDRESSAL OF
PUBLIC GRIEVANCES BY INDIAN RAILWAYS'

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(1997-98)

(ELEVENTH LOK SABHA)

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(RAILWAY BOARD)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 4 U NOV 1998
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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 1997/Bhadra, 1919 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS
(1997-98)

Shri Basudeb Acharia—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Ram Naik
3. Shri Jagdambi Prasad Yadav
4. Shri Satya Deo Singh
5. Shri Anand Ratna Maurya
6. Shri Dharendra Agarwal
7. Shri Ashok Sharma
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Rajya Sabha

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44. Shri Tridib Chaudhuri
45. Shri Wasim Ahmad

SECRETARIAT

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Shri S.N. Mishra | — <i>Additional Secretary</i> |
| 2. Shri R.C. Gupta | — <i>Deputy Secretary</i> |
| 3. Shri S.N. Dargan | — <i>Under Secretary</i> |
| 4. Shri O.P. Shokeen | — <i>Committee Officer</i> |

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of Standing Committee on Railways (1997-98) having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Tenth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in their Second Report on 'Redressal of Public Grievances by Indian Railways'.

The Second Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 13 September, 1996 and contained 12 recommendations/observations and the replies of the Government to all the recommendations contained in the Report were received on 15 January, 1997, 30 January, 1997, 08 April, 1997 and 09 April, 1997. These replies were considered by the Committee on 20 August, 1997.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 20 August, 1997.

4. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Second Report of the Committee is given in Appendix II.

NEW DELHI;
26 August, 1997

4 Bhadra, 1919 (Saka)

BASUDEB ACHARIA,
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Railways.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (1997-98) deals with action taken by the Government on the recommendations and observations contained in their Second Report on "Redressal of Public Grievances by Indian Railways" which was presented to Lok Sabha on 13 September, 1996.

2. Action Taken Notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 12 recommendations/observations contained in the report. These have been broadly categorised as follows:—

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government—Para Nos. 49, 53 and 58.
- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies—Para Nos. 52, 54, 57 and 59.
- (iii) Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration—Para Nos. 50, 51, 55 and 56.
- (iv) Recommendation/observation in respect of which final reply of the Government is still awaited—Para No. 60.

3. The Committee desire that final replies in respect of the recommendations for which only interim reply has been given by Government should be furnished to them expeditiously.

4. The Committee will now deal with action taken by Government on some of their recommendations/observations.

Lack of proper monitoring mechanism

5. The Committee had in paragraph 50 of their Report, found that although full-fledged system was functioning at Divisional/Zonal/Board's level for redressal of the grievances of the general public and railusers, instructions and guidelines were also issued for toning up the grievances redressal system from time to time, yet the system had totally failed to deliver the goods upto the desired level perhaps due to the lack of proper monitoring mechanism. The Committee had therefore recommended that there was an urgent need of effective monitoring mechanism in the Board under the direct control of its Chairman to have continuous monitoring of the functioning of the system at all levels.

6. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways have stated:—

“The Public Grievances Redressal Machinery at Board’s level functions under the overall control of Chairman, Railway Board. The information about the number of complaints registered at different levels by the rail users/travelling public and their causes are received by Board through periodical Confidential Demi-Official Reports of the Additional General Managers of the Zonal Railways and are critically examined and scrutinised at the level of Executive Director, Public Grievances and Additional Member (Commercial), Railway Board every month and put up to Chairman, Railway Board for review. Weak areas are identified and instructions/guidelines are issued from time to time to Railways for toning up system so as to remove system deficiencies and to reverse the increasing trend of complaints in the areas so identified.

Besides this, periodical Conferences of Additional General Managers of Zonal Railways are held in Board’s Office, chaired by Chairman, Railway Board to discuss the major causes of complaints, time taken to dispose off the complaints received from different quarters and guidelines are given to them to further improve the system so as to provide customer friendly service to the travelling public.

In spite of continuous monitoring at Board’s level, there have been slippages occasionally, but the overall position has been reasonably satisfactory. The scrutiny of the information received from the Railways reveals that there has been a decline of nearly 10.1% in the number of complaints received during the period April to June, 96 as compared to the corresponding period of 1995; the relevant figures being:—

Period	Complaints registered	% decrease
1995 (April to June)	5257	
1996 (April to June)	4726	10.1%

However, recommendation of the Committee has been noted and further efforts will be made by the Board to ensure continuous effective monitoring of the Public Grievances Redressal Machinery so as to tone up the functioning of the system at all level.”

7. The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry of Railways. The present Railway system of redressal of public grievances has

totally failed to achieve the desired objective. From the reply furnished by the Ministry, it is observed that they have not initiated any steps to overcome the failure of the present system. Mere issuing of the instructions to the concerned Zonal/Divisional authorities has not worked. The Committee therefore reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Ministry of Railways must strengthen their present monitoring system in the Railway Board. Surprise checks should be conducted by the Senior officers to find out whether the instructions orders/issued by them are being implemented scrupulously. The Committee also desire that stern action should be taken against the officials found guilty and the action taken against them be intimated to the Committee.

Need for more emphasis for attitudinal change

8. Stressing the need for laying more emphasis on attitudinal change of the Railways staff, the Committee had, in paragraph 51 of their Report, noted that the most affected areas where volume of complaints were increasing day by day related to Enquiry Offices; punctuality of trains; improper behaviour of Commercial Staff, and other fields such as reservation, booking, cleanliness of stations, improper behaviour of other than Commercial staff, maintenance/cleanliness of coaches, etc. They felt that there was an urgent need for attitudinal change in the behaviour of railway staff with their customers. The staff dealing with the public directly should be more polite, courteous, helpful, responsive and positive. The Committee therefore had desired that concrete steps should be taken to develop, amongst the staff the sense of devotion to duty and responsibility towards their customers.

9. The Ministry of Railways, in their action taken reply, have stated:—

“Indian Railways being the largest utility organisation in the country has an inter-face with a large segment of population which constitute its users including about 11 million passengers travelling per day. There is, therefore, a compelling need for giving an uplift to its public image which so much depends on the attitude and behaviour of the front-line staff while dealing with the public. It is in this context that the need for bringing about an attitudinal change in the Railway staff having public interface has assumed increasing importance and accordingly railways have been taking steps to impart training to such staff in imbibing responsive, helpful, courteous and polite behaviour.

Indian Railways Commercial Manual emphasising on correct attitude and behaviour has enjoined upon the commercial staff to conduct themselves with dignity while interacting with customers. According to the manual, all commercial staff must:—

- (i) be alert, prompt, helpful, courteous and obliging;
- (ii) furnish correct information or when not able to do so, be helpful and direct enquirers to the official who can do so;

- (iii) attend to the comfort of all passenger, specially women and children unaccompanied by male members;
- (iv) maintain a close watch on the movement of traffic and suggest ways and means to promote flow of traffic to the railways;
- (v) pay special attention to the general cleanliness of the station platforms, offices, refreshment rooms, waiting rooms, waiting halls, bathrooms, lavatories etc; and
- (vi) give when asked their names, designations and/or distinguishing numbers without hesitation.

There is an institutional arrangement for imparting training to the front-line staff in matters of proper behaviour and courtesy in their dealings with the public and rail users and this has been made a part of the curriculum in the zonal training schools. In addition Railways have been organising as an on-going effort, educative campaigns, seminars, special courses periodically for the staff to inculcate helpful, courteous and responsive attitudes. Senior Officers of the Railways interact with such front-line staff freely on such occasions in order to inspire and motivate them to correct forms of behaviour in public and in dealing with valued customers. Southern Railway has very recently organised a 5-day training course in which professionals from University and Management Institutes were called to help railway management, impart training and the course content designed in consultation with these professionals, *inter-alia* covered with following thrust areas:

- (i) Improvement of the quality of service;
- (ii) Expectation of the customers;
- (iii) Dealing with job stress and consequences;
- (iv) Need for better information and communication with customer;
- (v) Dealing with public complaints in more effective manner;
- (vi) Improvements in inter-personal relationship with customer; and
- (vii) Transactional analysis.

Other zonal railways have been directed to organise similar courses for their front-line staff.

Besides, system improvements have been brought about in the area of customer satisfaction by reducing areas of manual interface and generating customer friendly environment. Some of these are as under:

- (i) Computerised reservation system have been provided at all stations where the reservation work load is more than 300 berths/seats per day.
- (ii) To enable the passengers to know about train running and reservation status, Inter-Active Voice Response System (VIRS) has been provided at some of the stations like New Delhi, Bangalore, Madras.

- (iii) Taped enquiries for giving information about arrival/departure of the trains have also been provided at major stations.
- (iv) Bed rolls are being supplied to all the passengers travelling in AC 2-Tier coaches.
- (v) The details of the availability of reservation are being published in the leading newspapers every day to enable the passengers to get the latest information in this regard."

10. From the reply of the Ministry of Railways, the Committee find that the Government have not taken seriously the concern expressed by them in regard to bringing an attitudinal change in the behaviour of Railway staff affecting the interest of larger sections of travelling commuters. They have simply put forward the same arguments which were advanced by them before the Committee during their evidence. In the opinion of the Committee mere issuance of manual instructions to the Commercial staff and asking them to conduct themselves with dignity while interacting with Commuters is not enough to contain all kinds of discourtesies creeping into the vast Railway net-work. The Committee therefore, recommend the Government to develop a System/Machinery equipped with suitable Administrative Powers to take action against the defaulters right on the spot. The Committee would await the action taken by the Government in this regard.

Enhancement of compensation amount and need for early settlement of claims

11. The Committee had in paragraph 55 of their Report found that there was provision for compensation for minor/major injury or death/permanent disability caused due to railway accidents. The prescribed amount of compensation for death/permanent disability was Rupees two lakhs and for other major or minor injury, the amount was from Rs. 1.80 lakh as maximum to Rs. 16 thousands as minimum. The Committee had recommended that the amount prescribed for death/permanent disability should be suitably enhanced from Rs. 2 lakhs keeping in view the inflationary trend. The Committee had also expressed their deep concern over undue delay in settlement of claims. They had expressed their desire that corrective measures should be taken at the earliest so that undue delay could be avoided.

12. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways have stated:

"In the year 1974 the amount of compensation on account of death was Rs. 50,000/-. It was revised to Rs. one lakh in the year 1989 after a gap of 15 years. This was further enhanced from Rs. one lakh to Rs. 2 lakhs in June 1990.

If we compare the average fare per passenger of Indian Railways with that of Indian Airlines, it is seen that railways is charging Rs. 13.50 against Rs. 2200 being charged by Indian Airlines. This means that Indian Airlines is charging 163 times more than that of

Indian Railways and therefore compensation paid by the two agencies can't be comparable.

Keeping in mind railway fare structure and the magnitude of traffic moved by the railways, the present level of compensation is considered adequate.

As regards to the delay in settlement of accident claims, it is pointed out that prior to the establishment of Railway Claims Tribunals the average time taken in giving awards in accident claims cases was 2 to 3 years. The setting up of the Railways Claims Tribunals has been a distinct advantage to the claimants in accident cases. Owing to adoption of summary procedure for disposal of cases and holding of circuit benches at other places for expediting settlement of pending cases, the average time taken in deciding claim cases has been reduced to around ten months. It is pertinent to note that there are only about 600 accident claims cases pending with all the 19 benches of Railways Claims Tribunals.

To ensure speedy settlement of Accident Claims cases, instructions have been reiterated to Zonal Railways that as soon as a 'passenger train accident' or 'Untoward incident', as defined under Section 124 and 124-A of the Railway Act, 1989 takes place, all particulars of injured and killed may be obtained, claims applications sent to claimants, and the records should also be made available to the concerned bench of Railway claims Tribunal. When claims are filed and come up for hearing, railways should give all possible assistance to the tribunal for their speedy settlement. It is also to be ensured that payment is made to the claimants at the earliest after the cases are decreed by the Tribunal."

13. The Committee note that the amount of compensation on account of death being paid by the Ministry of Railways was last enhanced from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh in June 1990. Keeping in view the present all round inflationary trend, which has eroded the value of money and also the income level of the public in general, the Committee reiterate that the amount of compensation being paid for minor/major injury or death/permanent disability caused due to Railway accidents needs to be suitably revised as per the index of the present level of inflation. It would go a long way to assuage the feelings of the affected families of the victims.

14. As stated by the Ministry of Railways in their action taken note, the average time taken in deciding the compensation claim has come down from 2 to 3 years to around ten months. To ensure speedy settlement of accident claims, instructions have also been reiterated to Zonal Railways that as soon as 'passenger train accident' or 'untoward incident' takes place, all particulars of injured and killed may be obtained, claim applications sent to the claimants and the records should also be made available to the concerned Bench of railway claims tribunals. In spite of these instructions,

the Committee find that there have been 600 pending cases with different Railways Claims Tribunals. In the opinion of the Committee, the formalities/process for preferring & disposal of claims is so cumbersome and time consuming that a claimant has to run from pillar to post to finally get his claim cleared. The Committee would therefore urge upon the Government to review the system in vogue for disposal of compensation claims, so as to further simplify and also reduce the time in processing the claims.

Proper and effective co-ordination with the concerned State Police authorities to overcome on touts menace.

15. The Committee had in paragraph 56 of their Report also found that the general public had been facing lot of problems in getting confirmed tickets from reservation counters especially due to touts and anti-social elements being active in a big way. The Ministry of Railways had admitted that though the anti-social elements were being apprehended and handed over to police, they were again appearing after some time and re-starting their activities. The Committee had therefore recommended that the regular checks should be intensified especially at big stations. They had also recommended that a proper and effective coordination with the concerned State police authorities should be established to ensure that the persons once apprehended in such cases and handed over to the police should not re-start their activities. Efforts for creating awareness in general public to help in eliminating the menace should also be intensified in a big way.

16. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways have stated:

“Railways have intensified regular checks at reservation offices, station platforms and in running trains at all important stations in order to keep the activities of touts and other such anti-social elements in check. To apprehend such elements indulging in malpractices and book them under relevant provisions of Railways Act, surprise checks by Vigilance and commercial organisations of the Railways in concert with Railways Protection Force/Government Railway Police are also organised at frequent intervals. Special drives are being launched during peak periods like Pooja holidays, Summer and Christmas holidays etc. The above are reinforced by taking following measures:

- (i) Close surveillance over all important reservation offices by officers and inspectors of vigilance and commercial departments.
- (ii) Constant checks in running trains to detect and apprehend persons travelling on transfer tickets.
- (iii) Scrutiny of reservation slips for reservations to checks the genuineness of reservations.

- (iv) Close monitoring of "Change of name facility" provided in Computerised Passenger Reservations System in order to obviate the scope for manipulation and misuse. Records are maintained of all such changes and these records are scrutinised by concerned officers.

A close liaison is maintained with Government Railway Police as well as local police authorities at field levels as well as headquarter levels. Assistance of local police is taken for organising raids on the premises of agencies operating in an unauthorised manner in selling of railways tickets on premium.

As a result of intensification of various checks conducted by railways, there has been an increase in the number of touts apprehended during the current year as well as the number of cases of transfer of tickets detected on running trains, as will be evident from the table below:

	April—August 1995	April—August 1996
No. of preventive Checks	11735	12466
No. of touts apprehended	1083	1172
No. of cases of Transfer of tickets detected	2829	4026

With the objective of increasing public awareness about the menace of touts etc., railways have taken the following steps:

- (i) Important reservation complexes have been provided with Public Address System through which frequent announcements are made to caution the travelling public against buying tickets from touts and unauthorised agents. Such appeals are also made to general public through radio, TV and print media.
- (ii) Availability of reservation in different trains is displayed through manual and electronically controlled boards and screens as well as through newspapers and teletext service on TV for the benefit of travelling public.

The observations of the Committees have been sent to the railways for taking appropriate action."

17. The Committee note that though a number of steps have been taken to overcome the menace of touts by the Ministry of Railways but they have totally failed to put a check on them. It is evident from the fact that the

number of touts apprehended and the number of cases of transfer of tickets detected have increased from 1083 and 2829 in April-August 1995 to 1172 and 4026 in April-August 1996 respectively. The Committee take a very serious view of the situation prevailing in this regard.

The Committee are concerned to note that no action has been taken by the Ministry of Railways on their recommendation for establishing a proper and effective co-ordination with the concerned State police authorities to ensure that the persons once apprehended in such cases and handed over to the police may not restart their activities. The Committee reiterate that immediate action is needed to be taken to establish proper and effective co-ordination with the State police authorities to overcome this problem. Simultaneously Police/Railways Officers who are found to be in collusion or negligent in their duties should be punished severely.

Scope for improvement in present Public Grievances Redressal System

18. Stressing the need for improvement in the present public grievances redressal system the Committee had, in paragraph 60 of their Report, found that there was further scope of improvement in the present public grievances redressal system functioning in the Railways at different levels. The Committee had desired that further necessary corrective measures should be taken immediately to streamline the redressal system especially in regard to effective monitoring of the system at all levels under intimation to them. The Committee also desired that the names of the Officers dealing with redressal system at different levels; their designation and telephone numbers and timings fixed for meeting with the general public and rail users to hear their grievances, should invariably be given wide publicity through media and print for facility of the general public.

The Committee had also found that the four Committees viz. (i) Divisional Railway Users' Consultative Committees; (ii) Zonal Railway Users' Consultative Committees; (iii) National Railway Users' Council, and (iv) Station Consultative Committee were functioning to strengthen the redressal system in the Railways. They had desired to have the following information:

- (i) Composition and term of each Committee (constituted during last five years);
 - (ii) Number of sittings of each Committee (year-wise) during the last five years and recommendations made by them;
 - (iii) The number of recommendations accepted and implemented so far; and
 - (iv) Reasons for non-acceptance/implementation of any recommendations, if so.
19. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways, have stated: "Railways keep on taking corrective measures in order to further improve the system. The periodical reports being received from

Zonal Railways are critically examined and reviewed up to the highest level of Railways Board *i.e.* Chairman, Railway Board. Weak areas are identified and corrective measures are taken by issuing instructions/guidelines to the Zonal Railways emphasizing the need for speedy disposal and complaints/grievances so as to minimise the complaints and to make our services more customer friendly. Issuing the instructions/guidelines for this purpose to Zonal Railways is a regular process and recently we have issued instructions to them *vide* our letter No. 96PG/1019/AMCSC, dated 11.10.96. emphasizing the need for speedy disposal of complaints and to achieve better customer satisfaction. The point about wide publicity through media and print giving names of the officers dealing with redressal system at different level is noted. However, it is pointed out that the names of officers dealing with redressal system, their designation and telephone numbers are given in the Indian Railways Time Table "Trains at a Glance" and the Zonal Railways Time Table for the facility of general public. Such publicity is also given through Notice Boards in Divisional, Zonal Railway Headquarters, Railway Board Offices and at stations. Further publicity will be given from time to time through media and print for the facility of the General public".

20. The Committee take serious note of the casual approach of the Ministry of Railways in furnishing the action taken replies to them. The information called by the Committee in regard to composition and term of the four Committees *viz.* (i) Divisional Railways Users' Consultative Committees; (ii) Zonal Railway Users' Consultative Committees; (iii) National Railway Users' Council, and (iv) Station Consultative Committee; number of sittings of each Committee (year wise) during the last 5 years and recommendations made by them; number of recommendations accepted and implemented so far; and reasons for non acceptance/implementation of the remaining recommendations, has not been submitted to them so far. As the above information is vital for giving suggestions for strengthening of public grievances redressal system, the Committee desire that the requisite information should be supplied to them within a month's period.

21. The Committee would also like to have details of the publicity given through Media and Print giving telephone numbers and names of officers dealing with redressal of public grievances after the presentation of their Report.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 49)

The Committee note that a time limit of three months has been prescribed for disposal of complaints received from the Department of Pension & Personnel. For the complaints/representations received through Ministers, MPs and other VIPs a target of one month has been prescribed for this disposal. The Committee are constrained to note that for the complaints which are received from the general public, the Ministry of Railways have not fixed any time limit and it entirely depends upon the Railways officers' discretion to attend such complaints. The Committee are of the firm view that the complaints received from the general public should be disposed of within a time limit to be prescribed by the Ministry of Railways.

The Committee have been informed that one month's time limit is also applicable for the disposal of the complaints/representations received from the Standing Committee on Railways for Ministry's comments. On the contrary it has been the experience of the Committee that the complaints/representations sent by them to the Ministry of Railways have been taken in a very casual manner as is evident from the fact that a number of complaints/representations did not received attention of the Ministry for months together. The Committee desire that Ministry of Railways should tone up the administration and ensure that time schedule prescribed for the disposal of the complaints is strictly adhered to.

Reply of the Government

As has already been mentioned in this para, one month's target time has been prescribed for the disposal of the complaints received from the general public through people's representatives *i.e.* MPs, MLAs, Ministers and other VIPs. A time limit of 45 days and 3 months has also been prescribed for disposal of public complaints received through Directorate of Public Grievances (Cabinet Secretariat) and Department of Pensions and Pensioner's Welfare respectively.

As regards the complaints received directly from the general public, it is pointed out that these complaints are received and registered at Zonal/ Divisional Headquarters' level and at stations and are quite large in number. The statistics with regard to the time taken at different levels for disposal of complaints is not maintained. The complaints are generally dealt with at the Divisional level where time taken for the disposal ranges

between 30-45 days. In some cases the time taken may even be more particularly in cases where complaint is not available for ascertaining the facts of his complaint or in which more than one Zonal Railway is involved. However a time limit of 90 days has been fixed for the disposal of such complaints. Where, however, detailed enquiry becomes necessary after the initial scrutiny, a time limit of 120 days is fixed.

As it has already been intimated to the Standing Committee *vide* item No. 4, of the Second Questionnaire on the Redressal of Public Grievances by Indian Railways at the time of oral evidence by the Board, the Ministry of Railways attach very high importance to the complaints/representations forwarded by the Standing Committee and the disposal of such representations/grievances is ensured within the time limit prescribed for the disposal of grievances/representations received through the Ministers, MPs, MLAs and other VIPs etc. *i.e.* one month.

1. To ensure speedy disposal of complaints/representations received from the Standing Committee on Railways, this Ministry has toned up by the machinery and guidelines have been issued for their disposal as under:—

- | | | |
|-----|---|---------|
| (a) | Where the information
is available in Board's
office itself | 10 days |
| (b) | Where the information
has to be collected
from the Zonal Railways | 30 days |

2. Budget (Committee) II Branch under Executive Director (A/c) has been nominated for dealing with such complaints/representations received from the Standing Committee on Railways.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5(PG) dated 5.2.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 53)

The Committee note that periodical meetings chaired by the Chairman, Railway Board with the concerned officers are held to review the functioning of public grievances redressal system. During the last five years from 1990-91 to 1994-95 only six meetings were held. The Committee recommend that such meetings should be held at least twice a year so that remedial follow-up action could be taken expeditiously.

Reply of the Government

Recommendation is noted and will be implemented.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96BC-II/SCR/XI/5 (PG) dated 15.1.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 58)

The Committee feel that though there is decline in forced entry by unauthorised elements in reserved compartments of the trains, efforts to check and overcome this problem should further be intensified.

Reply of the Government

Railways are fully aware of the problems of unauthorised entry of passengers in reserved coaches. A number of steps have been taken by the Railways to curb this activity. With a view to ensure that unreserved passengers do not enter the reserved coaches, instructions have been issued for a tighter and stricter pre-checking of tickets in both reserved and unreserved coaches so as to prevent the unauthorised travellers from boarding the train.

2. With the above objective of preventing unauthorised entry into reserved coaches, Zonal Railways have been advised to supplement the existing strength of TTEs by withdrawing them from stationary duties and various squads for effectively manning the train services as per the requirements.

3. Instructions have also been issued to fill up the existing vacancies of TTEs through the Recruitment Boards, departmental promotions etc. A proposal is also on hand for creations of additional posts without insisting on matching surrender to the extent of 1/3rd of the current requirement.

4. Zonal Railways have also been advised to intensify the check for preventing unauthorised entry of passengers in the reserved coaches.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96BC-II/SCR/XI/5(PG) dated 15.1.1997]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLIES

Recommendation (Para No. 52)

The Committee also find that a maximum number of complaints have been shown under the Head 'Miscellaneous Causes'. The Committee desire to know the details (cause-wise) of these complaints and time taken in their disposal.

Reply of the Government

The complaints which are being received from the travelling public have been classified under 21 categories and 'Miscellaneous Causes' is the part of it. Following items from the part of 'Miscellaneous' category:—

- (i) Slip coaches not attached in time.
- (ii) Wrong information being given by staff.
- (iii) Change in timings not notified on Notice Boards.
- (iv) Gents travelling in Ladies Coaches.
- (v) Non-availability of invalid chairs and self-service trolleys etc.

Complaints under the above items like other remaining 20 major heads are attended promptly to redress the grievance of general Public/railway users within the time ranging between 30-45 days.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5 (PG) dated 15.1.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 54)

At present the total number of Railways Stations is 7043. The Committee are surprised to find that the last periodical review of the availability of basic amenities at stations was conducted as far back as in April 1991. It is doubtful whether the required basic amenities are available at the stations as on date. The Committee desire that a fresh review should be conducted immediately and the latest position regarding provision of basic amenities at each station should be furnished to them. For future, annual review should be conducted to ensure regular availability of basic amenities at all stations.

Reply of the Government

Survey of availability of basic amenities on the Railway stations had been done periodically in the past. Last such survey was carried out in April, 1991. Based on the outcome of these surveys, deficiencies as noted were removed. Last such removal of deficiencies has been completed in March, 1995.

Standing Committee on Railways recommended that the entire gamut of passenger amenities be reviewed and revised. Accordingly, the concept of 'Basic Amenities' and 'Additional Amenities' has been abandoned and 'Infrastructural Facilities' and 'Passenger Amenities' concept has been introduced. Infrastructural Facilities are those which are required for operating a station and depend upon the importance and volume of passenger traffic handled. These facilities are station building, platforms, first foot over bridge, booking facilities, drinking water arrangements, seating arrangements, platform shelters, lighting, fans, urinals and latrines etc.

Facilities over the above the "Infrastructural Facilities" are designated as 'Passenger Amenities' and these are to be provided on a need-based manner, keeping in view the volume of traffic as per norms laid down.

Accordingly, all the railways were directed to draw 'Perspective Plans' for identifying the requirements on various stations. Deficiencies, if any, identified at a station requiring augmentation of the existing facilities are to be eliminated/provided in a phased manner according to priorities stipulated in the Plan. All the Railways are taking up works at Railway Stations as per this Perspective Plan.

Thus as per the Board's latest guidelines, all the amenities over and above the Infrastructural Facilities will be provided in a phased manner as per the Action Plan drawn by the Railways. However, Zonal Railways have reconfirmed recently that erstwhile 'Basic Amenities' exist at all the railway stations.

To meet the additional requirements of funds, an all time high allocation of Rs. 120 crore has been provided for the current financial year.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5 (PG) dated 15.1.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 57)

The Ministry of Railways have stated that while implementing Unigauge Project it is ensured that all matching facilities are provided at all stations. However, in reply to a question whether levels of platforms of the stations on different stations covered under gauge conversion scheme have been upgraded to the required level, the Ministry have stated that 'the level of platforms at these stations has since been upgraded or is being gradually upgraded'. The Committee take strong exception to this vague reply given by the Ministry of Railways. The Committee desire that a survey should be conducted at the earliest to find out the number of stations where platform levels are yet to be upgraded and chalk out a plan to upgrade the level of platforms at these stations within specified time schedule.

Reply of the Government

As desired by the Committee, a survey has been conducted to find out the number of stations where platforms are yet to be upgraded. The details of the findings are given below:

Northern Railway	21 Nos.	21 stations have been sanctioned during 96-97.
N E Railway	27 Nos.	2 stations have already been sanctioned.
N F Railway	06 Nos.	
Southern Railway	08 Nos.	
S C Railway	15 Nos.	
Western Railway	30 Nos.	
Total	107 Nos.	

The Railways have been asked to prioritise the requirements on the basis of the traffic handled at these stations and to include them in the Annual Works programme on the basis of the priorities so determined so that all these platforms can be upgraded within the 9th plan period.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5 (PG) dated 9.4.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 59)

The Committee note that census to assess the density of road/rail traffic at railway crossings is conducted after every five years. If the density found in accordance with the criteria prescribed for construction of road under/over bridge at railway level crossing i.e. one lakh vehicle units or more, a level crossing is considered for replacement by road under/over bridge. The responsibility of construction of such bridges is shared by both the railways and the concerned State Govt. The committee are of the view that the dual responsibility for construction of road under/over bridges at railway level crossings has totally failed. Huge traffic jams at railway crossings especially in big cities is a matter of routine now-a-days resulting in avoidable fuel consumption and creating a lot of environmental hazards. The Committee therefore strongly recommend that the dual responsibility for construction of road under/over bridges must be abolished henceforth and the Railway should take the full responsibility of the work after sorting out the modalities with the State Govts. on priority basis.

The Committee also recommend that the old criterion of one lakh vehicle units to assess the density of the traffic for construction of road under/over bridges must be revised to 50 thousand vehicle units and a fresh census for assessing the density of the traffic should be conducted immediately in accordance with the revised criterion and chalk out a comprehensive plan for construction of road under/over bridges specially in big cities. Keeping in view the changing complexity of road traffic the Committee further recommend that surveys to assess the density of traffic at level crossings in future should be conducted after every three years.

Reply of the Government

1. The Standing Committee has made 4 recommendations as follows:

- (i) Railway should take the full responsibility of construction of Road Over/Under Bridges.
- (ii) The criteria of one lakh train vehicle units of traffic density for construction of road over/under bridges be revised to 50,000 train vehicle units.
- (iii) Census of traffic density at level crossings should be immediately conducted to chalk out comprehensive plan for construction of road over/under bridges specially in big cities, taking into consideration the revised traffic density criterion.
- (iv) Census of traffic density should be conducted every 3 years.

2. (i) A Road Over Bridge has two distinct portions—the bridge portion and the approach portion. The bridge portion spans across the present and future expected tracks. The approach portion connects the existing road network of the city to the bridge portion through a sloping link. The bridge portion is invariably in Railway land. The approaches are mostly in State Govt./private land. For construction of bridge portion anywhere no acquisition of land is involved. If any structure comes in the way the same is easily shifted to a new location, being Railway owned. In case of approaches many a time acquisition of private land and properties is involved. Besides in cities the business activity on either side of the road also gets affected. Therefore, besides technical issues, several human factors need to be weighed and balanced in deciding the location of a road over bridge. In spite of this, aspirations and interest of every one can not be catered for. This leads to resistance and resort to various means legal and illegal to prevent/delay construction of approaches. The State Govts. who have knowledge and control of the various local issues can take the best decision and tackle in the best possible manner the problems arising out of these matters. Railways, who have neither the knowledge of local problems, local developmental programmes nor control over law and order enforcing authorities and powers for acquisition of land/property, will not be able to tackle these problems themselves. For all these the Railway will have to approach the State Govt. only.

(ii) In addition to the above problems, construction of approaches also involves shifting/diversion of utilities like water supply pipeline, sewage pipe line, electric supply line, cables and wires. The planning of utilities, location and management is entirely with the State Govts. State Governments are again in the best position to judge and decide ways and methods of shifting/diverting the utilities so as to enable construction of approaches. Railways have neither the expertise nor the authority to shift/divert any utility.

(iii) The State Govt. share the cost of construction of the Road Over Bridges and also construct the approaches. Railways construct only the bridge portion. State Govts. have their own Public Works Deptt./Bridge Corporations which carry out these works. If the construction of approaches is to be taken over by the railways, the Railway would be required to create appropriate organisation for this work whereas the organisation already existing in the State Govts. would be left with nor or reduced work. This is likely to lead to a situation which the State Govts. may not accept.

(iv) From the above, it would be seen that the Railways are neither equipped nor placed in the best position to construct approaches of the Road Over Bridges for which State Govts. are best suited.

3. It is true that traffic, particularly road traffic is developing fast. As a result, traffic over the level crossings is also increasing. Even with the present criteria of one lakh TVUs. there are a very large number of level crossings which are eligible for replacement by Road Over/Under Bridges. However, it has not been possible to take up works of construction of Road Over/Under Bridges in replacement of these level crossings. Not only this, works already approved and included in Railway's Works Programme are not progressing. The main reason for this is that State Govts. are not able to construct approaches. Problems of land acquisition, acquisition of private properties, shifting of utilities and overcoming legal hurdles besides inadequacy of funds are the reasons for slow progress. Reducing the criteria of traffic density from one lakh TVUs to 50,000 TVUs would only increase the number of level crossings which will be eligible for replacement by Road Over/Under Bridges, but it will not help in getting over the root cause of the problem which is difficulty in acquiring land and property, shifting of utilities and last but not the least finding funds. Even Railway would not be able to spare adequate amount of funds for construction of road over/under bridge if level crossings which qualify for this purpose are required to be replaced within a time frame of say 5 years or so. In view of this situation it is requested that the question of reviewing the criteria be considered only after the situation of constructing road over/under bridges in replacement of level crossings with traffic density of one lakh or more TVUs is under control.

4. (i) As mentioned above, the criteria for replacement of a level crossing by a road over bridge should not be revised at this juncture. Therefore, the need for carrying out traffic census in view of the revised criteria does not arise at present. The present system of conducting census once in 5 years covering 1/5 of the level crossing every year is adequate. Reducing the periodicity of census from 5 years to 3 years will only increase the workload of conducting the census as instead of 20% of the level crossings, Railway would have to cover 33% of the level crossings every year.

(ii) In view of the position brought out above, the Committee may kindly approve that this reduction in the periodicity be also deferred till the situation in regard to construction of road over/under bridges is brought under control.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5(PG), dated 15.1.1997]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendation (Para No. 50)

The Committee find that although full fledged system is functioning at Divisional/Zonal/Board's level for redressal of the grievances of the general public and rail users and instructions and guidelines are also issued for toning up the grievances redressal system from time to time, yet the system has totally failed to deliver the goods upto the desired level perhaps due to the lack of proper monitoring mechanism. The Committee therefore, recommend that there is urgent need of effective monitoring mechanism in the Board under the direct control of its Chairman to have continuous monitoring of the functioning of the system at all levels.

Reply of the Government

The Public Grievances Redressal Machinery at Board's level functions under the overall control of Chairman Railway Board. The information about the number of complaints registered at different levels by the rail users/travelling public and their causes are received by Board through periodical Confidential Demi-Official Reports of the Additional General Managers of the Zonal Railways and are critically examined and scrutinised at the level of Executive Director, Public Grievances and Additional Member (Commercial), Railway Board every month and put up to Chairman, Railway Board for review. Weak areas are identified and instructions/guidelines are issued from time to time to Railways for toning up system so as to remove system deficiencies and to reverse the increasing trend of complaints in the areas so identified.

Besides this, periodical Conferences of Additional General Managers of Zonal Railways are held in Board's Office, chaired by Chairman, Railway Board to discuss the major causes of complaints, time taken to dispose off the complaints received from different quarters and guidelines are given to them to further improve the system so as to provide customer friendly service to the travelling public.

In spite of continuous monitoring at Board's level, there have been slippages occasionally, but the overall position has been reasonably satisfactory. The scrutiny of the information received from the Railways

reveals that there has been a decline of nearly 10.1% in the number of complaints received during the period April to June, 96 as compared to the corresponding period of 1995; the relevant figures being:—

Period	Complaints registered	% decrease
1995 (April to June)	5257	—
1996 (April to June)	4726	10.1%

However, recommendation of the Committee has been noted and further efforts will be made by the Board to ensure continuous effective monitoring of the Public Grievances Redressal Machinery so as to tone up the functioning of the system at all levels.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/Scr/XI/5(PG), dated 15.1.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph 7 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 51)

The Committee are unhappy to note that the most affected areas where volume of complaints are increasing day by day relate to Enquiry Offices; punctuality of trains; improper behaviour of Commercial Staff, and other fields such as reservation booking; cleanliness of stations, improper behaviour of other than Commercial staff, maintenance/cleanliness of coaches, etc. They feel that there is an urgent need of attitudinal change in the behaviour of the railway staff with their customers. The staff dealing with the public directly should be more polite, courteous, helpful, responsive and positive. The Committee therefore desire that concrete steps should be taken to develop, amongst the staff, the sense of devotion to duty and responsibility towards their customers.

Reply of the Government

Indian Railways being the largest utility organisation in the country has an inter-face with a large segment of population which constitute its users including about 11 million passengers travelling per day. There is, therefore, a compelling need for giving an uplift to its public image which so much depends on the attitude and behaviour of the front-line staff while dealing with the public. It is in this context that the need for bringing about an attitudinal change in the Railway staff having public inter-face

has assumed increasing importance and accordingly railways have been taking steps to impart training to such staff in imbibing responsive, helpful, courteous and polite behaviour.

Indian Railways Commercial Manual emphasising on correct attitude and behaviour has enjoined upon the commercial staff to conduct themselves with dignity while interacting with customers. According to the manual, all commercial staff must:—

- (i) be alert, prompt, helpful, courteous and obliging;
- (ii) furnish correct information or when not able to do so, be helpful and direct enquirers to the official who can do so;
- (iii) attend to the comfort of all passengers, specially women and children unaccompanied by male members;
- (iv) maintain a close watch on the movement of traffic and suggest ways and means to promote flow of traffic to the railways;
- (v) pay special attention to the general cleanliness of the station platforms, offices, refreshment room, waiting rooms, waiting halls, bathrooms, lavatories etc; and
- (vi) give when asked their names, designations and/or distinguishing numbers without hesitation.

There is an institutional arrangement for imparting training to the front-line staff in matters of proper behaviour and courtesy in their dealings with the public and rail users and this has been made a part of the curriculum in the zonal training schools. In addition Railways have been organising as an on-going effort, educative campaigns, seminars, special courses periodically for the staff to inculcate helpful, courteous and responsive attitudes. Senior Officers of the Railways interact with such front-line staff freely on such occasions in order to inspire and motivate them to correct forms of behaviour in public and in dealing with valued customers. Southern Railway has very recently organised a 5-day training course in which professionals from University and Management Institutes were called to help railway management, impart training and the course content designed in consultation with these professionals, *inter-alia* covered with following thrust areas:—

- (i) Improvement of the quality of service;
- (ii) Expectation of the customers;
- (iii) Dealing with job stress and consequences;
- (iv) Need for better information and communication with customer;
- (v) Dealing with public complaints in more effective manner;
- (vi) Improvements in inter-personal relationship with customer; and

(vii) Transactional analysis.

Other zonal railways have been directed to organise similar courses for their front-line staff.

Besides, system improvement have been brought about in the area of customer satisfaction by reducing areas of manual inter-face and generating customer-friendly environment. Some of these are as under:—

- (i) Computerised reservation system have been provided at all stations where the reservation work load in more than 300 berths/seats per day.
- (ii) To enable the passengers to know about train running and reservation status, Inter-Active Voice Response System (IVRS) has been provided at some of the stations like New Delhi, Bangalore, Madras.
- (iii) Taped enquiries for giving information about arrival/departure of the trains have also been provided at major stations.
- (iv) Bed rolls are being supplied to all the passengers travelling in AC 2-Tier coaches.
- (v) The details of the availability of reservation are being published in the leading newspapers every day to enable the passengers to get the latest information in this regard.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5(PG), dated 15.1.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph 10 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 55)

The Committee note that there is a provision for compensation for minor/major injury or death/permanent disability caused due to railway accidents. The prescribed amount of compensation for death/permanent disability is Rupees two lakhs and for other major or minor injury, the amount is from Rs. 1.80 lakh as maximum to Rs. 16 thousand as minimum. The Committee recommend that the amount prescribed for death/permanent disability should be suitably enhanced from Rs. 2 lakhs keeping in view the inflationary trend.

The Committee also express their deep concern over undue delay in settlement of claims. They desire that corrective measures should be taken at the earliest so that undue delay could be avoided.

Reply of the Government

In the year 1974 the amount of compensation on account of death was Rs. 50,000/-. It was revised to Rs. one lakh in the year 1989 after a gap of 15 years. This was further enhanced from Rs. one lakh to Rs. 2 lakhs in June 1990.

If we compare the average fare per passenger of Indian Railways with that of Indian Airlines, it is seen that railways is charging Rs. 13.50 against Rs. 2200/- being charged by Indian Airlines. This means that Indian Airlines is charging 163 times more than that of Indian Railways and therefore compensation paid by the two agencies can't be comparable.

Keeping in mind railway fare structure and the magnitude of traffic moved by the railways, the present level of compensation is considered adequate.

As regards to the delay in settlement of accident claims, it pointed out that prior to the establishment of Railway Claims Tribunals the average time taken in giving awards in accident claims cases was 2 to 3 years. The setting up of the Railway Claims Tribunals has been a distinct advantage to the claimants in accident cases. Owing to adopting of summary procedure for disposal of cases and holding of circuit benches at other places for expediting settlement of pending cases, the average time taken in deciding claim cases has been reduced to around ten months. It is pertinent to note that there are only about 600 accident claims cases pending with all the 19 benches of Railway Claims Tribunals.

To ensure speedy settlement of Accident Claims cases, instructions have been reiterated to Zonal Railways that as soon as a 'passenger train accident' or 'Untoward incident', as defined under Section 124 and 124-A of the Railways Act, 1989 takes place, all particulars of injured and killed may be obtained, claims applications sent to claimants, and the records should also be made available to the concerned bench of Railway Claims Tribunal. When claims are filed and come up for hearing, railways should give all possible assistance to the tribunal for their speedy settlement. It is also to be ensured that payment is made to the claimants at the earliest after the cases are decreed by the Tribunal.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-IL/SCR/XI/5(PG) dated 15.1.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraphs 13 & 14 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 56)

The Committee note that the general public have been facing lot of problems in getting confirmed tickets from reservation counters especially due to touts and anti-social elements who are active in a big way. The Ministry of Railways have admitted that though these anti-social elements are apprehended and handed over to police, they again appear after some time and re-start their activities. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the regular checks should be intensified especially at big stations. They also recommend that a proper and effective co-ordination with the concerned state police authorities should be established to ensure that the persons once apprehended in such cases and handed over to the police

should not re-start their activities. Efforts for creating awareness in general public to help in eliminating this menace should also be intensified in a big way.

Reply of the Government

Railways have intensified regular checks at reservation offices, station platforms and in running trains at all important stations in order to keep the activities of touts and other such anti-social elements in check. To apprehend such elements indulging in malpractices and book them under relevant provisions of Railways Act, surprise checks by Vigilance and commercial organisations of the Railways in concert with Railway Protection Force/Government Railway Police are also organised at frequent intervals. Special drives are being launched during peak periods like Pooja holidays, Summer and Christmas holidays etc. The above are reinforced by taking following measures:—

- (i) Close surveillance over all important reservation offices by officers and inspectors of vigilance and commercial departments.
- (ii) Constant checks in running trains to detect and apprehend persons travelling on transfer tickets.
- (iii) Scrutiny of reservation slips for reservations to check the genuineness of reservations.
- (iv) Close monitoring of "Change of name facility" provided in Computerised Passenger Reservation System in order to obviate the scope for manipulation and misuse. Records are maintained of all such changes and these records are scrutinised by concerned officers.

2. A close liaison is maintained with Government Railway Police as well as local police authorities at field levels as well as headquarter levels. Assistance of local police is taken for organising raids on the premises of agencies operating in an unauthorised manner in selling of railway tickets on premium.

3. As a result of intensification of various checks conducted by railways, there has been an increase in the number of touts apprehended during the

current year as well as the number of cases of transfer of tickets detected on running trains, as will be evident from the table below:—

	April—August 1995	April—August 1996
No. of preventive checks	11735	12466
No. of touts apprehended	1083	1172
No. of cases of Transfer of tickets detected	2829	4026

4. With the objective of increasing public awareness about the menace of touts etc., railways have taken the following steps:—

- (i) Important reservation complexes have been provided with Public Address System through which frequent announcements are made to caution the travelling public against buying tickets from touts and unauthorised agents. Such appeals are also made to general public through radio, TV and print media.
- (ii) Availability of reservation in different trains is displayed through manual and electronically controlled boards and screens as well as through newspapers and teletext service on TV for the benefit of travelling public.

5. The observations of the Committees have been sent to the railways for taking appropriate action.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No. 96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5(PG) dated 15.1.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraph 17 of the Report)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATION/OBSERVATION IN RESPECT OF WHICH FINAL REPLY OF THE GOVERNMENT IS STILL AWAITED

Recommendation (Para No. 60)

The Committee find that there is further scope of improvement in the present public grievances redressal system functioning in the Railways at different levels. The Committee desire that further necessary corrective measures should be taken immediately to streamline the redressal system especially in regard to effective monitoring of the system at all levels under intimation to them. The Committee also desire that the names of the Officers dealing with redressal system at different levels; their designation and telephone numbers and timings fixed for meeting with the general public and railusers to hear their grievances, should invariably be given wide publicity through media and print for facility of the general public.

The Committee also find that the four Committees viz. (i) Divisional Railway Users' Consultative Committees; (ii) Zonal Railway Users' Consultative Committees; (iii) National Railway Users' Council and (iv) Station Consultative Committee are functioning to strengthen the redressal system in the Railways.

The Committee desire to have the following information:

- (i) Composition and Term of each Committee (constituted during last five years);
- (ii) Number of sittings of each Committee (year-wise) during the last five years and recommendations made by them;
- (iii) The number of recommendations accepted and implemented so far; and
- (iv) Reasons for non-acceptance/implementation of any recommendation, if so.

Reply of the Government

Railway keep on taking corrective measures in order to further improve the system. The periodical reports being received from Zonal Railways are critically examined and reviewed up to the highest level of Railway Board i.e. Chairman Railway Board. Weak areas are identified and corrective measures are taken by issuing instructions/guidelines to the Zonal Railways emphasising the need for speedy disposal of complaints/grievances so as to minimise the complaints and to make our services more customer

friendly. Issuing the instructions/guidelines for this purpose to Zonal Railways is a regular process and recently we have issued instructions to them *vide* our letter No.96/PG/10/19/AMC/SC, dated 11.10.96 emphasising the need for speedy disposal of complaints and to achieve better customer satisfaction. The point about wide publicity through media and print giving names of the officers dealing with redressal system at different level is noted. However, it is pointed out that the names of officers dealing with redressal system, their designation and telephone numbers are given in the Indian Railways Time Table "Trains at a Glance" and the Zonal Railways Time Table for the facility of general public. Such publicity is also given through Notice Boards in Divisional, Zonal Railway Headquarters, Railway Board offices and at stations. Further publicity will be given from time-to-time through media and print for the facility of the General public.

[M/o Rlys. O.M. No.96/BC-II/SCR/XI/5 (PG) dated 15.1.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see Paragraphs 20 & 21 of the Report)

NEW DELHI;
26 August, 1997

4 Bhadra, 1919 (Saka)

BASUDEB ACHARIA,

Chairman,
Standing Committee on Railways.

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE FIRST SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (1997-98)

The Committee sat on Wednesday, the 20 August 1997 from 1500 hrs. to 1620 hrs. in Committee Room 'C' Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Shri Basudeb Acharia—*Chairman*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Dr. Ram Vilas Vedanti
3. Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsi
4. Shri K.P. Singh Deo
5. Km. Sushila Tiriya
6. Shri Imchalemba
7. Shri Chun Chun Prasad Yadav
8. Shri Ram Singh Shakya
9. Shri K. Parasuraman
10. Shri K.P. Naidu
11. Shri Sukhlal Khushwaha

Rajya Sabha

12. Shri Wasim Ahmad
13. Shri W. Angou Singh
14. Smt. Malti Sharma
15. Shri Rahasbihari Barik
16. Shri S. Niraikulathan

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri R.C. Gupta — *Deputy Secretary*
2. Shri Surinder N. Dargan — *Under Secretary*
3. Shri O.P. Shokeen — *Committee Officer*

The Committee considered and adopted the following Reports with amendments/modifications as indicated in Annexures—* & II:

- (i) * * *
- (ii) Draft Tenth Report on action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in their Second Report on 'Redressal of Public Grievances by Indian Railways.'

* Related to other matters.

2. The Committee authorized the Chairman to finalise the Reports after making consequential changes, if any, arising out of factual verification by the Ministry of Railways or otherwise and to present the Reports to both the Houses of Parliament or the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha.

The Committee then adjourned.

AMENDMENTS MODIFICATIONS MADE BY STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS IN DRAFT TENTH REPORT ON ACTION TAKEN ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SECOND REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON 'REDRESSAL OF PUBLIC GRIEVANCES BY INDIAN RAILWAYS'

S.No.	Page No.	Para No.	Line		
01.	03	07	Last Line	For Read	'would not work' 'has not worked'
02.	04	07	08	For Read	'them' 'the Committee'
03.	10	14	18	For Read	'simplify and streamline the system' 'simplify the system and also reduce the time in processing the claim.'
04.	14	17	06	For Read	'found to be negligent' 'found to be in collusion or negligent'

APPENDIX II

Analysis of action taken by Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in Second Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (1996-97) (Eleventh Lok Sabha) on 'Redressal of Public Grievances by Indian Railways'

Total number of recommendations/observations	12
(i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government	3
(Vide recommendations/observations Para Nos. 49, 53 & 58)	
Percentage of Total	25%
(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies	4
(Vide recommendations/Observations Para Nos. 52, 54, 57 & 59)	
Percentage of Total	33.3%
(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee and which required reiteration	4
(Vide recommendations/observations Para Nos. 50, 51, 55 & 56)	
Percentage of Total	33.3%
(iv) Recommendation/Observation in respect of which final reply of Government is still awaited	1
(Vide recommendation/observation Para No. 60)	
Percentage of Total	8.4%