

It should be framed in the best interest of the workers and the same be laid on the Table. We should be given an opportunity to discuss it so that various schools of thought here and the representatives workers are able to express their views thereon.

With these words I seek leave to withdraw my Resolution and urge that the Bill be passed.

This legislation is meant for the welfare of labourers, workers, employees and I hope Government would implement it in that spirit although I am not optimistic but one should not be pessimistic as well. I want to give one more chance to the hon. woman Minister and withdraw my Resolution.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Has the hon. Member leave of the House to withdraw his Statutory Resolution?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

[Translation]

JUSTICE GUMAN MAL LODHA : This legislation is meant for the welfare of labourers, workers, employees and I hope Government would implement it in that spirit although I am not optimistic but one should not be pessimistic as well. I want to give one more chance to the hon. woman Minister and withdraw my Resolution.

The Resolution was, by leave, withdrawn.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basudeb Acharia is not present. Since he had already moved his amendment, I put amendment No 4 to the vote of the House.

The amendment was put and negatived

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill further to amend the Coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948, be taken into consideration."

The amendment was adopted

[Translation]

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH : As the hon. Member has said if one goes into the coal mine the will come out with blackspots. In this connection I would like to say :

Mein wo aina houn list mein aap apana chehara dekh sakati hain,

Jo kale hain we kale he deekhenge

Magar aina hamesha saaf aur transparent hota hai.

(I am that mirror in which you can see your face and if you are black your reflection will also be black, but mirror is always clean and transparent)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, the House will take up clause-by-clause consideration.

The question is :

"That clauses 2 to 4 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 to 4 were added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Since Shri Rajiv Pratap Rudi is not present, I am not taking his amendments.

The question is :

"That clauses 5 to 10 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 5 to 10 were added to the Bill.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Long Title were added to the Bill

SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

17.31 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET 1996-97 — GENERAL
DISCUSSION

AND

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT
(RAILWAYS), 1996-97

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, we shall take up items No. 13 and 14-General Discussion on the Railway Budget for 1996-97 and Demands for Grants on Account (Railways).

Motion moved .

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India, on account, for or towards defraying the charges during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1997, in respect of the heads of Demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 1 to 16."

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

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grants on Account submitted to the Vote of the House (inclusive of the amounts already voted by Lok Sabha on 11th March, 1996)
1.	Railway Board	11,52,44,000
2.	Miscellaneous Expenditure (General)	59,90,04,000
3.	General Superintendence and Services on Railways	414,00,74,000
4.	Repairs & Maintenance of Permanent Way & Works	853,68,07,000
5.	Repairs & Maintenance of Motive Power	594,71,90,000
6.	Repairs & Maintenance of Carriages and Wagons	884,72,16,000
7.	Repairs & Maintenance of Plan and Equipment	454,44,55,000
8.	Operating Expenses-Rolling Stock & Equipment	729,80,31,000
9.	Operating Expenses-Traffic	1682,74,99,000
10.	Operating Expenses-Fuel	2001,80,42,000
11.	Staff Welfare & Amenities	333,56,76,000
12.	Miscellaneous Working Expenses	472,26,42,000
13.	Provident Fund, Pension and other retirement benefits	1180,98,26,000
14.	Appropriation to Funds	3538,00,00,000
15.	Divident to General Revenues. Repayment of Loans taken from General Revenues and Amortization of Over-Capitalization	12,76,16,000
16.	Assets - Acquisition, Contruction and Replacement	
	Revenue	22,50,00,000
	<i>Other Expenditure</i>	
	Capital	4050,95,18,000
	Railway Funds	2365,95,32,000
	Total	19619,33,72,000

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Madam, Yesterday, it was the brithday of Lok Manya Tilak and he was considered to be the father of Indian discontentment movement.

17.31 hrs.

(Shri Chitta Basu *in the Chair*)

Ram Vilas ji I am saying this in your context and you have become the father of discontentment among the railway users because of the Railway Budget that you have presented.

We never expected much from the united front Government, but we had some expecations from Ram Vilas ji. We were hoping that he would introduce some innovative schemes in the Railway Budget. But we are sorry to say that he has not shown any dynamism, he has not infused any new ideas. No new schemes are proposed. In this background, he has watered down all our hopes. I have studies his Budget thoroughly. If I have to react in one sentence, I would say that his Budget is running on the same old track, the train is the same, the wagon is the same only the motorman has changed.

His Budget should have been an Indian Railway Budget but it is a Bihar Budget because he comes from Bihar, it is a Karnataka Budget because the Prime Minister comes from Karnataka, it is a Tamil Nadu budget because the Finance Minister belongs to that state, but no special schemes have been included for Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Guajarat ...*(Interruptions)* If you are not relishing, you can speak when your turn comes.

I wish, I would join the happy moments of those for whom new trains have been introduced. 9-10 new trains have been introduced and it is said that he will consider the question of updating the surveys and also conduct some new surveys. In my opinion, this Budget is hollow. Instead of concentrating on completion of the ongoing Projects, he is simple saying that he will do this and he will do that.

No doubt, he has introduced some new trains but common man doesn't want Rajdhani Express or super fast trains. He travels by Passenger Trains, he is the person who faces great hardships while travelling by train. The Former Railway Minister belonging to Congress Party had cancelled many Passenger Trains. He has introduced Howrah-Delhi Janta train again. The people going to Maharashtra will have to travel via West Bengal. They have to tavel 400-500 Kms and for them, he has ot introduced any new train and they are forced to travel by buses and pay higher fares. He has not made any changes in the short distance train system. The passengers will have to spend more by travelling by surface transport. Therefore, I will plead that the operation of passenger trains should be restored.

We talk of accidents, we talk of unmaned level crossings. He has stated that we have 25,000 unmaned

railway crossings and has promised not to keep any level crossing unmanned in future. But he has not promised to reduce these 25,000 unmanned level crossings. In case no new rail tracks are to be constructed, then where is the question of new unmanned level crossings. I will suggest that a three ways phased project should be taken up to man all the 25,000 level crossings. This will reduce the incidence of accidents, insure train punctuality and provide employment to many people.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is the penultimate year of the eighth five year plan. In this annual plan, a sum of Rs. 8130 crores is proposed to be allocated to the Railways. My submission is that this amount falls far short of the requirements of Railway Projects. It needs the Budgetary support of Rs. 1270 crores in the estimation of the Hon. Minister. In my opinion this year Budgetary support should be atleast Rs. 3,00 crores. The Hon. Minister should take up the matter with the govt. and get it sanctioned. Only then will he be able to take up new schemes.

Two years ago, I was appointed the Governor of the study group on Financial Prospects of Indian Railways at the behest of the Railway Consultative Committee. I studied the project and came to certain conclusions on which I would like to share with this August House. The Railways got 75% Budgetary Support during the Fifth Plan which went down to 58% in the Sixth Plan, 42% in the Seventh Plan and 19.8% or say 20% in the current Eighth Plan. So, the support was reduced from 75% to 20%. Such a drastic cut, and he is sitting silent. Nobody is going to give him Budgetary support in this manner and he will not be able to bring about appreciable improvements in the Railways without adequate funds. This concept of the Planning Commission of the Government, is wrong. If he wants to create new infrastructure in North East, which is necessary also. The commercial line of thinking will not help. The Government has, therefore, to change its basic policy. The capital expenditure needed for new tracks will have to come from the Planning Commission by way of budgetary support. No doubt, the railway tracks already laid, the trains, already running, can be operated in commercial lines but at the same time, their efficiency, their profitability must be ensured. Unless he endeavour to secure at least 50% budgetary support, no improvements can be achieved. This is my submission.

Three four years ago the Ministry of Railways had drafted a scheme, namely this BOLT (Build, operation lease and transfer) scheme. Now, Sir, I have some knowledge of railways, so have you. But I would like to caution the hon. Minister that private companies will not come forward because the railway, is not earning profit. As far as Maharashtra is concerned, three schemes viz. Diva Baski Diwapanwe and Borivalley-Birar were included in this scheme and a sum of Rs. 500 crore was expected from these schemes. Tenders were invited. No tender was received for Diva BaSai and Divapanvl

and only one tender was received for Borivalley Sector. But I believe, this tender is also not viable economically and financially. So, do not go for BOLT scheme. It is sheer waste of time. What is required is financial prudence. The finances have to be mobilised. I come from Mumbai. The hon. Minister had come to Mumbai. The metropolitan project has been discussed in this House many times. I understand he cannot have information instantly but when I went through his budget speech, I was surprised to read the allocation made for Mumbai metropolitan Project. I do not know whether his officers have also read it or not. At page 28 of his Budget speech, it is said and I quote—

[English]

"As Mumbai Metropolitan city carries more than 50 percent of total suburban passenger traffic, it has been decided to allow 50 percent of the Budget under MTP planhead."

[Translation]

This means 50 percent of the suburban traffic is in Mumbai and therefore, he is giving 50 percent of the provision intended for metropolitan Projects. But I think this is a wrong notion. The daily total passenger traffic in the country is 1.10 crore and 55 lakh passengers out of it are in Mumbai. It is not the question of only metropolitan transport. What transpires from his Budget Speech is that 50 percent of the total Budget is to be given for this purpose.

Sir, I have the figures of sub urban passenger traffic. These figures will show, how wrong he is as far as allocation of 50 percent for MTP is concerned. Calcutta has a daily traffic Passenger of 19 lakh for which a sum of Rs. 55.47 crore has been provided. The passenger traffic in Madras is 5 lakh for which a budget provision of 40.60 crore has been made. In other words, the daily passenger traffic of Calcutta and Madras Put together is 24 lakh passengers for which a provision of Rs. 96 crores has been made. Now, Mumbai has a daily passenger traffic of 55 lakh and a provision of only Rs. 29 crore has been made for the MTP. Who has taught him this arithmetic? I do not want to blame him because I know he cannot do such a silly thing. But whosoever has done it, has tried to mislead the House. He has promised to make some more provision in the Supplementary Budget. So, I would like him to have a deeper study of such matters.

Sir, I would like to give you some interesting information. In Mumbai, 10 person stand and wait in any area of 1 sq.m. I would like him to see this for himself. The people of Mumbai will carry a wrong impression. Last year, some suburban passenger riots took place in Mumbai over some trifling matters. So, if central Government ignores the metropolitan in this way, it will aggravate the situation. Therefore, I will plead with him to give a serious thought to it and do justice to the metropolitan projects. All the three metropolitan

cities are our assets. They are trade and business centres. Several industries are located there. He should do justice to the passengers of business community because there is a lot of difference between tourist passengers and business passengers. Both of them should be done justice.

I would like to point out one thing more. There is no difference between this Budget and last years Budget. Last year a provision of Rs. 317 crore was made for Borivelly-Quadupalli project but this provision remained unutilised. Similarly, a sum of Rs. 90 crore was provided for Diva-Basai project. But the same also remained unutilised. Nor the provision of Rs. 52 crore made for Diva-Panel project was spent. The provisions included for modernisation projects of several sub urban stations also remain unutilised. This figures have been provided by the concerned general managers. So, he has to think deeply on this aspect.

Sir, Shri Suresh Kalmadi ji is not present. I wish he were here. He had published officially a booklet titled 'Action Plan Mumbai, 2001' when he was Union Railway Minister. He had said that an investment of Rs. 1190 crore would be required to developmetn of Railways in Mumabi by 2001. But he is no more the Railway Minister, so the new Railway Minister has to work on this project. This booklet has been prepared by the Railway Ministry. The Budget for this year and the concepts of this book do not tally. So, he has to view the problems of Mumbai in this background.

I congratulate him for not increasing the second class fare and that of suburban trains but what is required is that he must give a serious thought to providing better facilities and solving the problem of overcrowding in the trains and if this is not done, then, the trains will get late and agitations and riots will take place.

[English]

The sub urban Rail Service is just on the brink of collapse.

[Translation]

He must ensure that the projects for Mumbai included in the Budget are completed in 2 years

He has announced creation of some new Railway Zones and the people of concerned zones must be happy over this. But there should have been a separate zone for Mumbai sub urban Railway. A Konkan Railway corporation like independent autonomous booky should be created. The local passengers, Members of Parliament and the State Government all have made this demand. The World Bank from which he is going to receive aid, has also provided a conditionality for the creation of a separate zone, but there is no mention in the Budget of such a zone. I think, its very difficult to bring about on improvement until an autonomous

corporation is constituted. Money can be riased by issuing bonds and I think the people of Mumbai will give very good response. So, I will urge upon the government to create an independent autonomous sub urban Railway Corporation for Mumbai.

The 10 percent increase in freight will definitely affect the consumers. There is no difference of opinion about it. I should suggest that this can be reduced to 5 percent by obtaining budgetary support out of Union General Budget. Otherwise, this will be a heavy burden on the common consumer. Therefore, I demand, that the increase in the freight should be reduced to 5 percent.

I appreciate your gesture of exempting the items like food grains, fruit, sugar, kerosene. In this connection I would like to say that in Jalgaon region banana is grown on a large scale and 50 to 60 wagons of banana come from there daily, but the railways do not treat banana as fruit. It is common man's fruit and I would appeal to him that banana should also be treated as fruit or vegetable and exempted from the proposed freighth hike of 10 percent.

Sir, he needs adequate funds to provide better railway facilities. I will give a suggestion how to mobilise maximum funds. If he acts upon my advise there would be no paucity of funds. It is being discussed for the last five years that Chennai Calcutta and Delhi and if this land is commercialised, then, my estimate is that railways can mobilise Rs. 20,000 crore only from Mumbai. Similar amounts can be mobilised from Chennai, Calcutta and Delhi.

SHRI MAJOR SINGH BOKE (Tarantaran) : Call Calcutta also with the changed name.

SHRI RAM NAIK : I will call Calcutta with changed name when the people of Calcutta change its name.

This proposal has been engasing the attention of the cabinet for the last 4 years. Sh. Sharad Pawar ji is not in the House. When he was Defence Minister, he also indicated that Defence also has large area of surplus land. Similarly, other Minister also indicated that their departments too have surplus land. I do not want to go into the question of land grabbing. But if the surplus land available in 4 metropolitan cities is made proper use of by the railways, they can mobilise funds to meet their entire budget. So, there should be transparency alongwith proper utilisation of the surplus land. The Railways can get as much money as they need.

On page 29 of the Budget speech regarding Konkan Railway corporation, he has said :

[English]

"In this regard, we expect special cooperation and help from Planning Commission and

Finance Ministry so that the resource problems of Konkan Railway Corporation in the last stages of its construction can be resolved."

[Translation]

I know that the Konkan Railway does not have sufficient funds but I would like to inform you that urban cooperative banks of Mumbai and Konkan are prepared to help Konkan Railway.

18.00 hrs.

The Konkan urban cooperative bank has written a letter to this effect on 4th July. He receives many letters, and may be, this letter has not received his attention. The letter says and I quote :

[English]

"Our Association represents 31 urban cooperative banks in Konkan region. Our Members Banks and other cooperative banks still wish and can invest in these bonds an amount of Rs.100 crore or so. However, there are certain restrictions on these banks for investment as per section 24 of the Banking Regulation Act. The banks can invest their funds only in approved securities."

[Translation]

Now, it is for the Ministry of Finance to approve the securities. Mr. Prabhu is sitting here. Many others are also associated with Mumbai cooperative banks ... (Interruptions) I am talking of Konkan Railway.

[English]

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE (Dumdum) : I may say that not only in the Railways but elsewhere also it is supply which generates demand in many cases. The fact that the suburban passengers in Mumbai are that high is partly because of the fact that the Railway services are available in Mumbai on a much bigger scale than in Calcutta

Since you referred to Calcutta I want to say one thing. I know that you will be helpful and understanding. I have also spoken to the Railway authorities. The problem with regard to comparison between Calcutta and Mumbai has also to be in terms of the availability of road surface in the town areas. Calcutta has only six per cent of road surface while Mumbai has 16 per cent ... (Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : It is 18 per cent.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : Therefore, the need in terms of underground metro service in

Calcutta is much more than that of Mumbai. I am sure you will appreciate it. I wanted to bring these things to your attention.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAIK : I am not saying why more allocation has been made for Calcutta. I have no grudge whatsoever. Please don't misunderstand me. My contention is that the metropolitans having greater population than Calcutta should get justice. What I said is that Mumbai should be done justice in the manner Calcutta is being justified. I have simply pointed out the incongruity in the speech of the hon'ble Minister. The people of Calcutta travel by metro. I have seen metro and enjoyed travelling in it. It is fitted with loud speakers and announcements are made about approaching next stations. It has platforms on right side as well as left side. In Calcutta, one can alight on right side platform but not in Mumbai.

SHRI SOM NATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Our Committee has recommended construction of Metro Railway in Mumbai.

[English]

SHRI RAM NAIK : Sh. Basu Deb Acharia was the convenor of that group. The only point is that it should be implemented.

[Translation]

The Konkan cooperative banks have offered to invest Rs.100 crore in bonds. If the government is prepared, the Mumbai cooperative banks are ready to give 200-250 crore of rupees deposit. But the decision is to be taken by the government.

Sir, I will request the hon'ble Railway Minister to consider the suggestions made by me. I have given you an indication, how you can mobilise maximum funds. If the suggestions can bring some relief to the people, then, I think the discussion on the Budget will prove to be more meaningful. We should not create an impression among the passengers and the people at large that we are making only a futile exercise. I hope government will consider my suggestions. I would be obliged if he can tell me during his reply, which of the suggestions he can implement immediately. As for other suggestions he can find some way out after having mutual discussions.

[English]

SHRI. P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I congratulate the Railway Minister for his popular Budget. He is a good Public Relations man, very amiable and responsive. Therefore, he could present a 'tali bajao' Budget and, still he is trying to

oblige the Members by conceding to a number of demands even after the Budget.

Sir, the Railways are a very fine organisation and built up good reputation over the years. Under very difficult circumstances, they are discharging their responsibilities and serving the nation and are contributing to the economic development of the country. I compliment the sixteen lakh railway employees and the officers for their diligent service, and also the successive Railway Ministers, some of whom contributed with their wise leadership and some contributed by not interfering in the functioning of the organisation.

Sir, some time ago, a doubt, was expressed whether a separate Railway Budget is necessary at all. In 1924, when the Ackworth Committee recommended the separation of Railway finances from the general finances, there was an imperative need for a Railway Budget. Today, I wonder, whether a separate Budget is necessary each year - and the show of the Railway Minister coming with a bag or giving finishing touches in his room when none of the recommendations in the Budget, none of the proposals in the Budget is secret. In the case of the General Budget, there is some justification because if people come to know about the proposals early, then the goods may be stored. But here, even if somebody buys a ticket two months in advance, he has to pay the difference when the fares are raised. Therefore, I do not find any justification for a separate Railway Budget and this paraphernalia. This has to be thought over also in course of time.

Sir, there are some good features in the functioning of the Railways. One thing is touch wood - they have been able to reduce the number of accidents in the Railways as compared to earlier. Today, they have been halved. It is a good performance which has to be kept up. Also, the wagon turn-round has improved. One of the important features of the functioning of the Railways, that is, the tonne kilometre per wagon day, which is indicative of the great performance of the Railways, has improved from 986 tonne kilometres in 1981 to 1590, almost double, in 1994-95. This is a good performance, as far as the Railway freight traffic is concerned. Similarly, the operating ratio, which is a percentage of the working expenses to the gross earnings, is now contained at 81 per cent. That is also a good feature which has to be complimented.

Sir, the hon. Railway Minister mentioned about the creation of some new Zones and also some new Divisions. Of course, this talk has been going on from Bangalore to Pune, Pune to Hajipur etc and I do not grudge the creation of new Zones wherever operational requirements are there.

But simply because the demands is there for a new zone, if you go on creating new zones and if for each

zone, you have to spend about Rs. 200 crores to Rs. 250 crores, the valuable money of the railways is wasted on this. Therefore, the criterion for creating new zones should be the operational requirements and nothing else. That has to be decided.

The Railway Minister has announced some new trains and also some allocations to the on-going projects. It should be the policy of the Railways to complete the on-going projects. I will come to that a little later. But by allocating meagre resources for the on-going projects, if they are kept pending for 10 years or 15 years, I do not think they will ever be completed and moreover, the cost will escalate and the traffic also cannot be carried meanwhile.

The Railway Minister has announced some concessions to the handicapped persons etc. and I welcome it. Due to his Budget proposals, the Railway Minister will get an additional Rs. 927 crores in the remaining eight months of this financial year. That means, Rs. 1,390 crores in a full year. It is not a meagre amount and whatever the Railway Board Chairman may say that this will have an impact of 0.3 per cent or so, we all know that it does not stand good. Ultimately it will lead to price escalation. Particularly when the freight rates are increased across the board by 10 per cent, definitely prices of commodities will go up according to that percentage or more. Therefore, I do not agree with that argument that it will have a minimal effect. Passenger fare increases are not inflationary. But freight rates increases are definitely inflationary and they will lead to price escalation also. But one thing. The increases in fares may be justified. But we find that the services are going down day by day. The speeds of the trains are going down. The comfort is deteriorating and the service is going down. Therefore, the increase of fares is not justified if you see the corresponding amenities provided in trains or at stations.

One or two magic wands have been used by the Railway Minister or by his officials. I give only two examples. In regard to freight rate increase, the Railway Minister has given some concessions. The Railway Minister has excluded fruits, vegetables, etc. I will show how the jugglery of words can be used to increase freight rates also. He said that freight rate increase excludes on parcels of some commodities. But at the same time, the Railway Minister said "Rationalisation of parcel rates."

For example, about fruits and vegetables, the Railway Minister said that they are excluded. But fruits and vegetables are normally moved by parcels and not in bulk except onions, potatoes, bananas and mangoes. These are carried in rake loads and all others are carried in parcels. Definitely the concessions might help the big traders. But the small traders who send by

parcel have to definitely pay more. Whatever concession is announced in freight rates is nullified by the rationalisation of parcel rates. That is one example of how the officials will do one thing and make tali bajao after tali bajao, and by the time the Members recover, they will find something else coming up ...*(Interruptions)*

I will give one more example. The Railway Minister announced a new train, Secunderabad-Guntur-Vasco-da-gama. In the bracket, he said "after the completion of gauge conversion." It is a postdated cheque and God knows when this gauge conversion will be completed and why he should announce such a train so much in advance? By the time we clapped and saw the brackets, all our enthusiasm had gone.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : You tell him that the bracketed portion should be implemented first.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : That is how the benefits are nullified at the beginning itself.

A number of new train services have been introduced. It is good. But when Shri Lalit Narain Misra was the Railway Minister, he followed the maxim that where there is a will, there is a railway and where there is no will, there is a survey" because the surveys never see the light of the day. No new lines are constructed.

When the public demand or the Members of Parliament demand something more, after that, a re-survey, that is updating the survey, is ordered to satisfy them and we are all gullible people. We are satisfied with these things.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : When there is no survey, is it possible to lay the railway line etc.?

SHRI P. UPENDRA : I am telling you this thing. If you have no resources, you can satisfy the Members of Parliament and the public by saying that you ordered a survey. That is enough ...*(Interruptions)*

After telling these things, I would like to deal with some fundamental problems affecting the Railways. They are more important than the small things which we demand. There is one thing. The Railways should always adopt a long term strategy and a short-term action plan. But that is lacking. There is one thing, the growth of the Railways is not at all commensurate with the increasing traffic and the economic liberalisation policy.

There had been a phenomenal increase in the traffic since independence. Between 1951-52 and 1994-95, the passenger traffic went up by three-fold and this increase has been there without any additional inputs. There has been only a small addition to the network

and the freight traffic has also increased. It was about 73 million tonnes in 1950-51. In 1994-95 it was about 365 million tonnes. There was a several fold increase the increase is nearly five times. What is the corresponding increase in the track? In 1950-51, at the beginning of the First Plan, we had 53,596 route kilometres in this country. Today, we have 62,660 route kilometres, just 8000 kilometres have been added in forty-five years. And, there is a three-fold increase in passenger traffic and five-fold increase in freight traffic. But the system has grown by only 8000 kilometres.

What about the rolling stock? In 1960-61, the total number of wagons was 3,07,000. Today, it is to the extent of 2,91,000. They may say that there are bigger wagons, eight-wheelers etc. they can justify it, they have stopped giving figures in terms of four-wheelers. They do not mention whether it is in terms of four-wheelers or eight-wheelers...*(Interruptions)*

As regards coaches, today they are less than the number in 1992-93. In 1992-93, there were 30,298 coaches and today, they have come down to 30,036. The coaches are less. The wagons are less. What about staff? It is exactly at 16,00,000 since 1985-86. For ten years, not a single addition has been made to the staff strength in spite of the increase. Of course, they may say that the productivity has increased and the Railways are carrying more traffic with the existing inputs. But I call it flogging the system. The system is being flogged, the employers are put to more work. They are working day and night and the same number of employees have been handling this increased traffic without any addition to their strength. Therefore, that has also to be taken note.

Another thing is that the Railways are not able to carry the traffic offered. That is the second point which they have to note. The traffic has increased. They have to carry much more. When the traffic is being offered, they are not able to take it. They are scaling down their traffic target. Whatever they wanted to achieve by the end of the Eighth Five Year Plan, they scaled it down by several million tonnes. What is happening now? About freight traffic, during the period 1991-96, in six years period, it was less than 23 per cent. That is the growth in the freight traffic. In 1996-97, they want to carry only 20 million tonnes more, that is, less than that in the current year. Now, steel, cement and fertilisers have shifted to road traffic.

Now, they are shifting to roads. Whatever traffic which was carried by the Railway earlier is being shifted to the road. In addition, the container traffic is increasing. But kindly check up the goods that the containers are carrying. They are carrying the traffic which has to go by wagons because wagons are not available. Steel products, cement and such other items are being carried

by containers today, if you go and verify that. This does not speak well of the Railways' capacity to handle the growing traffic.

There is a major bottleneck in moving the cargo to and from the ports. That has to be taken note of. As a result of the increase in imports and exports, there is congestion near the ports and the Railways are not able to carry the traffic to and from the ports. The World Bank Report in 1995 has also mentioned this fact under the heading 'India: Transport Sector Long-term Issues', authored by Robert Burns and others. I quote :

"Capacity constraint of the Transport system may, together with that of the power sector, serve as a constraint on overall economic growth of India."

The Railways are ill-equipped to meet the growing traffic because low power fuel inefficient diesel locos of 1960 design are being used. Redundant workshops and depots which are not being modernised, obsolete wagons, many with 20 tonne axle loads, and slow electrification of the arterial routes and slow modernisation are the handicaps under which the Railways are functioning. The Budget does not indicate how the Railways are going to gear themselves up to meet this traffic by the end of the century. They are projecting 20 million tonnes more. But what are they doing to increase the capacity of the system? Neither does his speech indicate it, nor does the Budget document indicate it.

We have to be aware of the growing competition from the road. India was a rail dominated economy in the 1950s and today, it is a road-dominated economy. Roads carry 60 percent of the inter-city freight traffic today in terms of tonne kilometres. Eighty per cent of the inter-city passenger traffic in terms of passenger kilometres is carried by the roadways. The user preference is shifting in favour of transportation by road though it is costlier.

The National Transport Policy Committee envisaged a modal split between the railways and the roads. The Railways are expected to carry 72 per cent of the long distance freight traffic and the remaining was to go to the roads, but the actual shares of the Railways and the roadways have moved in the opposite direction. Today, the roads are carrying much more than what they are expected to carry....(Interruptions)

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : India, now, should not develop in terms of Railways, on the basis of Railways but in terms of the American experience, on the basis of Ford Motor cars. The whole approach has changed and you are not protesting against that ... (Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : You can do that when you speak. Now, let me deal with this.

The Railways are losing a very heavy amount in passenger traffic. It is not in terms of long distance passenger traffic; it is not in terms of sub urban traffic. In suburban traffic, they are making profits in Mumbai, though they are no doubt losing in Madras and Calcutta. They are losing much more in the short distance passenger traffic and in the same sector, they are giving concessions. There is a contradiction in that. On the one side, they want the short distance traffic to be handled by the roadways and on the other side, they are giving concessions for the short distance traffic. These two cannot go together. In fact, I feel that they should do more to the development of the roadways so that short distance traffic is shifted to the roadways. The Railways will carry the bulk traffic, which they are losing to the roadways. In terms of revenue also, this is a high revenue traffic, which is going to the roadways.

Then, let me come to Plan allocation. As Shri Ram Naik has mentioned, in the First Plan, 22.10 per cent of the total Plan outlay was spent on the transport sector, including the 11.50 per cent on the Railways. In the Eighth Plan, it has come down to 12.43 per cent for the entire transport sector, including 6.27 per cent for the Railways. In the total plan itself, they are scaling down the Railways' share and the transport sector's share. As a result, all the Eighth Plan targets could not be achieved by the Railways. That is the one point which we have to see.

The budgetary support, as he mentioned is around 51.10 per cent in 1986-87. It has come down to 15 per cent. Nobody is bothering about this. Neither the Planning Commission nor the Ministry of Finance is bothered about this. We fully support your demand that the budgetary support for the Railways should be increased, if the Railways have to carry the traffic which is being offered.

You have got the Railway Finance Corporation. You have floated the bonds. But nobody is responding. Nobody is buying those bonds. Then, how else to raise resources, except by way of budgetary support? There is something wrong with your own allocation. In the sectors where you have to allocate more, you have reduced the allocation. As compared to last year, you have reduced the allocation for new lines, gauge conversion, doubling, computerisation, track renewals, bridge works, electrification and workshops.

SHRI RAM NAIK : You tell us in which sectors they have increased it.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : They have increased only in two or three sectors, such as restoration of track facilities, computerisation etc. But for two or three items, on all other works which are necessary to make the Railways efficient, they have reduced the allocation as compared

to last year. It is not a good trend. It is not a healthy trend.

In spite of raising Rs. 5,000 crore by increasing the fares and freight rates during the last three or four years, you are still raising resources by additional budgetary support.

There are some controversial investments also. For example, the unigauge policy which I opposed earlier also. The standing Committee of which Shri Somnath Chatterjee was the Chairman, also commented on it. If you have got resources, then you can convert the entire track. I do not object to that. But when you have got scarce resources, which are to be spent on electrification on new lines, on backward areas, on doubling, on increasing capacity, on modernisation, on computerisation etc., you have diverted the resources to gauge conversion which is not an absolute necessity. You can do it in certain points where there are transit problems and where there are bottlenecks. You can have certain sections converted into broadgauge. In other parts of the world, metregauge is working as efficiently as broadgauge is, including electric trains. In many of the European countries, metregauge is very efficient as compared to broadgauge. Then, why this obsession with gauge conversion?

Your predecessor, not the immediate predecessor, but the one who has adopted this policy has done a great disservice to the Railways. It was done without the Planning Commission's clearance. Ten thousand kilometres of track is to be converted into broadgauge. Can you imagine this? On the one side you have no resources and on the other side, you want to convert ten thousand kilometres at a stretch into broadgauge. That is not at all justified.

In fact, you have to go in for alternative routes. Even doubling should be done selectively. Instead of having another line, you should have alternative routes. Your stress must be on alternative routes rather than on doubling.

Then, I would like to make one point about social obligation. Every day Railways cry that they are meeting social obligations. Now, it is to the tune of Rs. 1482 crore. They may say that they are carrying essential commodities at concessional rates and that they are losing on coaching services etc. Previously, you used to say that you are losing on suburban traffic. Now you are making profit on Mumbai suburban traffic. It is only in the shorter distance passenger traffic that you are losing. You have to consider that aspect also.

Then, I want to say something about uneconomic branch lines. You have not been able to close them down. No State Government will agree, from the political angle, to close down uneconomic branch lines. I would rather suggest that you compensate them to that extent.

Give that money for the improvement of roadways and the highways in those States.

That will be a better proposition so that short distance road traffic is carried more efficiently. That is where the States can also improve their road network and the National Highway network. You will have to see these things.

Then, I come to first class. Why do you keep it? Why do you manufacture first class coaches now? It is not necessary at all. You have a single class. You have got air-conditioned sleepers. These are much more preferable.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : It is not manufactured.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Whatever it is, it is still there. You have to phase out and remove it completely.

Then, your workshops are indulging in production activities. Why is it so? Their main job is maintenance and repairs. They are going for production activities at the cost of maintenance. This can go to the private sector. Whatever production is there in the workshops, it is not competitive when compared to the goods you procure from the market. Then, why should these workshops indulge in production? Now you have to separate the Chittaranjan Factory, Integral Coach Factory and the Diesel Locomotive Works from the Railways. You can make them separate corporations and run them on commercial lines so that they can get technological assistance from abroad or other joint sector corporations and all that.

SHRI SOMANTH CHATTERJEE : But do not decry them. They are doing excellent work.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : No, no; I am not decrying them. They are doing very well. But why should there be the Railway Board's stranglehold on these organisations? That is what I am telling.

The Railways had drafted a Corporate Plan 1980-1995 covering 15 years. What has happened to that? It was drafted after a great discussion. Today, nobody talks about it. How many goals have been followed? What are the strategies for that? What was the long-term planning involved in that? Nobody is bothering about that.

Umpteen Committees - Dr. N.M. Nanjundappa Committee, the Prakash Tandon Committee, the Poulouse Committee etc. were appointed. What had happened to the recommendations of those Committees? How far have these been implemented? Why have the good suggestions contained in these Reports not been implemented?

What is the role of the private sector? You have also to define that.

On the one side, you are going to disinvest in the ITDC. You are giving hotels to the private sector. Now you want to start departmental Railway Catering Corporation. What is this? There should be some policy from the Government side. While you do not run the hotels, why do you have top-heavy Railway Catering Corporation? What type of food would you supply? Why do you not privatise that kind of activity instead of taking it upon yourself? Why should you run the hotels? You have hotels in Puri, Ranchi and at other places.

SHRI NIRMAL KANTI CHATTERJEE : When did the World Bank contact you?

SHRI P. UPENDRA : They do not do. Now, you cannot talk after the Common Minimum Programme.

Now, I talk about punctuality. Mr. Minister ...*(Interruptions)* Many of the prestigious trains are running behind schedule. We have to keep a track on punctuality of the prestigious and long distance trains from time to time.

About amenities, the less said, the better. The allocation is less for passenger amenities. You go to any station. Most of the stations are of the British days. Nothing has changed - either the building or the shelter over the platform or the benches, or the platform or the platform cover. Some of the stations have platform cover but are without drinking water. You see the condition of the platforms, the stations and the booking counters. They are all of the British days. Nothing has been done in most of the stations. Out of 7,000 stations, 6,000 have not been touched at all. Nothing has been added to these things. You have also to see that these stations are improved. Lighting is improved. Drinking water is provided both on trains and at stations also.

Before I come to the final point, I would like to speak about staff welfare. As a Member of the Railway Convention Committee, I visited a number of staff colonies. We have seen the deplorable condition of the staff quarters. Hospitals are good but these are without doctors. There is no equipment. Therefore, you have to take care of the staff amenities. We have given a report on industrial relations in the Railways and the staff welfare in the Railways. That is a good report. Kindly go through that.

We have mentioned how to improve staff amenities and we have also suggested that there should be more mobile dispensaries on the Railways because the Railway people work in a number of stations and they cannot come to the central point for hospital facilities. Therefore, we have to run more mobile dispensaries for the benefit of the Railway staff. They need more central schools in the colonies because they have no other educational facilities.

There is no participation of labour in management. Your predecessor called the Railway union leaders once to the General Managers meeting. It is a good beginning; you can continue that; you can get good suggestions from them also. The Corporate Enterprise Group (CEG) is not functioning. No meeting of the CEG are held.

Sometimes ago, I mentioned about the case of the promotee officers. Out of 12000 officers, 9000 belong to Class II and their case has been neglected. In spite of the specific recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee, no action has been taken because the Railway Board is completely against this class and you may prevail upon them and see that justice is done to them.

Before concluding, I will just take two minutes to mention about some of the requirements of my State as I have so far spoken only on general points. About Vijayawada, my own constituency, a number of things were agreed to and announced by the General Manager ...*(Interruptions)* Of course, it can be discussed with the General Manager and the Railway Board across the table but nothing has been implemented. So, I bring it to your notice. If he has announced certain things, you may kindly see that they are implemented. I invite you to come and inaugurate those facilities in the off-session. You have asked the MPs from Andhra Pradesh to consolidate their demands and tell you four or five of them. I am mentioning those five or six demands here.

We want a Rajdhani Express to Hyderabad. There is no Rajdhani Express to Hyderabad. Every State capital has got a Rajdhani Express. So, we must have a Rajdhani Express to Hyderabad.

There was once a Superfast train between New Delhi and Visakhapatnam which was cancelled. We want restoration of that Superfast train from Visakhapatnam to New Delhi.

Then, we want a Superfast train from Visakhapatnam to Bangalore. Kindly see that it is implemented. It will be a very popular train.

We want an extension of the suburban services from Madras, which is now upto Sulurpet, Nellore, a few kilometres. Kindly extend it.

We want restoration of the Janata Express from Madras to Bombay which goes through the Rayalseema area. It is very needy; it was cancelled earlier. You have restored Howrah-Delhi train because of your supporting party. We are also supporting you. Therefore, you must restore this train also...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Something atrocious was done and so, he rectified it.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : I am telling the same thing. Regarding Tirupati-Pakala-Katpadi gauge conversion,

only Rs. 1 crore has been given out of Rs. 55 crore required. Will it take 55 years to complete it? Therefore, kindly increase this allocation also. Similarly, for Secunderabad-Dronachalam conversion, you have given Rs. 10 crore whereas Rs. 102 crore is required for this. Kindly see to this part also. Then, about creation of the Guntur division, you have given only Rs. 25 lakhs whereas Rs. 13 crore is required. Regarding Peddapalli-Karimnagar-Nizamabad section, which is 177 kilometres long, an amount of Rs. 2.19 crore has been spent so far. Therefore, kindly increase this allocation also. As regards electrification between Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam, it is very slow and unless that is done, Madras-Calcutta route cannot be electrified fully. Due to this, people of Calcutta and Madras are suffering and, in between, people of Andhra Pradesh are also suffering. Therefore, kindly see that electrification is completed.

My last demand is about the transfer of Waltair Division to South Central Railway. It is now in the South-Eastern Railway. For operation and administrative purpose, it should be included in the South Central Railway so that people can come to Hyderabad rather than going all the way to Calcutta for administrative matters. These are the demands from my State.

I again compliment you for a good Railway Budget. I hope you will keep up the reputation of the Railways. We will cooperate with you and see that this organisation grows strength to strength with which I had the privilege of being associated for 25 years. I want it to grow and we will give constructive suggestions from time to time and see that the Railways flourish.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH (Aurangabad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Members who are ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Don't go after that. You say what you want to say.

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Allright I will come to that a little later. They are finding faults with the Railway Budget. This Budget has been made for the poor, for the oppressed, for backward people, for down troddens. It is for 90 percent people of the country and they are not appreciative of it. Second class Railway fare has not been increased...*(Interruptions)* Your way of thinking is wrong. Your perception is wrong. You think only for a handful of people. If you are able to think the poor, you ought to appreciate the Budget...*(Interruptions)*

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : Poor people travel by second class bogies. The Express train have one or two second class compartments. You go and see the second class compartments, people are herded in toilets ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please speak when your turn comes.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : You have no right to sit on the seat, this is your Government.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : This is a United Front Government supported by congress. When we talk of the poor, they feel embittered. He has charged that this Budget is for Bihar. I would say that once upon a time, Bihar used to be the Capital of this country and was a front menner. 40 percent of minerals are found in Bihar. It is you people who have not allowed Bihar to forge ahead. Bihar is a backward state and 45 percent of its population lives below poverty line. Now some provision has been made for Bihar and you cannot swallow it. This will not work...*(Interruptions)* You are responsible for all this who talk of 10 percent ...*(Interruptions)* They are alleging that this is a Bihar Budget. I want to ask them whether computerisation of more than 300 stations which provide reservation facility will be made use of only by Bihar; whether the 16 new trains to be introduced are meant only for Bihar? They can see all the States have been included in the Budget. The Konkan Railway is to be completed this year. Is it also for Bihar?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI KARIA MUNDA (Kunti) : Do you know since when this Konkan Railway is under construction ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI OSCAR FERNANDES (Udupi) : What objection does the hon'ble Member have about the Konkan Railways?

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no question of levelling and countering allegations. Let him have his say. You can speak when your turn comes.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : This railway is being commissioned this year and I would like to say that out of the Zonal offices being set up, one is for Bihar. Earlier it was in Sonapur. This office was shifted to Gorakhpur during the time of Jawahar Lal ji. What I am submitting is that this Budget is meant for the poor, the down trodden, the dalits and 90 percent people of the country. The Budget has not put any additional burden on the poor and second class fare has not been increased.

[English]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South) : Sir, I am on a point of order.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : My Chairman, Sir, the BJP Members are annoyed because a very popular Railway Budget has been presented and they are frustrated. That is why they are behaving like this.

[*English*]

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Under which rule you are raising it?

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : My point of order is under Rule 356, which says :

"The speaker, after having called the attention of the House to the conduct of a Member who persists in irrelevance or in tedious repetitions...."

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no point of order. I rule it out. Mr. Singh, you may continue.

[*Translation*]

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : This Budget gives priority to neglected regions. It provides for electrification of 643 km track conversion of single line into double line, meter gauge into broad gauge, etc. Hon'ble Member Shri Upendra ji said that there is no need to convert meter gauge into broad gauge but he should know that meter gauge trains run with very slow speed and a lot of time is wasted in travelling by these trains. It is the need of the hour to convert meter gauge into broad gauge and the Government is doing very good job...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL (Varanasi) : Shri Paswan is competent enough to reply the debate. You give some new suggestion...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is wrong...(*Interruptions*). You cannot go on interrupting like this.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Mr. Chairman is also not weak. He can give his ruling...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Some hon'ble Members have alleged that trains are to be introduced in private sector from 5 tourist centres. Bodhgaya is an international tourist spot. People go there and perform religious rights of their ancestors who, it is believed, wait on the top of trees. Unless 'Pinddan' is done, they would not rest in peace. There is no train from Bodhgaya. I would request the hon'ble Minister to start a train between Bodhgaya and Delhi via Gaya and Calcutta.

Then I come to my Constituency, Aurangabad which is not connected with Rail Headquarters. It is a backward district and is infested by terrorists. I will request a new

railline should be constructed between Aurangabad and Garhwa via Zakhir so that my district is also connected with railway head-quarters and the problem of terrorism is also rooted out.

A new train from Dehri-Onsone should be introduced to link rural areas and computerised reservation facility should also be made available there. Patna-Gaya is a main railline but it has been doubled between Patna and Parsabazar section only. I would demand that the entire Patna-Gaya line should be doubled immediately. Steps should be taken to provide stoppage for Express trains at Anujarayan, Khesar and Ratiganj Stations. There is broad gauge line between Darbhanga and Katia. Survey for Mujaffarpur-Sitamarhi new railway line has been completed and I would request adequate funds be provided for this track.

I thank the hon'ble Minister for presenting a Budget for dalits, oppressed and poor people who constitute 90 percent population of the country.

[*English*]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, I have to congratulate the Railway Minister because for the first time we have seen in the Railway Budget for the year 1996-97, what we have been clamouring for over the last several years. There are areas which are backward, inaccessible, which are not connected by railway line but ought to be connected. The Minister has connected them with railway lines. This is a departure from the earlier Railway budgets. I congratulate him also for sparing the poor short distance second class passengers. Last year also when the fare was hiked for second class and suburban passengers...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : There are very few passengers undertaking short distance journey and second class compartment are also very few in number...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Let me speak. You do not know the percentage of suburban passengers. You do not have any idea of the percentage of suburban passengers. It is much that the percentage of long-distance passengers and these passengers have been spared. The hon. Minister has realised the plight of these passengers because he had to travel in a very difficult situation, he had to travel in over-aged coaches without proper toilet facilities, without shutters, and without any amenities. Last year also I mentioned the plight of these passengers.

During the rainy season, the passengers in local trains are not in a position to sit, free from rains in the

winter from the cold wind and in the summer from the hot wind. I would congratulate him again for sparing them. I would request him to examine, to ponder and to see how the passenger services and how the services can be improved. There is scope. I do not think that there is no scope for replacement of those overaged coaches. The Indian Railways now have 36 percent of the passenger coaches which are overaged and are being used. This year he has planned for increased acquisition of passenger coaches from 1400 to 1600. In spite of that, the Indian Railways would have overaged coaches to the extent of 30-36 per cent. He will have to plan in future because we have the capacity. We have two production units in our country, one is ICF and the other is the RCF. They have the capacity to manufacture 2000 coaches per years. They can manufacture 2000 coaches with little investment. Gradually, overaged coaches can be replaced. I would request the hon. Minister to plan for future and gradually to replace those overaged coaches.

Sir, I was expecting something because last year while participating in the Railway Budget, I made this same suggestion which Shri Upendra has also pointed out here. What is the problem with the Railways? When we demand additional trains or additional services, the reply is resource crunch and that there are no funds and there is no money. Wherefrom will the money come to introduce new trains, to have new lines, to increase capacity and utilization? But, is there no scope?

Last year, while participating in the Railway Budget, I suggested that there should be a change in the transport planning of the Railways. In 1989, the freight traffic was 230 billion tonnes kilometre. In 1996-97, the budgeted freight traffic is 283 billion tonnes kilometre. See the growth of freight traffic. In 1989-90, it was 3.6 percent; in 1990-91, it was 2.6 percent; in 1991-92, it was increased to 5.9 percent; then reduced to 0.8 percent; and then in 1994-95, it was only zero per cent growth. Is there no scope? There is scope.

19.00 hrs.

(Shri P.M. Sayeed *in the Chair*)

I can give one example. A bulk transited item of the Railways is coal. If I am correct, it is to the extent of 65 percent. Now, Coal India together with all its subsidiaries has produced 275 million tonnes of coal last year. What are the Railways carrying? The Railways are carrying 180 million tonnes of coal whereas in the road sector, it is 100 million tonnes of coal. The amount of revenue the Railways are losing is about Rs. 6,885 crore every year. Every year, the Railways are losing Rs. 6,885 crore for not carrying coal to New Castle.

How can this capacity be increased so that the Railways can carry the goods? I want to know whether

our wagon fleet is sufficient to carry the goods. It is a fact there is a reduction in the wagon fleet. In 1992-93, it was more than three lakhs and last year, it came down to 2,91,000 and this year, it might still come down. I do not have the figures with me. I do not know whether the Railways have the figures. It is because, the Railways cannot finalise their accounts within 5-6 months. That is the difficulty of the Railways. It takes about six months to finalise the accounts of the Railways. Even, the Railways have planned to acquire 25,000 wagons. In spite of that, there, will, still, be a shortage of wagons. In order to carry the targeted freight traffic for the current year, the Railway need at least 50,000 wagons. We criticised the last year's Budget. When the Railways planned to acquire 18,000 wagons, we criticised the Railway Ministry. But, ultimately, the Budget was passed. Suddenly, after one month, the number was reduced to 12,000.

The Members of Parliament from West Bengal are really concerned about the wagon manufacturing units which are mostly located in West Bengal. It is manufacturing 80 percent of the wagons and 60,000 workers are engaged in wagon manufacturing directly and more than 60,000 workers are engaged in ancillary and other small units. Both put together, the figure comes to 1,20,000. Do you know what was the system earlier? The system was that the Railways used to place orders with Wagon India and they used to distribute them among its member-units. Suddenly, now, the system has been changed. We do not know the reason why it was changed. Wagon India was the decision of the Cabinet. But when that system was being changed, the Cabinet's approval was not taken. The Standing Committee had also criticised that decision.

What we want now is that we want to restore the earlier system of placing orders with the Wagon India and the Wagon India must distribute them. It is a conglomeration of wagon manufacturing units of public sector and the private sector. Earlier, the Railways used to supply the inputs free of cost. Suddenly, in October 1995, the Railways have changed this policy also that they would not supply these inputs free of cost. A Committee of Rajya Sabha which went into the acquisition programme have categorically recommended that the earlier system of providing inputs free of cost should be restored. I would request the hon. Minister to implement the recommendation of the Committee of Rajya Sabha in regard to the purchase of wagons and also giving orders to the wagon manufacturing units.

Now, Sir, I will come to the question of bulk handling of materials. Do you know what was the reply of the Railways? Their reply was the traffic was not being offered. What we are saying is that we will offer them the traffic. Let them also allow the industries to get the

traffic.

That is not less. Today, how many tracks are there? There are 19 lakh tracks in our country. Per year how many tracks are being manufactured? Approximately, one lakh tracks are being manufactured. How many wagons are being manufactured? Last year, only 19,000 wagons were manufactured. The year before last, only 12,000 wagons were manufactured. This year the hon. Minister has increased it to 25,000 wagons. That is also not sufficient.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : I have just now started, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, you have not started just now. You have started at 6.53 p.m.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : I have spoken only for ten minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am not in argument with you. If you do not want any other Member from your Party to speak, you can continue.

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : So many Members will speak tonight and tomorrow...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : No arguments, please. Mr. Acharia continue, please.

DR. ASIM BALA (Navadwip) : Sir, every Member will speak on this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have not fixed the time for this. The Business Advisory Committee has fixed the time. We are behind schedule, so please cooperate Mr. Acharia, you are a senior Member of this House.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Sir, this discussion will not be limited to only eight hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I do not know, your Party Members were also there in the Business Advisory Committee meeting.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not disturb him. You are reducing his time to speak.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Why are we asking that the Railways should carry more traffic? That should be the reverse that is, 75 percent by Railways and 25 percent by road traffic. Railways will also gain, more revenue will come and we will have to import less petroleum products also. We can save to the extent of Rs. 16,000 crore, of foreign exchange in a year if the Railways could carry 75 percent of the freight traffic.

I am now dealing with full rakes and wagon-load. There should be a change of that policy also that small

manufacturers or those who want one wagon will not get. They will have only a full rake. That has also created problem and because of that there is less traffic. So, I would like to appeal to the hon. Minister that there should be a drastic change in the Transport Policy and planning of the Railways.

Sir, the safety and punctuality are very important. Last year also I pointed out regarding increase in derailment cases. How many hours are lost because of derailment? In 1990-91, 5,291 hours were lost; in 1992-93 5,117 hours were lost; and in 1994-95 4,118 hours were lost. Though it is less, the Railways do not keep accounts of this.

There are financial losses because of derailment as the trains are diverted to other routes. Some of the trains and goods trains have to be cancelled because of a blockade. There are certain zones, there are certain sections, there are certain areas and lines which are called derailment zones or derailment prone sections where if derailment does not take place, we are also surprised that derailment does not take place. But this can be prevented.

How can this be prevented? These can be prevented by sector-wise track renewal. I know, in South-Eastern Railways alone, which is contributing to the Indian Railways to the extent of 35 percent of the revenue, there are 1,800 kilometres of railway line which are over-age. They need immediate replacement. From Adra to Midnapore is a very important line which is being electrified and the hon. Minister has allocated Rs. 10 crore for that. That is also not sufficient.

It has to be enhanced. To electrify the line Adra-Bankura-Vishnupur, at least a sum of Rs. 15 crore or Rs. 20 crore is required. You will be surprised to know that that track is fifty years' old. How can your capacity be increased? How can derailments be prevented? For that, you have to allocate more funds for the replacement of all overaged tracks. That was recommended by the Railway Reforms Committee, that is, the B.D. Pande Committee, in the year 1988. That Committee recommended that sufficient allocation should be made for track renewals.

Then, Sir, there was a serious accident last year. In this House we discussed about Ferozabad accident in which more than 425 passengers were killed. We were assured that sufficient allocation would be made for the safety of the railway passengers. The Standing Committee on Railways also went into that aspect and recommended that sufficient allocation should be made; sufficient funds should be made available for signalling and telecommunication, which is very vital for the safe operation of the Railways.

Sir, what is the allocation this year? For signalling and telecommunication, last year it was Rs. 227.09

crore; in February when the Vote on Account was presented, it was Rs. 280.89 crore and in this current Budget it has been reduced to Rs. 256.89 crore. This amount is not sufficient to provide fouling mark to fouling mark in all important stations and to provide track circuit in all important stations. This assurance was given on the floor of the House by no other person than the Prime Minister of India while replying to the debate on the Railway Budget because at that time he was not only the Prime Minister of India but he was also holding the portfolio of the Minister of Railways. He assured the House that sufficient funds would be made available for signalling and telecommunication; for providing track circuit in all important stations and junctions and for fouling mark to fouling mark. Funds were made available for the Allahabad Division, for that particular Ferozabad station. But that was not utilised, that was not implemented, that was not provided and due to that, there was a serious accident resulting in the loss of the lives of 425 passengers.

I had congratulated the young Minister of Railways for the departure from the earlier trend. But what should be our priority? I agree with Shri P. Upendra. Last year also...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already taken 20 minutes. I wanted to caution you. Please continue your speech.

DR. ASIM BALA : Sir, he always used to speak for 45 minutes in the discussion on the Railway Budget ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, this is my special privilege. All the Chairmen and the Deputy-Speaker always used to allow me to speak for 50 to 55 minutes. I am not speaking irrelevant things...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Why do you not just give points?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, you are diverting me. I was just concentrating on a very important point. What should be our priority? The Railways were not for Railways alone. There cannot be any economic development without the Railways.

Sir, Shri P. Upendra and myself were the Members of the Railway Convention Committee. We examined all the pending projects and recommended that once a project had been sanctioned, it should be completed within the time schedule.

Now what is the allocation for the new lines? What is the target for the new lines? It is only 91 kilometres. And what is the allocation for the new lines? For the new lines, the allocation is only Rs. 220.55 crore. Last year, the allocation was Rs. 181.71 crore. Our priority should be extension or expansion of the Railway network. What is our achievement? It is only 8000 or 9000 kilometres. Before our Independence, we had, we

inherited 53,000 kilometres of railway line. Now our achievement within the last 15 years, is only 8000 or 9000 kilometres. Unless you allocate us more funds, how can we have line for Agartala? You have allocated rupees one crore only, rupees one crore for Eklakhi-Balurghat, rupees one crore for Digha-Tamluk and rupees one crore for Howrah-Amta line about which Shri Hannan Molla has mentioned. You have allocated only rupees three lakh for Bankura-Damodar River Railway Line which is a very important railway line. Maybe, it is a private line. It has to be nationalised this year. Before the expiry of three years' time it has to be taken over and nationalised. It has to be converted to broad gauge line and it has to be connected with Tarkeshwar by constructing a bridge over the river Damodar. You have allocated more than Rs. 800 crore for bridge construction.

We are not against uni-gauge. Shri Upendra is also not against uni-gauge. I told last year Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief that his dream for the project uni-gauge would remain as a dream. I said that it would remain as a dream.

We will never have one system of Railways. We will have to have two systems of railways or three systems of railways, namely broad gauge, metre gauge and narrow gauge. What have we done to make our metre gauge more efficient? Have you spent a single paisa for the track renewal of metre gauge system? What is the average speed of our goods trains, freight trains? It is only 23 kilometres. By improving our track condition, the speed can be increased. The hon. Minister had brought two or three 6000 three-phase locomotives. We vehemently opposed it. I also vehemently opposed. We do not need three-phased 6000 horsepower electric locomotives, although its technology is very up-to-date but our Indian Railways Manufacturing units can produce a 5000 horsepower locomotive. Maybe, it is of the old technology.

When I went as a convener of a Sub-committee of the Standing Committee, I got an opportunity to inaugurate one locomotive. I had seen how the workers could produce and could surpass the target. Their simple demand is that they want a union. No money will be required. They have no union. The production units have no union. They do not have any recognized union and they are the workers who have manufactured, who have surpassed the target. You ask them to produce 110 locomotives, they will produce 115 locomotives. When you ask them to manufacture 130 locomotives, they manufacture 135 locomotives. They are the workers who are being deprived of a legitimate right to have their own unions. They do not have any union. I do not know what the difficulties are.

So, the priority should be the extension of the railway lines. The Railways are not for the Railways. He

has also failed to convince the Planning Commission and the Minister of Finance to yet more as a budgetary support because the Railways are not only for the Railways but they are also for the entire country. Unless you have Railways, you cannot have economic development. If you do not have Railways, you cannot have achievement, economic progress, industrialisation and the GD ratio also will be less.

Then, Sir, the hon. Minister has introduced so many new trains, although most of the trains for the restoration and for replacement.

The new express train between Rampurhat and Howrah will be replacing the existing passenger train. Please do not withdraw that passenger train because the people are very agitated. We always get a patent reply that it is already over saturated; more than 85 percent of the saturation. I do not know whether that capacity can be increased. Howrah-Panskura line is over-saturated. There is a demand to increase the number of lines between Howrah and Panskura from three to four and between Panskura and Kharagpur from two to three. But we are told that there are no funds for that, so how can we have an additional train? I have been saying that not a single paise is required for that. One narrow gauge line was converted into broad gauge line, that is, Kotsila-Purulia line, which covers 35 kilometers in my district. One of the 15 backward districts of our country is Purulia. The Purulia-Kotsila line was converted from narrow gauge to broad gauge. But only one train was introduced.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : How can you say it is a backward district? International arms trading is taking place there.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : You are responsible for that.

[*English*]

The Purulia-Kotsila train was not a new train. Only one train was extended...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have to conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : So, I demand that one express train may be introduced from Hatia to Howrah. There is only one express train from Purulia to Howrah which takes more than six hours. This period can be reduced...(*Interruptions*) There was only one line for the last four or five years. I was trying to get a passenger train introduced. There was a great resistance from the Railways saying that the introduction of passenger train would cause disruption in the freight traffic. Ultimately, the Railways agreed to introduce a passenger train by improving the track. One very popular express train was introduced — Subarnarekha Express — between Dhanbad and Tatanagar connecting the coal city in Bihar to my town, although it passes through my

constituency. But there is only one train between Dhanbad and Tatanagar...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have to conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am concluding within five minutes time.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already taken more than half-an-hour. Unfortunately, I cannot give you that much time.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : There is only one express train now. Why can the Railways not introduce one more passenger train between Dhanbad-Adra-Purulia-Tatanagar? Then, this line can be viable. They suddenly came to the conclusion that the internal rate of return is less than 12 percent, so it is not economically viable. The passengers are demanding it. The first Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) was introduced between Asansol and Burdwan. Then, the second MEMU was introduced in my area, that is, Purulia-Adra-Asansol. The second MEMU was inaugurated by Shri Suresh Kalmadi, the former Minister of Railways before the last General Elections. The second rake was inaugurated. Now, these MEMUs are being brought to Tikiapara for maintenance. We know how passenger rakes are being maintained by the Railways. I do not agree with Shri Upendra that the workshops should not undertake manufacturing of the rolling stock. Unless they manufacture the rolling stock, the capacity of our workshops will not be increased. We have very good workshops.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : I have only said that they are neglecting the maintenance part and looking into production

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Along with the maintenance of coaches, they can utilise their capacity by manufacturing also.

Sir, the Kharagpur workshop is manufacturing very good push-pull DMUs. The Samastipur workshops is manufacturing wagons. We have also suggested that the capacity of the Railway workshops can be utilised by manufacturing rolling stock and by manufacturing coaches and wagons which can be manufactured. This can be done. I made a suggestion and I do not know why the Railways are not agreeing to it. Today the maintenance is being done at Tikiapara which is 100 kilometres away from Adra-Asansol section. I suggested that the maintenance of Mainline Electric Multiple Units can be developed at Asansol. They have agreed to it and have allocated funds for that at Asansol. But that was for Eastern Railway.

For the South Eastern Railway this maintenance facility can be developed at Adra and Anara where the

infrastructure is there. The steam locos have been phased out and the shed closed down. Those infrastructure facilities can be utilised by spending a little money. That facility can be developed and maintenance can be done. Additional services can be available and more MEMUs which have become popular - can be introduced by replacing the conventional coaches. We have less number of coaches today. We can replace these conventional coaches by more and more Mainline Electric Multiple Units.

Sir, you imagine the difficulties of the passengers who are to travel from Asansol to Tatanagar without toilets. What is the distance between these two stations? It is 250 kilometers. You imagine, Sir, how difficult it is to travel a distance of 250 kilometres without any toilet. It is because all the maintenance is being done at Tikiapara. All the rakes are being brought every day to Tikiapara for maintenance. So, I request that they develop maintenance facility at Adra and Anara so that more services can be available.

The hon. Minister has stated that the industrial relation is very good. We have been demanding for it. In the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government also you have stated that in order to recognise the unions you will adopt the secret ballot method. The hon. Minister was earlier Minister of Labour and he knows the problems in the Railways also. That secret ballot system should be adopted in the Railways. There are number of recognised unions. There are two Federations. There is the Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe Welfare Association. There is the Railway Promotee Officers' Association. Then in the Railway Board also you have the Railway Board Staff Association. All these are recognised. But there is one Confederation which is an umbrella organisation of all categories of workers which does not have this facility. They had the negotiating facility prior to 1979. In 1977 when the Janata Party Government came to power they got this right. The Loco Running Staff Association also got that right in 1973. Why can you not restore that little facility of the right to negotiate so that they can negotiate and can sit in the meetings?

SHRI P. UPENDRA : You ask for one union.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : We are for one union in the Indian Railways. That can be decided through secret ballot.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, please conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, for a number of times I have asked them to have a review of this recognition policy.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Will you conclude now? You spoke for over 30 minutes.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Why should there be two Federations?...*(Interruptions)* There should be three Federations...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, it cannot go on like this. Please conclude.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, a large number of running staff were dismissed since 1981. After the Supreme Court order in 1990 some of them were reinstated. But in the Eastern Railway none were reinstated. In regard to the running staff who were to be reinstated as per Central Administrative Tribunal's order, the orders were not implemented.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, please conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : That is why, the running staff who were dismissed in 1981 would have to wait for the Supreme Court judgment. When you have taken back the running staff on the Northern Railway, why can you not take back the running staff of the Eastern Railway? They are starving and some of them have died.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Nobody can control this House if the Members do not stick to their time. Please conclude now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am concluding, Sir. You are not allowing me to conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are a senior Member and you know the constraints of the House. We are sitting late tonight and tomorrow also.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I know that I am a senior Member and, that is why, if you allow me to conclude, I will conclude.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please. This should be your last sentence.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This may be my last sentence. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to look into all these things. There should be a drastic change in the transport policy so that the need of the people, the need of the country is reflected in that*(Interruptions)*

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN (Alleppey) : Sir, we have a large number of people in the waiting list. Therefore, the Members should be requested to confine to the time limit.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, I call Shri Prakash Paranjpe. Mr. Prakash, twelve minutes time has been allotted for your Party.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : Sir, what is this restriction of time limit on party lines? The matter

pertaining to Railways is above party lines. Why are you restricting it on party lines?

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not waste the time of the House. I have called Shri Prakash Paranjpe and let him speak. I have not decided this, gentlemen. The Business Advisory Committee has fixed it up. Your Member is also there in the Business Advisory Committee.

SHRI ANIL BASU : Sir, he is a Member of this House. So, he cannot be only 'my Member'; he is also your Member.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is everybody's Member. We will have to stick to the programme drawn by the Business Advisory Committee. Shri Prakash Paranjpe :

SHRI PRAKASH VISHWANATH PARANJPE (Thane): Mr. Chairman, Sir, today is the first time I am speaking in this august House. I belong to a constituency where the first railway train was introduced from Mumbai to Thane. I belong to the same constituency, which is the second largest in Hindustan, consisting of 28 lakhs and odd numbers. More than 60 percent of the population is travelling through suburban trains. I am not standing here to criticise the hon. Minister of Railways nor the Railway administration, but to convey the feelings of my voters, their difficulties and their demands. I am very much thankful to the hon. Minister of Railways because before the Budget, he visited Mumbai to understand the problems of the suburban railway travellers. But I am sorry to say that in his speech, he has not touched a single issue which was raised at his Mumbai meeting. I am requesting the hon. Minister of Railways to reply in his speech on whatever demands I am presenting now.

I know that I am not supposed to raise the demands of day-to-day difficulties, but I have to raise the demands which need a policy decision. The very first demand I am raising is about Thane-Belapur Railway. CIDCO has invested not less than Rs. 90 crore. The goods are travelling on that train, but so far the passenger service has not yet started. Twenty percent of the revenue from excise and sales tax to my State is earned from this locality. Thousands of workers, students and Government servants want to go to the New Mumbai and still the passenger service has not yet been started. I am hopeful that in his speech, the hon. Minister of Railways will declare the date from which the passenger service would start.

Secondly, the Railway authorities have asked for the reservation of 42 acres of land in Thane Corporation area in Diva. I am suggesting to the Railway authorities to have a big Diva Terminus so that the load on the suburban railways would be reduced. Diva is such a junction that you should construct the Terminus on the CIDCO basis. CIDCO is constructing railway stations and junctions with self-supporting scheme.

Whatever suggestions I am giving here, the Railways would not have to spend a single penny on them and, moreover, the Railways would be earning money. I have listened to the speeches of all the hon. Members. They are demanding more and more trains, but nobody is giving a concrete suggestion on how the revenue of the Railways would be increased without taking any loans.

So, I pray to the hon. Minister that our Ministry should start constructing the railway stations wherever it is possible on the basis of CIDCO using the air space for commercial purposes. For this purpose, I request the hon. Minister immediately to ask the authorities to have Mumbra-Dombivli rail link on a trial basis. The railway authorities can very well ask for competition from the architects and give up their plans and then sell the entire project to a private investor where the railway will, without spending money, construct a good railway station and by selling the commercial portion on the railway station can fetch a good amount of money. I am giving an idea to the railway authorities that by selling the air space from Churchgate to Bandra and from V.T. to Thane and all other metros, you can get a large amount of money in crores of rupees. They have already started this kind of selling in foreign countries. I request the hon. Minister and the concerned authorities to consider my suggestion. I know that it is not a simple thing. But selling of air space on the railway lines will fetch money in thousands of crores of rupees and I am sure that if this money is received, the railway authorities would be able to meet all the demands of the people for laying of new lines. Unless we raise additional resources, no demand can be fulfilled by any Minister. Ultimately we have to see how we can increase the income of the Railways. I sincerely feel that selling of air space from Churchgate to Bandra and V.T. Terminus to Thane and other metros would definitely fetch a good amount of money in thousands of crores.

The hon. Minister visited Mumbai to see that a double decker railway is started. Double decker railway from Karjat to V.T. and Kasara to V.T. will definitely reduce the burden of track jamming on the Railways. I do not know why you have not given any thought to this plan.

The progress of the Railways before Independence was 561 Km every year and after independence, the rate is hardly 162 Km per year. But I do not want to criticise that. It has not been possible to achieve much progress because of want of funds. Surprisingly, a provision for the Railway Budget in 1995-96 was made to the tune of Rs. 203 crores for laying new railway lines in place of old lines which were constructed in 1945. This year, 1996-97, hardly Rs. 150 crores are provided which is a very much less amount. Hardly 100

Km of railway lines would be constructed. Therefore, we have to provide more and more income sources to fulfil the requirements and demands of all the people.

Last but not least, I want to bring to your notice that arrears to the tune of Rs. 28 crores are pending to my State towards reimbursement of salary to be paid to the Railway Police Force. This demand is there right from 1979 and as on today, the railway authorities owe this amount. I pray to the Railway Minister that I will be very happy if he can sanction the money as early as possible. As our senior M.P. Shri Ram Naik has said that you have given an assurance that a separate suburban board would be set up to solve the problems of suburban people. But all the points which I have raised need a policy decision and I am quite hopeful that whatever points I have raised would increase for railways can be given.

I once again thank the Minister of Railways for not increasing the fare of monthly pass and tickets for suburban people.

I am sure that the hon. Minister would definitely take cognisance of all the points that I have raised and give a favourable reply and announce the date of starting of the passenger railway train from Thane to Belapur.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS (Kalahandi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as my colleague has said that the Railways needs a lot of money to develop its infrastructure, I do not know in what way the hon. Minister is going to meet the deficit of Rs. 927 crore. The hon. Finance Minister, in his speech, did not categorically say anything about it or make any commitment. So, it is definitely a burden on the Railways to meet the deficit. So, it is certain that the Railways has to generate its own fund by utilising its own property like my colleague said that the airspace in the metropolitan areas can be sold out or given on rent. Or, the Railways has vast areas of land all over the country. I think the hon. Minister can make use of those lands for the commercial purpose and he can earn money and meet the deficit to some extent. It would definitely be strenuous for the Railway Minister to manage funds.

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to some of the problems of the Railways. The hon. Minister in his speech stated about the Kapurthala factory which has failed to achieve its target. But the reason was not mentioned by the hon. Minister. This Kapurthala factory is a renowned factory and it has its own reputation and it has got the Excellence Award also. Therefore, the reasons must be found out and this factory should be made efficient.

The hon. Minister has spoken about many reforms about trains and the rural areas. But so far as thousands of trains in the rural areas are concerned, specially the old trains, their coaches bogies which the poor people

are using are rotten. The toilet is rotten and the whole coach is not worthy for the human beings to sit inside. There are thousands of trains like that and the poor people in the villages are facing a lot of problems on account of that. So, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to this plight and request him to have an immediate replacement of such kinds of coaches in different trains.

Our hon. Minister laid emphasis to the North-East area for which I would definitely thank him. He has paid attention to the North-East area to include it in the railway map.

In his speech, he has mentioned that after Independence we have covered only 8000 kilometres of railway line. During the British regime, within 94 years, we had covered about 54,696 kilometres. What is the difference between them and us? There are many differences and many things that are to be studied and the Railways should try its own to lay more and more railway line. Otherwise, the backward areas in the nook and corner of the country cannot be connected with the developed places. Along with the process of development of railways, development of the country can be made, especially the development of villages can be made. There are five lakh villages in the country. They cannot develop. The areas which are full of resources, which are full of mineral deposits and natural resources cannot be developed and their natural resources cannot be exploited without any railway line.

The Minister has given Rs. one crore to my railway line. Keeping in view the development of the backward region of the country, the then Planning Commission approved that railway line and it is an on-going project. But to our utter surprise, in the last five years, not even one kilometre of railway line has been laid. My district Kalahandi is full of mineral resources. There has to be a bauxite-alumina plant. But that could not be established there and the bauxite of the said district could not be utilised.

There has to be an alumina plant at least in the future because it is having the best quality of bauxite deposit in the world.

Then, there is the Indravati Power Project coming up. It would generate 600 MW electricity after two years and it would irrigate 250 lakh acres of land after two years. We can have a lot of rice transportation. In addition, many granite mines are also there. So, it would be viable economically also. I am very sorry to say that the Minister of Railways has said that it is not commercially viable. The commercially viable points are not touched by the train. This railway line is being highly neglected.

The hon. Minister has made a zone out of his constituency. If he is not the Minister of Railways

tomorrow, that zone would be neglected, that zonal office would be neglected. In what kind of an embarrassing condition would he hon. Minister be then? He is like my elder brother and he is a leader of the dalits. So, I would request the hon. Minister to pay special attention to this railway line, at least to keep up the dignity...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : please conclude now.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : It is not going to be six minutes now.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your time is over.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : No. I have just spoken a bit.

MR. CHAIRMAN : But you have taken your time.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : Please allow me for some more time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have already given you two minutes extra.

SHRI BHAKTA CHARAN DAS : The railways had committed to extend a train. That train is Sambalpur-Howrah Express. They had committed to extend it till Raigara. This could not be done because the fuel examination plant was not available at Raigara. It was extended till Titlagarh. Subsequently, the Railways committed that it would be extended up to Raigara. Eight months ago, the Railways committed to the people of Koraput district, the people of Kalahandi district and the people of Phulbani district that this train would be extended up to Raigara.

When the then hon. Prime Minister inaugurated the Koraput railway line, it was said that train would be extend till Koraput because the Prime Minister was going to inaugurate that line. But even after the inauguration of that line, the Koraput-Raigara line has not been extended up to Raigara. A few days ago, there was hunger strike. A freedom fighter was sitting there in hunger strike. I had to request him to withdraw that strike. I would make this request to the hon. Minister. He has extended thirteen trains. This train also could be extended.

Then, another point is about Samata Express from Waltair to Delhi. There is only one train on this route and that is the Samata Express. It is running thrice a week and it needs to be regularised. It is an income generating train. It is always running to its full capacity. Such a long distance train does not have a pantry car or an air-conditioned coach. I would request the hon. Minister to provide an air-conditioned coach and a pantry car for that train and regularise it for seven days a week...*(Interruptions)*

I will conclude in just a minute. There are certain issues. I have to speak on many points but you are not permitting me. I hope, other hon. Members from my State would also speak on this.

My only request to the hon. Minister is this. By pleasing everybody, I do not think that the Railways can develop.

Sir, safety is the most important aspect. The hon. Member, Shri Basudev Acharia has also made a mention about derailment. According to the Railways, derailment is a vital and major source of railway accidents. This is not being properly studied. Even though it was studied by the Railway authorities many times, emphasis is not being given to this aspect.

We should study the causes - whether it is the wooden sleepers, the rotten wooden sleepers which we get from the contractors or the caste iron sleepers or the black cotton soil which are available in our country. If the reasons are clear, why are we not able to overcome this difficulty? We should stop derailment. I would suggest to the hon. Minister to lay more stress on this aspect.

I support this Budget, even though my colleagues in Samta Party may not support it, because my leader Shri Paswan is the Minister of Railways. He is the leader of the *Dalits* also. I support the Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowda also. I support this Budget with the intention and request that he would spend all his time and energy to come up to the expectations of the people of this country.

I support this Budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members, we will have to decide upto what time we will sit. Is it upto 9.30 p.m. or ten o'clock?

SOME HON. MEMBERS : We can sit upto ten o'clock.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I take it that it is the pleasure of the House to sit upto ten o'clock.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have to inform the House that we will sit today upto 22.00 hours and dinner will be provided to all the M.P.s and Press reporters in Room No. 70 and for staff in Room no. 73. The dinner will start sharp at 20.00 hrs. All of the hon'ble Members can go to dinner according to their convenience. Dinner for staff will start of 20.30 hrs.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have not yet commenced my speech, but these people have started interrupting me...*(Interruptions)* I am the second speaker from the BJP. Shri Ram Vilas ji my old colleague and I can complain him and I am sure, the Minister will listen to our views. I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Paswanji for presenting this popular Budget. This budget contains the aspects of a good dance with attractive

expressions, actions, sweetness. This is infact a political Budget.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV (Purnea) : You have the knowlege of various facets of dance.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : I am appreciating yor dance. I am the spectator of your dance stage ...*(Interruptions)* I will speak only if you allow me to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please let him speak.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Minister had been occupying the seat for a long time which I am occupying today. He occupied the treasury benches earlier also. This time, he has been given the Portfolio of a major Ministry. It is not an ordinary Ministry. It is connected with the lives of the people of the country. The Railways do the job of cementing the unity and integrity and also diversity of India. The hon'ble Minister while taking charge of the Ministry, had said that the Railways have so far been serving the rich and the prosperous regions. But his effort would be to expand the Railway network, to take it to the poorest of the poor and to connect the 80 far neglected regions with Rail facility. But the hallucination of this chair works the magic when the person sitting on this Chair is compelled to change his concept, give up his revolutionary ideas.

The other announcement he made was that his Budget will be poor oriented. Now he is providing audio-video facility in Shatabdi Chair car and also telephone facility in the Rajdhani Express running between Delhi and Bombay. I am not opposed to these facilities but he will have to fix some priorities, preferences and directions. Whether he will stagnate of audio-video facility or will touch the areas he has promised to take care of. I have not been able to locate his priorities in the Budget. I understand his difficulties. He was a worried man. The Pay Commission report will be implemented in respect of the railway employees. The Government had already raised the prices of electricity diesel etc. even before the Budget was presented. I do not know whether he has fixed his priority or not but he will have to provide for Rs. 150-200 crores and we know all of us will have to share this burden.

There are hundreds of unmanned railway crossings where severe accidents occur frequently. He has, during discussion on railway accidents promised to man these level crossings. If he has not said so, he can now make an announcement...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PAWAN : I did not say that all the Level Crossing will be manned. What I said was that we have 24-25000 unmanned crossings and we would need at least Rs. 5-7 lakh for this purpose. This is not possible

for any Railway Minister. I had promised that we would man the level Crossing at sensitive areas which are more prone to accidents on priority basis. I would reiterate that I will try to man those level crossing on priority basis for which the hon'ble Members may write to me.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : The assurance now given by him is somewhat a deviation from the statement made by him earlier. We shall definitely write to him about such level crossing. Railway accident is possible at every unmanned railway level crossing. He has his own difficulties but I just wanted to draw his attention to this matter.

Today railway is the biggest employer of the country, but its productivity and efficiency are declining. His attention must have gone to this aspect also. We are a socialistic State and profitability is not our sole aim. We have, therefore, to be conscious to the heavy responsibility of this undertaking towards social and socio-economic development besides achieving profitability.

In his Budget Speech he has highlighted the eastern region as one of the neglected areas. I recollect that a Prime Minister of the Congress Party which is supporting this Government had constituted a 19 Member committee to study the socio-economic aspects of eastern region and I hope he must have got the report of the study team of this Committee. He has talked of the role of surface and air transport in eradicating the impediments in the development of that area and their economic backwardness because it is necessary to have proper transport communication between eastern region and the rest of the country.

20.00 hrs.

He proposes expansion of railway network in the region. I do not know what amount of funds will be available. When I say it is a political budget I do not intend to level any allegations. The House is in Session. The Railway Budget has been presented. The Hon'ble Prime Minister had declared in this August House that the economic package proposed for Jammu and Kashmir includes of Rs. 2500 crore railway project, namely Udhampur - Baramula railway project. I am not opposed to the construction of this line but this track is not going to be constructed today and even after 30th September but the Railway Budget does not make any mention of this project. I do not know with whose inspiration the Hon'ble Prime Minister has made this announcement today. As I said I am not opposed to...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is true that this scheme is not included in the Railway Budget because if we take up this project as a Railway

project then I am afraid it may take 10 years or 20 years or even more and therefore, this Udampur Baramula railway track has been treated as a National Project and provided for in the Union Budget to ensure its completion within 4 years treating it as a priority project. The other thing is that he has expressed doubts about completion of railway line like Lumbding-Silchar and Kumarghat-Agartala. He must know, we have not adopted economic criteria for Disa-Ganganagar, nor have we taken into consideration the people for whom this project is meant. We have taken it on priority basis by relaxing all the norms by treating it a backward area.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : I thank the Hon'ble Minister for relaxing the norms for providing rail link to these areas. I have already mentioned these things. It is not an ordinary task. These areas have remained neglected. The people have not come in the national mainstream. The socio-economic factors have been responsible for this and the railway is also a major factor in this isolation. He has tried to remove these factors.

I would like to stress the imperative need of the said railway line in Jammu and Kashmir. The socio-economic factor is one of the reasons for agitations, for open interference by Pakistan in our internal matters but what I would like to ask him is whether he would allow political manoeuvring in the Railway Ministry. Why was this project not included in the Railway Budget? He could have relaxed the norms and made provisions for the next 4 years. May I know whether he will seek budgetary support for this project? He doesn't have funds for other projects. The Government has found money for this particular project because elections are to be held there before 30th September. If this is his approach, then, I vehemently oppose it. I do not oppose the project. I have no dissension so far as development of J and K is concerned. It will be in the greater interest of the country.

We have been always complaining of paucity of funds in the Railways. Today, corruption has entered into the national life and railway cannot be an exception. My Congress friends will feel offended. During the tenure of 10th Lok Sabha major scandals came to light and railways did not lag behind. Now where is the necessity of importing engines. Basu Dev Acharia ji was saying that we need not import the engine-or other things? We can do with 5000 horse-power engine. We should not import engines from Brown-Baberi. There is corruption in the import of wagons, in the entire railway system. What does he think about this corruption? In the last Budget, it was stated that Railway scraps included sufficient stock of rolling-stock, mild steel and cast-iron. Last year Rail scrap worth Rs. 1000 crore was sold. A special type of mafia operates in the transaction of

these scraps. They pool the resources and there is no authentic estimation of the scrap stock. The railway wooden sleepers are sold in the black market. Today R.C.C. sleepers are being used which are necessary for sustaining fast speed trains. Similarly, the cast-iron which should have been lakhs of tonnes might have been sold in black market and only 10 percent of it may be available with the railways. For this also, the department does not get competitive price. In other words, the railways do not get full price of their valuable scrap. The hon'ble Minister should look into this aspect also.

Now there is the question of railway wagoons. It is said that we have the requisite number of these wagons. But there is shortage of rolling stock and wagons are not available for movement of goods from one place to another during peak seasons. Is he formulating any scheme in this regard? He has talked of own your own wagon. This is a good scheme. But the weighted capacity of the wagons is utilised much below. This has also been accepted by the former Railway Minister. Today the industrialist avoid booking railway wagons because they are not available on time. These people are not looking towards surface transport. There is corruption in the allotment of wagons also. There is also a racket of pilferage. Goods worth thousands of crores of rupees are pilfered. There is a consortium who prefers claims against the stolen goods. During 1994-95, 177614 cases of pilferage were reported by the railways and out of them only 67806 cases were disposed of. The claim involved a sum of Rs. 25.13 crores. These are last year's figures and were given by the then Railway Minister. Who are behind these pilferages? This must be found out. Mughal Sarai in Varanasi is notorious for pilferages. If he is able to check the pilferage and increase efficiency slightly, he will be able to lay golden railway, there would be no shortage of funds.

It is said that Railways are short of Capital and he is increasing freight to increase funds. There is need to review the working of Railway protection force because pilferages in the railway have not been checked. Their training aspect, their commitment aspect needs review. Why this force is unable to protect the railway property? It has the biggest share in these pilferages. The railway is facing resource crunch, is short of liquidity, is lacking capital fund, important schemes are not progressing. And on the other hand, claims are being paid for pilferages. There is a clash between GRP and RPF over certain matters, certain duties and responsibilities. The RPF is answerable for the pilferage of railway property. Does he propose to consider how better coordination can be brought about in the working of these two Forces?

Railways are expanding considerably. They are not conservative services today. Many companies have

been set up. RITES consortium in working in and outside the country. The IRCON is not only Laying rails but is constructing roads and buildings. The railways have been diversified. It has entered telecommunication sector also. How far IRFC, the Finance Corporation have been able to mobilise funds, only he knows, but this is an institution of the Railway Board. Konkan Railway is a seperate company. Now there is a proposal to set up seperate companies for urban transport and for Centre for Railway Information. There is multi-dimensional diversification of the railways. It is expanding horizontally. There is, therefore, need to review the working of the Railway Board and the burden it is sharing. Is the number of Members of the Railways Board is sufficient? Is there need to reconstitute the Railway Board? He has to look into this aspect because today there is heavy social pressure on the railsector. There is lack of coordination between railway officers and workers and to some extent, the beaurocracy is more influential. There is despondency in the railways. This results in frequent clashes between the officers and workers. When railway accidents take place, the fault of the system is overlooked and the lowest employee is punished. The entire concentration remains in the suspension of the worker. The victim are paid some compensation and the matter ends there. There are passengers who, for want of accomodation in the compartment, travel on the roof of the train between their native places to Ludhiana, Calcutta, Bombay etc. in search of employment. They are not ticketless travellers but they do not have the allotted seat. I would like to know whether Government will consider payment of compensation to such passengers when involved in a railway accident.

The number of A.C. sleepers, 3-tier sleepers is increasing. But I will suggest maximum increase of A.C. 3-tier sleepers. There are several trains between Bihar and Punjab via Delhi. Thousands of workers travel by these by taking risk of their lives because almost all the bogies are reserved. It takes 2 to 3 hours to get a ticket for Vaishali train. What I want to say is that the number of unreserved coaches should be increased, and the trains should be hauled by two engines. May be, we don't have large platforms, sheds and the Coaches will have to be sided in the dark, but augmentation of coach strength will provide seating facilities to the poor. So, we should not restrict rail facility only to reserved coaches. The interest of the poor has to be looked after.

I would request the hon'ble Minister to think of those poor people for whom nobody has thought so far. During elections we make big promises. We are overwhelmed by the poverty and the poor only at that time. The hon'ble Minister belongs to a Dalit community. But he has not experienced the hardship faced by poor passengers. Only the wearer knows where the shoe

pinches. I would like to draw his attention towards the plight of more than 16 lakh railway workers whose interest is neither taken care of in the Rail Budget nor in the general Budget. Neither it is discussed by the Parliament. It is seen that the posts which fall vacant on retirement of employees are being surrendered. New recruitment is banned. It is the right of the Children of the employees who serve the department for 25-30 years, to get a job. This aspect also needs his attention. A new Forum namely participation of railway employees in management has been set up. Former Railway Minister Shri C. K. Jaffer Sharief was very much annoyed over this. He claimed to have done a lot for railway men. Their representatives were invited in the meeting of the Railway Board. Is it enough to satisfy the requirement of railwaymen? Whether 'PREM' is working satisfactorily and if not what is he thinking about workers' participation'. Whether he is prepared and has made up his mind to tolerate real participation of genuine workers in the management of railways? Is he prepared or will he be satisfied by taking formal decision on papers and files? His enthusiasm will get exhausted in one or two years and he will forget everthing. The workers will be invited for talks once in one or two years. They will simply express their feelings, then tea will be served, dinner will be served as is being done today and they will part company. We will go our way and he will go his way.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : How should he be given participation in the management?

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Sir, this is a small thing. But I would like him to talk to the Union representatives. A representative of unrecognised Union, howsoever eloquent he may be, cannot negotiate with the management. He needs a media, he needs a Member of Parliament, a recognised Union. Many a times, the recognised Unions also have vested interest. The Members belonging to Communist party are sitting here and they have specialised in this art. Basu Deb Achariaji has left the house after making his speech. The management will have had talks with the Unions. Only then can there be transparency. Leave along participation, the management cannot tolerate their very presence. They are not prepared to listen to the unions. Then which forum the workers should look to? Detailed discussions have held in this House on the issue of workers' participation. The hon'ble Railway Minister had, when he was sitting on the other side, expressed his views on Labour participation in the management. He spoke volumes in their favour. But today he is sitting in the treasury benches and he can do anything in this regard. He must express his views on this matter. We are prepared to give our views but let him invite us. He should first have discussions with the representatives of the employees.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Sir, I have yet to say something for my area. I will try to finish soon. I would like to submit that whosoever becomes the Railway Minister looks upto his area. Shri Ram Vilasji is a consernative and he has a great fancy for Bihar. Karnataka is his compulsion. What has he thought of U.P.? Bihar and U.P. had very cordial relations for centuries. He must take these relations into consideration

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : When we go from Delhi to Bihar we go via Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : It is his compulsion. If he builds rails on the air then he can skip Uttar Pradesh. But as of now, it is his compulsion and compulsion is other name of this system. He has not done anything for Uttar Pradesh. He must think about this State also.

Now I would like to make some observation about catering T.T.E. and catering work as rail-public relation agents. But T.T.E. is also facing many difficulties. 3 to 5 coaches are entrusted to one T.T.E. Some of our colleagues create scenes there. Any way, it is between us. He has to look not their difficuties. If the number of coaches is more, the number of T.T.E. should also be increased. The T.T.E. has to look after the convenience of and attend to the passengers. He arranges for food and bedding etc. He remains awake the whole night but he has no seat to sit in. This is practical difficulty and it must be looked into. The hon'ble Minister is the read of the railway family consisting of 18 lakh family Members and if this number is multiplied by 5, the strength of the family comes to 90 lakh. Being head of such a large family, I would request him to see their welfare. Big announcements will not help. We must proceed step by step. This will definitely give us encouraging results.

SHRI KALP NATH RAI (Ghosi) : Whether the railway has a family of 16 lakh or 18 lakh?

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : The population is increasing. It is good if it is 18 lakh. I take his statement as correct.

A Railway Catering Corporation is there for taking care of Railway catering services. But I don't know whether it exists or not.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : It is under consideration.

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : I would request him to make this corporation active and pay more attention to catering facilities. Shri Deve Gowda's Government has made a very good announcement, though in principle I am against it. They have said that the Ministers will be divested of their discretionary powers. I do not know whether power to issue passes remains with him or

not...*(Interruptions)* What I want to say is that tendency of granting passes indiscriminately is bad. The favourites are being issued passes without any justification. This practice was much in vogue when Late Shri Kamla Pati Tripathi was the Railway Minister. Infact the Congress people have special expertise in this matter. The honourable chairman is also aware. But what is the end result? The genuine passenger who pays for his travel is deprived of the seat. So, these things have to be checked. The platform ticket will now cost Rs. 1. This price should be reduced. If the cost is less people will become habitual to purchase platform ticket to enter the platform.

Sir, there is talk of unigauge system. Mr. Chidambaram is not here. His budget and the Railway Ministers Budget are similar. Wine is the same but the bottles are new. The Railway Minister has also become fond of new economic policy. Globalisation and libralisation. The Railways have important role in the creation of infrastructural facilities. Without infrastructural facilities we cannot think of constructing a rail line or of setting up an industry. Nor can we think of unity if diversity. The thrust areas he has proposed are not new. We have been having discussion here on electrification, gauge conversion and unigauge. Just now Mr. Basu Dev Acharia was saying that we must have multigauge, metergauge, narrow gauge and broadgauge side by side. But the Government has not been able to achieve the target of 8th, Five Year Plan. What is he going to do during the coming 9th Plan. We need unigauge which is a necessary step for proper operation of the railways. It must be introduced whatever be the cost. At the same time the old rolling stock, old tracks will have to be changed.

Sir, Mr. Naik has said that the budgetary support for Railways has been declining over the years. But I think the Railways have been getting budgetary support right from the beginning of the 1st Five Year Plan. It was 75 percent in the 5th Plan, 42 percent in the 6th Plan. It has perhaps come down to 15 percent now.

Now what is budgetary support? What benefit do the Railways get out of it? During his Railway Budget speech he has been looking to the Finance Minister and expressing his agony. He appeared to be demanding some funds for his Railway schemes. I do'nt think the Finance Minister is obliging him...*(Interruptions)* If he has taken some initiative, then please demand more and more money. Railways belong to all of us. All of us will help him but he must present his demands with greater stress...*(Interruptions)*.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

[English]

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : I am just concluding, Sir. I am coming to my part.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already taken half an hour.

[Translation]

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Sir, please give me five minutes more. I come from Gonda district and my constituency is Bahrapur. I have with me a letter dated 13th September 1989 from honble Shri Madhav Rao Scindia. I had made some demands at that time and I want to reiterate them. Uttar Pradesh is being meted out a stop motherly treatment I had demanded gauge conversion of Gonda-Gorakhpur line via Balrampur-Sitapur. In reply, I was told that presently Balrampur-Tulsipur via Gonda-Gorakhpur track is a meter gauge route and it connect the meter line network between Uttar Pradesh and Assam and if this line is converted into broadgauge, the important metergauge system will be affected and there will be chair all round. This means conversion of gauge will create chaos. This is what the then Railway Minister had said.

Today, I again, demand that this is an important Railway line and should be converted into broadgauge line. It has already been converted upto Zakal road. This route provides link to the North-East. This is of strategic impotence. It connects Bihar also. I had also demanded gauge conversion of Mankapur-Katni line. In reply I was informed that a survey was conducted for conversion of branch line of Mankapur-Katni metergauge. But the project was not found finally viable. But this track has now been converted. I had also demanded construction of a Railway bridge over the Sarju river in Ayodhya. He has in his speech said that the work of acquisition of land for the construction of the bridge over the Sarju river to connect Faizabad is being completed. Sir, in 1989, when I made a demand for construction of this bridge I was told that it was not financially viable but today the hon'ble Minister has accepted the project. I demand for conversion of Balrampur-Tulsipur Railway line via Gorakhpur which was rejected at that time and which has not been accepted.

The hon'ble Minister has announced conversion of all the Railway lines in Uttar Pradesh. He had said that conversion of Tanakpur-Pilibhit, Bareilly-Pilibhit, Sitapur-Lucknow track will be taken up in the first phase during the coming years. When will this be started is not clear. He must have come concrete programme. He has not even asked for funds for this purpose. The Kanpur-Mathura-Kasganj, Kasganj-Bareilly and Gonda-Gorakhpur lines have been identified and surveyed. I am grateful to him for this. But no survey has been completed for Gonda-Gorakhpur Line.

In 1977, the hon'ble Minister was also a Member of this House. We were sitting on the Treasury Benches.

The proposed for Balrampur, Utrila and Khalilabad was discussed. The survey for this line had been completed. But this has not found a mention in the proposals of the hon'ble Ministers.

Sir, Gonda railway junction receives trains from all over India. The Gonda-Balrampur section is a 40 km-track and Shrasvasti, the place of Buddhist pilgrimage is 15 km from there. The Govt. of Japan has given an assistance of Rs. 400 crore for providing rail link to the places of Buddhist pilgrimage. The affluent people visit these places by chartered planes but Large number of pilgrims from Srilanka and Burma come to Gonda junction. But they do not have proper retiring room facility. The Government has provided A.C. retiring room facilities in major cities. I would request the hon'ble Minister to provide A.C. retiring room facility at Gonda junction Station also so that the foreign tourists coming by trains during night can rest there and proceed to the places of pilgrimage. We are earning a lot of foreign exchange from these people.

The Indian Railways do not have general sales agent in Nepal as a result of which a foreign tourist, instead of visiting India goes to some other places because of non availability of advance reservation facility. I have raised this issue severel times. I have also written to the Railway Board. He has called for the report from the Assembly in this regard. Infact, the net result is that we have been loosing the valuable foreign exchange. We must have adequate facilities to attract foreign tourists. This will enhance our image abroad and attract foreign tourists to this country.

It is my fortune that the hon'ble Railway Minister is known to me for a long time. He is like my elder brother. Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : (Silchar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, 16th July, 1996 is the red letter day for the people of North-Eastern States. I have been in this House from 1988 onwards. I have heard many things in my career. I have met six Chairman of the Railway Board. I have met nine Railway Ministers. One day in 1996, as an Opposition Leader, I had the opportunity of listening to the present Railway Minister after his visit to Tripura.

He created a furore in the House and said that "We only give lip service to the North-Eastern Region. Why do you not have Railway lines to these various State capitals, especially Tripura and other parts of the country. Sitting here as a Minister, I thought this would be one of the speeches which would be witten in the parliamentary proceedings but everything would go in vain.

When this gentlemen become the Railway Minister, I heard his first speech from Silcher, speaking to the Television. He again repeated that one of his first priorities would be to develop the Railway line in the North-Eastern States. I thought, he would go to the Railway Board and he would be bantised by the Railway Board officials and again he would be back to normal as it had happened to others in the past.

Then he called a meeting of the North-Eastern MPs. All of us went. I do not want to blame any individual. A book, like this, was circulated to us. Going through the book, I again could see that the Railway Board officials have not changed, though the Minister has changed. He offered us dinner. I took him out of the room and asked him, "What was that meeting for? You have heard so many people, you have heard the Railway Board Chairman, what did you learn from them? He said, "Sontoshbhai, I am a Minister and they are officials, give me time."

I came back and wrote another letter to him expressing my worries. After a few days, he gave me a chance to have interction with some top officials. There also I came to know that such line was not there, such and such line could not be done, such and such line was not remunerative, the CCA has not approved it, the Planning Commission has not approved it, etc. and hence the indication to me was to wait for some time.

I came back again and at some time at midnight, I again rang him up. He said, "I am doing my job, you do your job." I asked him, "What job do you want me to do?" He said, "You speak to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister, about me you need not worry." I did meet the Prime Minister and talked to him. When I met the Prime Minister, he told me that for the whole North-Eastern Region the Railways was pressurising him. When I met the Minister of Finance, he expressed his willingness to help the North-Eastern region and Shri Chidambaram said "Santosh Da, I will support you."

I am 62 years old. I never got blood pressure unless India loses in hockey or in any football game. But that day I was sitting here thinking what he was going to state. Then he came to page No. 18. What was said in the past in 1995 was reflected in this speech. He said, "hon. Members from the North-Eastern States have been representing about the lack of rail link to the State capitals. This Government has decided to remedy that situation."

They started in this direction and work on traction of the new line from Komarghat to Agartala, to link up the capital of Tripura, has been included in the Budget. This line will meet the long standing expectations of the people of that region.

I was a Member of Parliament from Tripura and I tried with the then Prime Minister also. Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief, the then Minister of Railways or anybody else would always say, "It is a difficult terrain, we cannot go. It will be very difficult to do it." It was about my line, Lumding-Silchar, which I wanted from the hon. Minister. The same analogy is being brought. When it was updated one General Manager (Railway) told me that Konkan Railway was now being done, the tunnel was being constructed, why could not the same be done in the case of Lumding-Silchar? I had requested Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief and he ordered for updating it. That was ready.

My colleague, Shri P. Upendra has said that survey is the reason for the delay. I do not agree with him. This line was updated only a year back. And today this line has come into reality. A sum of Rs. 600 crore is required for this. It may not be possible to give this amount in one year or two years or three years or four years. But, I would like to tell Shri Paswan that on that very day, that is, on the 16th, I took a chance and told my people in Barak Valley, "Probably Shri Paswan is going to give it." It was celebrated by bursting of crackers all over the Barak Valley irrespective of the Parties. This was the demand of the people of the Valley. The line, Lumding-Silchar, was the demand of all the Parties Congress, BJP, CPM and other Parties.

There is a Member from Karimganj also. I take this opportunity to convey my hearty thanks, my gratitude to the Minister and to the new Chairman of the Railway Board, who, I suppose, is slightly positive that the previous one. I do not know how long he will continue. But I must congratulate the hon. Minister for the steps he has taken. One of the demands that was made during the meeting was for the Bogibhool bridge. When the hon. Minister said in his Budget speech: "It has been decided to take up the construction of the fourth bridge on the river Brahmaputra at Bogibhool", the whole of Assam had celebrated it.

The hon. Minister also said that the railway line, which is now up to Tinsukia will be extended further. He also mentioned about the project of Aruanachal and has given a project for Imphal. The Chief Minister of Manipur, being the Congress Chief Minister, gave a Press release saying, 'This is the first time in the Railway Budget that Manipur has got justice from the Government of India and I congratulate the hon. Minister. "The Chief Minister of the Congress Party has brought an analogy that the Congress Government had not given it in the past. For that, I take this opportunity to convey my hearty thanks. Probably you have seen one thing. I am a man who not only demands but I also stand by you.

On the other day when I was talking to Shri Chidambaram, I said: "Yesterday the Railway Minister

gave a speech and said that he would consider about the railway line. What is the problem?" He told me that they had to make resource mobilisation. He said: "If they make a particular point, Dada, I will take care of the balance amount." You had fortunately demanded there and said: "We have arranged to have our resource publication".

If that be the case you will get the support from all of us. On behalf of the North-Eastern States, as a whole, I convey my hearty thanks to the Prime Minister, who was positive. I convey my hearty thanks to the hon. Minister for acting on whatever he had proached while he was in the Opposition. For that, we are grateful to him.

This line will take a long time. I have got two or three problems only. I will not go into the all India phenomenon because the other hon. Members are going to speak.

Now, Silchar is connected by metre-gauge from Lunding and by broad-gauge from Guwahati. Dimapur is going to be extended to Tinsukia. This transshipment is causing a lot of problems to all of us. So, I would like to make a request to him. As the hon. Minister has decided to make it broad-gauge, a provision of Rs. 10 crore has been made and he cannot do it overnight.

It is not my proposal. It was the proposal of your Railway experts. From Lunding towards Silchar there is a point up to which, there is no tunnel and there is no ditch. If you extend the broad gauge up to that point, by another line - and at least if you cannot take the present line, we do not mind - or if the goods, foodgrains and other things can be extended up to that point, then, from there they are transhipped in metre gauge to Silchar. Then, Silchar, Karimganj, Agartala, Mizoram and Manipur will be served. Today, the cost of our essential commodities is too high. It becomes difficult.

Only on the other day, I told Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav that the road from Silchar to Shillong was closed for 15 days. The Railways provide a good service. I spoke to the General Manager. He took some steps. But if to a certain extent this broad gauge line can be extended, the transshipment time will be saved. Whether it is possible or not, that I do not know as I am not a technical man. If it is not possible, then kindly take some steps so that the transshipment does not take unlimited time for the passenger and the goods traffic and we can get our essential commodities without delay. This is one point.

Another point to which I would like to draw your attention is that there was Railway construction office in Silchar. Since the broad gauge was not coming, there was an attempt to close down that office. At my request, both Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief and Shri Suresh Kalmadi kept that office. This should be utilised. As you say very

nicely and the Prime Minister has also said it in a public meeting in Uttar Pradesh, that the construction development work is not only for spending for development but the infrastructure development will also provide employment.

So, the total amount will be spent from Lunding-Silchar, where definitely, there should be a good organisation, an engineering office. There should be an engineering office in Silchar which is my constituency. I am not demanding any other things. I am demanding only a construction office, where the ordinary muster-roll labourers and others will also be able to work and they can participate. This is my humble request to you.

Then I have another humble request to you. Yes, the hon. Member from BJP is here. It is very unfortunate for political Parties like BJP. They are trying to mix up the package given by the hon. Prime Minister along with the election. They must remember that the Government, in the past 10 years, had an all Party meeting in which your Party was also involved. Another Party went to Kashmir also. Everybody is saying that for Kashmir there should be a special package. Now for the Minister of Railways to give Rs. 2500 crores, is next to impossible. To give a national scheme and to absorb this money separately from the Railways, hon. Members, it is saving us. You are asking so many things for your constituency. At the same time, it will send a good message to the people of Kashmir that the Government of India is concerned about them also. When it does something, it will not go to the credit of the Janata party but it will go to the credit of all of us.

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : They are, on the one hand, announcing the elections and on the other they are amounting this package. What have they to say about this?

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : That is the problem. The BJP can do anything for election. We should not do anything for election. We are all political elements. Why should we do it?

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Thank you for yielding.

[Translation]

I have always stressed this point. I thank the hon'ble Minister for announcing this project for Kashmir. This is intended to bring J and K people in the national mainstream. There is no opposition to it in principle. What we object is that this line is not going to be completed by 30th September. Survey is not going to be completed. They will not be able to mobilise

Rs. 2500 crore and even if they do, the line is not going to be completed. Have they been advised by some astrologer to announce this package today? Therefore, I link this package with elections and the Government had elections in mind while announcing this package. Whatever Mr. Paswan may say, this is the fact. Their supporters staged dharnas on stair cases outside. But here, they have become the yes men of the Government. The fact is that they are two facets.

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : To suggest that we are against the package is wrong. Nobody has opposed it. We want railway lines should be provided in Kashmir.

20.45 hrs.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker *in the Chair*)

But there should be some way of doing it. Simply making an announcement and not taking practical view of it is not plausible, particularly when elections are approaching...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Agreed. They had 13 days Government. The Prime Minister had gone to Lucknow. Why did he announce the construction of Ram Temple in Ayodhya? I do't blame him.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Whether Ayodhya Temple has any bearing on the Railways?

[*English*]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : I don not blame Shri Vajpayee. I am countering his proposal. Every man, whether it is Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Shri L.K. Advani, Shri H.D.Deve Gowda or Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao or anybody else, will think of his political party. There is nothing wrong in it. I do not say that it is wrong. He is telling that it is wrong. Your Government for thirteen days has made provisions for thirty years. May God bless you and Ram bring you here...*(Interruptions)*

[*Translation*]

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Sir, they have been ruling the country for 40-45 year. Their misdeeds have pushed them to this ridiculous situation.

[*English*]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, will you protect me? I have not disturbed him. He spoke for forty-five minutes. He has said about Congress scam and other thing. I did not stand up to disturb him...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : You did the scam ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : During your rule of 13 days, in lunch hour, you approved the deep counter guarantee proposal of Enron. Is it not a scam?

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Was this not approved by this Government also?

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : This Government has done it after they got the Confidence of the House. Nobody is against the Enron. But why should you do it in hurry?...*(Interruptions)* So, I am telling you that let us not criticise each other. What has been done for Kashmir is good, the hon. Prime Minister has done something and it will be welcomed by all of us. The hon. Prime Minister is trying to give a message to the people of Kashmir that this House, this Government is looking after the interests of the people of Kashmir Election is another thing...*(Interruptions)* The hon. Member has come here after winning the seat. I know his capability. He can get some seats for his party. You need not worry about it. Leave it to him. But please do not try to send a message. He is very rightly saying, you welcome it first and then criticise. But what you are doing is that you are criticising first and then welcoming. This is wrong...*(Interruptions)* Please do not stand up to disturb me again...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, this is a very serious matter. He is trying to put his words in my mouth. I never said it. I am still on record and let the record be a testimony to this fact that I have stated that it is a very welcome step and let Jammu and Kashmir be integrated in any manner which is possible from the side of the Government. Now, Sir, he is trying to put his vision in my words. That is very bad. Please do not send this signal that B.J.P. is opposing it. It is, not true. We are supporting it.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Please do not get excited at 9 o' clock...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA DEO SINGH : I am not excited. You are trying to mislead us and trying to mislead the country ...*(Interruptions)*. let me clarify it...*(Interruptions)* I have been repeatedly saying that the project of constructing railway line from Udhampur to Baramula is most welcome. But the Railway Budget does not include any project for my area. In reply to my query, the hon'ble Minister said that resources worth 2500 crores cannot be generated. I opposed it simply because of the timing of the announcement. It has been done of political consideration. The Assembly elections have been announced. The hon'ble Prime Minister made the announcement keeping the elections in view. This was my objection...*(Interruptions)*

[*English*]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Today to the credit of this Prime Minister, I can say that he has the guts to say in this House that elections will be declared by the Election Commission on First or second. That is why he came to the House and declared it. I was present when he said so. He has the guts to say it.

He said so that it is the desire of the people of India so a whole that India is always considering Kashmir as an integral part of India. All of us will agree to it. But what the hon. Member has said is also out they desirable to be said. It will send a wrong message. This is my feeling. He may not agree with me. He has got every right to refute my presentation before the House. Sir, is it that he go the right to criticise the Government and the Prime Minister and I have no right to criticise his speech? What sort of tolerance is it? I do not understand. This is not fair...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You take up some other point.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV : Sir, I would conclude by saying that this Railway Budget burden to the common man and not putting burden for the movements of goods which are essential commodities and which are needed for the common people and also keeping in mind the commuters in the city and suburban areas.

On behalf of my Party and on behalf of myself as well as on behalf of the people of the North east I wish all the best for the Railway Minister. I will again put it on record to say that what the hon. Minister has done will ever be remembered by the people of the North East. I will request you to visit all our States so that we can welcome you. We do believe that you have a constraints of funds. But within the limitation of funds, I am sure that, you will do justice to the North East.

With these words I thank Shri Paswan and I support this Budget in toto.

[Translation]

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad) : Mr. Deputy Speaker. Sir, I thank you for giving me time to speak on the railway Budget. I shall try to finish my speech in five minutes. It is the misfortune of Andhra Pradesh that no railway Minister has come from there. Still I support the budget and would like to place some suggestions before Shri Paswan Sahib.

Sir, Hyderabad-Jaipur-Ajmer one is a meter gauge line. We have been demanding its conversion into broad gauge line in the absence of which rail users face a lot of difficulties. I once again demand that this meter gauge line should be converted into broad gauge. As you know, Sir, the naxalite activities are increasing in Andhra Pradesh and the people are afraid of travelling by trains. Steps should be taken for the security of railway passengers so that they reach their destination safely.

Hyderabad city is expanding in a big way and there is no overbridge in the city. And as a result, the traffic gets jammed for hours together. It is a very strange

thing that an over bridge at Wazirpura was sanctioned five or seven years ago and it has been completed but has not been officially opened for traffic. This bridge is located in the heart of the city and is being used for traffic unofficially. Sometimes its opened to traffic and sometimes it is closed. I don't know what the reasons are-I would like to be enlightened in this regard because as Member of Parliament we have to the obligation towards our people. People ask us the reasons for not opening this bridge to traffic. The railway officers are also unable to give us the exact position. I would like to know the definite date whether it is 1996 or 1997 or 2000 when this bridge will be officially opened for traffic?

My second point is about catering. Very substandard and poor quality food is served in trains. Most of the Ministers travel by planes. They could ascertain the exact position if they travel by trains. The railway tracks have become very old and uneven. The running trains keep jumping and it becomes difficult for the passengers to sleep during the night. The maintenance is poor. These small things cause great hardships to the passengers.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I would like to tell the hon'ble Members that from the day I assumed the charge of Railway Ministry I tried to travel by trains. I travel by plane only when it is absolutely necessary. I have travelled upto Mumbai by train. Offcourse, there are two or three aspects which caused irritation to me also. One is the lack of proper maintenance. Hon'ble members have been raising this issue time and again. Other is catering. We have private as well as official catering system. 75 percent catering is handled by private agencies, 25 percent by Railways themselves. The services of both are not satisfactory. I am worried about this and I have created special cells in my office and in zonal offices also but I would like to assure the hon'ble Member that I will do whatever is possible to bring about improvement. If necessary I will constitute a committee of Members of Parliament I accept the short comings and deficiency in the catering department but I shall be grateful if the hon'ble Members give their suggestion for bringing about improvements. I will have no objections in accepting them.

SHRI SUTLAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Thanks a lot. He is setting a very good practice. If he travels train during summers he will find that cold drinking water is not available. The water containers are empty ...*(Interruptions)* Cold drinking water is not available even at major Railway stations. Similarly, there is difficulty in reservations. A major part of the population lives in Hyderabad but the reservation facility has been provided in Secundrabad. Secundrabad has 20 percent population while 80 percent population lives in Hyderabad. The trains stops at Secundrabad. The trains

have started now coming to Hyderabad-Nampalli station after making repeated demands.

21.00 hrs.

But it gets late by two hours and the passengers get down at Secundrabad. I want the trains must observe punctuality. There have been instances when trains got late by 24 hours. I would like that the Railways must observe punctuality.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You have consumed your time. Now please finish. I have deducted the time taken by the hon'ble Railway Minister.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Similarly, the trains lack facility of medical care. People travel far off places and there is no medical facility and they have to wait for the medical aid till they reach the next station. In case any passenger gets ill there should be some arrangement in the train for medical care.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have made repeated request for introducing a train between Hyderabad and Warangal. There is heavy passenger traffic and an extra train is absolutely necessary.

I will not give you the trouble of ringing another bell. While concluding my speech I with all humility at my command request you to catch our eyes also because you belong to the entire House and not only to that section of the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will definitely keep your advice in mind.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI : Thank you Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the railway Budget. India is the second largest country population-wise. It has a population of 95 crore people 80 crore people travel by train. The Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is present in the House. There is always a debate between the treasury and opposition benches. We have a strong opposition here in the House. It is their obligation to make criticism. The criticism is welcome but they must accept whatever is in public interest.

The opposition had been conducting themselves on religious sentiments. Their political philosophy is religion based.

The people who are concerned only with securing votes cannot understand the importance the Railway has for the rural people. Our friends sitting in the opposition have only tried to know, as one of them was saying 'the bottle is the same but wine has changed.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He had said some thing different. I was listening by sitting on some other seat. He said 'wine is the same but bottle has changed'.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : May be, I have put it the other way. I correct myself but the temple is the same and they change the God ...*(Interruptions)* I am going to speak on Railway but want to keep those things close to my heart. Today we have a population of 90 crore and 80 crore of them are rail users. I would like to urge the Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Pawan and also congratulate him, that now he is the Railway Minister and many hon'ble Members alleged that this is a Bihar Budget ...*(Interruptions)*.

Sir, he has a great dream, he has travelled a lot and become a Minister though he comes from a Dalit family. He got the opportunity of becoming Minister twice and also has adorned many other positions. Today, he is the Minister of the biggest Ministry. 90 crore people are looking to him. He his a Minister in the United Front Government led by Shri Deve Gowda and the farmers have great expectations from Shri Gowda ji. The Railway Minister has presented the Railway Budget keeping in view the welfare of the weaker section, the poor people who are the real users of the railway. Shri Paswan Ji used to say, he wants to lit a light in the homes where darkness has been prevailing for centuries. He has enhanced the prestige of the weaker section by following the way Dr. Ambedkar had shown. I congratulate him for all this.

I hope that the respectibility of weaker section of the society of oppressed section will go on enhancing till he is there. The transparency he has shown in the Railway Budget shows that the United Front Government is really concerned about the 90 percent population of the country.

Sir, now I would like to turn to Bihar which is the second largest state of the country. It is a backward state. Bihar has given many Minister like Lalit Narayan Mishra and Kedar Pandey. Shri George Fernandes had also been a Minister. Shri Paswan ji is fifth or Sixth Railway Minister from Bihar. There is no denying the fact that the Minister has some leaning towards his state. Bihar which is the most backward State and second largest from population point of view has today received a little attention after 47 years of independence. If the expectations of the people of Bihar have arisen there is nothing new. Other Railway Ministers had done every thing for their respective States. I would request the hon'ble to do something more for Bihar.

He has announced conversion of many meter gauge lines into broad gauge. He deserves congratulations for this. But I would like to say Bihar needs new meter gauge railines besides broad gauge lines. The State is poor and people cannot afford surface transport fares. I don't grudge the A.C. first class and second class facilities but I would like he should pay more attention

to middle class people of the society. I have been making repeated demands that Sharasa - Manasi, Manasi - Farvisganj, Sharasa - Katihar line should be converted into broad gauge. I have met the Prime Minister personally in this regard and also Shri Kalmadi ji. I myself had inaugurated the survey work. He has earned the appreciation of crores of people. Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra had taken up the job-his house is hardly 35 km from my house - but that was left uncomplete and nobody has paid attention to the job so far. Now the hon'ble Railway Minister's attention has gone to this unfinished task. I shall request him to construct a railway line from Saharasa to Jogbani via Purnia - Katihar. Jogbani is situated on the Indo-Nepal border. It is a tourist spot. It is an international place like International Raxaul station. Special attention must be paid to Jogbani. It will strengthen Indo-Nepal Trade.

Sir, I have been requesting from time to time for connecting Pursala and Bihariganj via Rupoli, Bhawani pur and Barhara. It will curtail 18 hours' Journey to 1 1/2 hours journey. If the Ban Bankhi- Bihariganj rail track is connected from Bihariganj to Saharasa or Bihariganj is connected to Manasi Railway line, it can save 22 hours to 24 hours journey.

Similarly, if Banbankhi is linked to Kishanganj via Jalagarh and Jogihat then we will not have to go via Katihar, which takes us about 4 hours, it will reduce the distant considerably. As I had said during my meeting with him, if Madhubani is connected to Saharasa via Nirmalli and if Madhepura - Singhesar, which is the second tourism centre of the State, is connected to Jogbani via Triveniganj it will reduce the journey by 22-23 hours. The poor people cannot visit this place by bus because there is river in between. If this is linked even by meter gauge, then, I think it will be a great achievement for the Railway Minister.

He is aware that we had been fighting for the Raptal road which links Jagbani to Uttar Pradesh via Darbhanga. This has not been constructed so far. There is no alternative for the people. We have to travel from Darbhanga to Samstipur via Khagaria and Begusarai. It takes us 24 hours when this can be covered in 1 hour if the above link track is provided. If this railline is provided, it will be a boon for the North Bihar. I would, therefore, request the hon'ble Minister to consider this seriously. Katihar is third or fourth big railway junction of Bihar. We go from here to Bengal, Howrah, Guwahati, Siliguri, Jalpaiguri, Shillong, Nepal etc. This junction does not have the facility of direct superfast train. I request a direct superfast train should be introduced. Mahananda train is there but it takes 48 hours to 72 hours. It has no A.C. class. Don't give us A.C. first class or second class, at least give us A.C. third class.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Is there any A.C. third class?

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : I mean A.C. three-tier. If only that is provided that will be a great achievement for us. We have not been given any direct train. There is an superfast train from Howrah. The lone day train from Howrah has many stoppage and corres 12-13 districts. If a superfast train is introduced in public interest, for the benefit of traders, poor people, it will add to the benefit of the Railways. So I request a superfast train from Howrah be introduced.

I have said many times that there is no movement facility from North Bihar to South Bihar. If we travel by bus we reach Ranchi next day and have to travel the whole night. The bus that operates from Barauni for Saharasa, Katihar, Madhepura, Araria reaches Ranchi in 22-23 hours. There is no train service. We have either to go to Baruni or Patna to catch the train. It takes us three hours to reach Bokaro, Dhanbad. If it is not possible to give us any train then some more bogies may be attached to the train that starts from Barauni. Some bogies should be attached from Katihar for Dhanbad. I fail to understand why no attention was paid for linking North and south Bihar even after independence. I would personally request the hon'ble minister, if he wants to link North Bihar with South Bihar, he can provide a route via Barauni and Chul.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : There are more names from your group. I have no objection, but other members of your group will not get time to speak.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : There are only two names from SP.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Other names are also there. Alright, you continue.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : If he looks into all these matters it will be a big thing for us.

I would like to make yet another request. The former Minister Kalmadiji has ordered linking Hariharnath to Katihar. The train which Covers many districts and goes to Sonepur-Chapra has no A.C. first class bogie. All the M.L.As of these 11 districts desire to go Patna by Hariharnath Express because it takes too much time in going via Katihar. We will be grateful if a second class A.C. bogie is attached to Hariharnath Express. We had requested Paswan ji to introduce an EMU from Katihar to Patna because there is no train during day time and people are greatly inconvenienced. This EMU should start at 7 or 8 o'clock in the morning from Katihar and Patna simultaneously. This train be named Kosi train or with any other local name. I would request that this EMU train should be introduced. I would also like to say

that in a meeting called by the Minister that large number of labourers from Bihar go to Punjab and other places because we have no factory in our area and it is a flood prone area. All the labourers have migrated to other States because they get only one time meal here for want of work.

An hon'ble Member was saying that poor people travel by trains and cover long distances but these days only 10 percent affluent people travel by planes or Rajdhani Expresses. Mahananda is one train to which only poor and middle class people travel and it covers long distance. This train had only one or two bogies. The passengers travel on roofs. It is over crowded and passengers travel even in the train toilets resulting inconveniences to those passengers who want to use the toilets. So I will request the hon'ble Minister to attach more bogies to such trains to avoid the difficulties of the poor and middle class people travelling in these trains.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You have taken 27 minutes.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : I am concluding.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please conclude in two minutes.

SHRI RAJESH RANJAN ALIAS PAPPU YADAV : I would like to draw the attention of the hon Minister to his promise of providing over bridges. There is no overbridge between Farvisganj and Rukmani Road. The trains get detained there for many hours. I had requested him personally earlier and request him again to pay personal attention to this problem. It will be in the interest of the local people. I am concluding. I have to drawn attention to some more problems. Mahananda express has no canteen facility. It is a long route train. I have written many times in this regard. I was a member of that Board and raised this point time and again. I don't know why they forget the request made by the Members of Parliament. The hon'ble Minister never forgets but we have no prestige before big officers of his Ministry. I am happy that he listen to both ruling and opposition people and respects them equally. As for electrification, I would request that the railline from Mughal Sarai to Patna should be taken up in the first phase and Patna to Barauni and Barauni to Katihar route should be taken up in the second phase.

In the last, I would like to make yet another request. The trains operating on Guwahati - Katihar route via Barauni get late by half an hour because of change of engines. I would request that some alternate arrangement should be made so that the trains operating

from Guwahati and Katihar routes are not required to change engines in between. The Katihar - Manihari route is an important route. I would like to suggest that if road and rail bridges are constructed simultaneously by state Government and Ministry of Railways it will reduce Capital expenditure. There is no railway lines between Bhagalpur and Sahibganj and Bhagalpur and Naugachia. Road bridges are being constructed to connect these places and if the hon'ble Minister takes a decision to construct railway bridges along with these road bridges, then, I think, it will bring down the expenditure to be incurred by Railway Ministry and the State Government.

Sir, I thank you for giving me time. There are many other points which I could not touch. I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to Darbhanga - Lokah, Darbhanga - Nirmali broad gauge line. The halt provided on Indian side at Narayan pur Patra between Barauni and katihar is lying closed. This is a very important halt from Indian Railway point of view. This halt should be restored. It will be in the public interest. There is no overbridge at Banmanki junction or at other junctions like Nayayanpur junction and many fatal accidents take place there. I would request that overbridges should be constructed at Banmanki and Narayan Pur. I congratulate the hon'ble Minister. May he continue to serve the society, the country, the downtroddens. This will enhance the prestige of this August House also.

[English]

SHRI TIRUCHI SIVA (Pudukkottai) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I was a bit hesitant to take part in the discussion, but the congenial atmosphere of the House has emboldened me to take part in this healthy discussion on a very essential service, the Railways. I would like to make use of this opportunity to thank the Minister of Railways as a consumer and appreciate him as a Member of this House, and to congratulate him as a constituent of the United Front.

The very next day after the Railway Budget was presented in the House, the newspapers flashed headlines, "Paswan has increased 10 per cent on freight charges" and "Rise in upper class fares", etc. The very basic features that have not been highlighted by the newspapers are - no increase in fares of second class ordinary and second class mail and express, no increase in fares of monthly and quarterly season ticket for second class and first class, and no increase up to 200 km in existing fare of sleeper class mail and express and ordinary trains.

We have to appreciate this. I thank, and congratulate, and appreciate the hon. Minister of Railways for not having taxed the common man. In spite of the hike in the administered prices of diesel,

the academic apprehensions were turned upside down without an increase on the burden of the common man who happens to travel most in trains. I have the right and privilege to praise the hon. Minister of Railways. At this juncture, I believe, there could not be a better Railway Budget than this.

While praising and applauding the hon. Minister, I have certain demands to put forth. I actually feel sorry to mention here that we have always been a neglected State in the past so far as the Railway are concerned. We expect that that would not be repeated in the regime of our hon. Minister of Railways Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. We see in him a pioneer of social justice. He has no bias on any thing in the country and the people and so, we expect a lot from him. I would like to say that certain things might have escaped his notice. I am making use of this chance to bring to his notice some such issues concerning our constituency and our State.

The hon. Minister of Railways has announced nine diesel push-pull trains, but none of them has been allotted to our State. He has announced seven electrical push-pull trains, two in broad-gauge and 5 in metre-gauge, but none to our State. He has declared that conversion of Madras-Dindigul line into broad-gauge will be completed by March, 1998. I am sorry to say that it has been a very long process and only 30 per cent of the work has been completed due to lack of allotment of funds. We wish it could be finished by 1997. The MRTTP system which he has mentioned between Madras and Velachery is a successful scheme owing to the contribution of the Tamil Nadu Government headed by our leader Dr. Kalaignar Karunanidhi. The hon. Minister has come forward to fulfil that.

We have many demands which we have conveyed to the hon. Minister. Along with that I would like to bring to his notice certain important issues for his perusal, consideration and action. He has increased the frequency of the train from Nagercoil to Mumbai from weekly to tri-weekly. We thank him very much for it. I would request him to attach one Sleeper coach at Karur because the people of Tiruchy, Thanjavur and Pudukkottai have to come to Madras to go over to Bombay.

If the hon. Minister can attach a coach at Karur, starting from Tiruchi and if it is attached to Nagercoil-Mumbai CST Express, it would be of much help to the people of there there districts. The hon. Minister may take this into consideration. When he came to Madras to get the opinion of our people, we expressed certain views, to some of which he had paid heed. I would like to remind him again that from Pudukottai, which is my constituency, to Madras, fast passenger train during the night time is badly in need because some 100 buses ply during nights only and people prefer buses because

of the low fare compared to the express trains. If a fast passenger train starting from Pudukottai in the chord line to Madras is introduced, full patronage will be given as the beneficiary will be not only the people but the Railways also.

Sir, one sleeper coach may be attached to 6176A Kamban Express for the convenience of the people who are travelling from Peravurani, Arandanghi, Pattukottai, Abhiramapattinam and other places.

While delivering his speech, our hon. Member, Shri P. Upendra congratulated the Minister of Railways and the Railway employees who are solely responsible for its development. I take this chance to put forth certain demands of the Railway employees which can be solved by the hon. Minister and only during his regime and under the United Front Government, which is for the poor, which is for the working class, which is for the have-nots.

I would like to mention here about a very important problem concerning the Group C and Group D employees. While in service they are given three sets of 'P' passes in one calendar year. But after retirement due to superannuation, the Group C employees are given two sets of passes whereas the Group D employees are given only one set of passes. This anomaly must be scrapped and they must be treated on a par. On behalf of the Group C and Group D employees, this is my request.

I would like to state that the policy of providing appointment on compassionate grounds to the wards and dependents of Railway employees, who die in harness while in service, have been in vogue for several years in all the departments. I would like to mention here that during 1977-79, during the Janata Government regime, a huge backlog was cleared by a fill up within a reasonable time.

Sir, in the Southern Railway, it has been neglected to a considerable extent with the result that there is a huge backlog. I am afraid that it may be due to the misapprehension that the ban on filling up of vacancies applies to this also. Necessary instructions may be given by Railway Minister to till up the vacancies to wipe out this backlog within a period of three to six months by enabling the employees, their dependents, their wards, to get employed in Group C and Group D cadres. Otherwise the very purpose will be defeated.

I present all these things because our hon. Railway Minister could understand these difficulties. An hon. Member has just quoted here that the hon. Minister hails from a poor family. He knows the conditions of the poor people. He knows the needs of the people.

Sir, the Golden Rock Workshop in Triuchi in Tamil Nadu has been considered to be the best in Asia. But,

for the past one year, the turnout of diesel locomotives for periodic overhauling allotted to that Workshop has been reduced from 120 to 108. Due to this drastic reduction of turnout of diesel locomotives, the general workload of this prestigious Workshop has been considerably reduced leading to a curtailment of overtime allowance, incentives and payments to Workshop staff, in addition to stoppage of promotion and recruitment of additional workmen. Hence, Sir, additional locomotives may be allotted to the Golden Rock Workshop enabling the employees as well as the Railways to reap a rich income.

Along with that I would like to mention here, Sir, that, being a new member, I took the chance of felicitating you and you can consider this as my maiden speech and can give me some more time. I am in a mood to talk to this House. I expected a very big forum here. I expected my veteran leader to hear, the speeches of newcomers like me here. But may be, due to certain situations, we are facing an empty House here. In spite of that, we are having some hon. members, the Deputy-Speaker and the hon. Railway Minister here. So, as I said earlier, the congenial atmosphere here in this House has emboldened me to speak now. So, I take this chance to present certain points because I expect a lot from the hon. Railway Minister.

Sir, the Railway Ministry is the single biggest employer employing more than 16 lakh men and women. It is the only avenue where reservations for weaker sections are scrupulously observed. With a total ban on filling up of vacancies and ban on recruitment, the social justice plan appears to be only on paper. Moreover, the privatisation, I am afraid may suffer a set-back in the social justice for which, Sir, the Railway Minister had suffered a lot and achieved a lot also. Kindly see to it that social justice may not suffer a set-back because of this privatisation. We have seen in you the qualities of Dr. Ambedkar and less characteristics of politician. That is why I present all these things here. In general, the common man is reposing his confidence in this august House. He is seeing his relievers of pains here. During this night time we are discussing about his needs, his problems. His life which was once gazing towards a gloomy future, is now marching towards a blossoming future because of the plans and proposals of this U.F. Government and its intense interest in executing them.

Sir, I think it would be right for me to quote a few lines from Tagore's Gitanjali it is because this was the mentality of the common man.

"The song that I came to sing remains unsung to this day.

I have spent my days in stringing and unstringing my instrument.

The time has not come true.

The words have not been rightly set.

Only there is the agony of wishing in my heart."

This was the note. This was his state. This was his stage.

Sir, now the time has changed. We are on the path of progress. We are on the path of developmental progress. For the information of the Deputy Speaker, Sir, I always dream more because dreams come true. Freedom of this nation was once a dream in the mind of Gandhiji. Casteless society was once a dream in the mind of Periyar. To be a democratic forefront in the world sphere was the dream of Panditji once. Now there is a dream for a better nation, for a contented future and for a self-sufficient nation. I believe under the U.F. Government, the R.M., the I.M., the F.M., under this P.M. will bring a prosperous future and the day is not far away for us to walk with our heads held high.

SHRI ANANTH KUMAR (Bangalore South) : Respected Deputy-Speaker, I want to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak now because this is my maiden speech in the Lok Sabha. I feel very proud that I am son of a Railway employee. Both my father and mother had participated in that very famous Railwaymen's struggle i.e. the Railway strike. I want to bring to your notice and also to the notice of hon. Railway Minister and the entire House about my impressions on this Budget. I feel this Budget is only full of project proclamations without requisite allocations which has created disillusionment and frustration among the people.

It is long on proclamation of projects and short on policy. Especially this Budget should have spelt on policy matters like expansion of network, strategies for freight traffic, framework for passenger services, reforms in internal management, financial arrangements, removal of rampant corruption plaguing the Rail system.

I want to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister of Railways that Karnataka has given the Prime Minister to the United Front. But our dear Minister of Railways has not given anything in adequate measure to Karnataka. There has been a regional imbalance in the Railway Budget.

Actually in the last Budget, in the last Government's priorities the gauge conversion of Karnataka were high and they had fixed the year 1997 to complete all the gauge conversion under Unigauge Project. But if the hon. Minister considers the allocations that have been made in this Budget, the gauge conversions in Karnataka cannot be completed. For example, the Mangalore-Hassan-Arasikere route which totally requires Rs.185 crore for its completion, but in the year 1995-96 only Rs.17.1 crore has been given and the provision for the

year 1996-97 is only Rs.30 crore. The balance amount to complete the work is Rs.138.15 crore. That is at this rate, it requires at least five years for commissioning.

I want to bring it to the notice of the Railway Minister that MRPL, i.e. Mangalore Refineries Private Limited, is there and if the crude and refined products should be transported then immediately this line should be commissioned. I want to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways to the fact that HPCL and offered earlier to fund the gauge conversion between Hassan and Mangalore. Therefore, I request the hon. Railway Minister to have a dialogue with the HPCL.

Secondly, new line have been announced. But these new lines like Kotur-Harihar via Harpanahalli line which requires a sum of Rs.65.94 crore have been allocated only Rs.1 crore. Another new line, that is, Kadur-Chikmagalur-Sakleshpur of 100 kilometres with a cost of Rs.157 crore has been allocated only Rs.1 crore. Therefore, these lines will not start in the near future. These are only costs for the establishment.

For the doubling of the line from Hospet to Guntkal, Rs.105.77 crore is required and only Rs.1 crore has been allocated. The same thing is being done in the case of doubling of Bangalore-Kengeri line of only 12.45 kilometres. For that also only Rs.1 crore has been kept in this year's Budget.

For Konkan Railway Rs.400 crore is required to complete that project. It has been assured in the Budget that by October 1996 the goods will start moving on that line and by December 1996 there will be passenger traffic also. But I want to bring it to your kind notice that the tunnel between Baindur and Bhatkal has collapsed in June because of sub-standard work and there is no provision in this Rs.400 crore for that project. I do not know from where this Rs.400 crore is going to come.

If we consider the loss because of the collapse of the tunnel also, then there is a big question mark whether the entire thing can be completed before 1996. It may take one more year.

It has been mentioned that survey for laying of a new railway line between Ankola and Hubli has been referred to the Planning Commission. I want to bring to your kind notice that it is hundred years' dream for Karnataka.

Sir M. Viswesweriah had a vision regarding Ankola-Hubli-Guntakal-Madras line because in the world, there are three important natural harbours - Karwar, Sydney and California. Karwar, being a natural harbour, has not been developed due to lack of this very important rail link. There is a very big naval project, Seabird also. Therefore, if you take up this project of linking Karwar-Ankola-Hubli to Guntakal and to Madras, then the entire

manganese and iron ore can be shipped both the ways from Hospet to Madras, Hospet to Karwar. It can be a trunk route across the two coasts, that is, the Western coast and the Eastern Coast.

In regard to Bangalore Additional Zonal Headquarters, I would like to ask the hon. Minister of Railways, what is the territorial extent of Bangalore Zonal Headquarters? What is the name of that Zone? Actually, there was a proposal from the entire Karnataka that it should be named as 'South Western Zone' and its territorial extent should be finalised. It has not been done. There is no provision in this Budget for this Additional Zonal Headquarters. We do not want Additional Zonal Headquarters. We want only Zonal Headquarters for South West Zone clearly clarified.

Bangalore has 51 lakh population. It is getting the Metropolitan status. I request the hon. Railway Minister to come out with a proposal in the Supplementary Budget in regard to the survey for a circular rail or a metro rail for Bangalore because it is essential. There is metro rail for Calcutta; there is metro rail for Madras; and there is metro suburban rail for Mumbai. The same transportation facility should be given to Bangalore also. Therefore, I request that the Railway Ministry should have a feasibility survey as to what can be done in regard to Bangalore circular rail or metro rail.

In this Budget, there is additional terminal facilities and second entry for Bangalore. For that, only rupees one crore has been given. That will not be sufficient and it should be hiked.

As the hon. Member, Shri P. Upendra has suggested, for Bangalore-Visakapatnam train, I also request you to have a new rail between Bangalore and Visakapatnam. Then a new rail between Bangalore and Bombay via Bhubli is required because that becomes the trunk route from Bangalore to Davangere to Hubli upto Mirja, then to Pune and Mumbai. That becomes a trunk route covering the entire Karnataka. Now, the Bombay route is outside Karnataka which traverses more in Andhra Pradesh. Therefore, I request you to start a train between Bangalore and Bombay via Hubli.

Another thing is that from Bangalore to Rajasthan, at present there is no train. A lot of Rajasthani people are there in Bangalore. I request that a new train between Bangalore and Ajmer or Bangalore and Jaipur can be announced.

All the Northern States have four to five trains to the capital of the country, that is, Delhi. But the Southern States have only one train each. For Karnataka, we have got Karnataka Express and bi-weekly Rajdhani Express. Therefore, I request you to make this Rajdhani Express tri-weekly. And one more train between Bangalore and Delhi should be introduced so that once in a day our hon. Prime Minister can also travel in that train. I request the hon. Railway Minister to visit

Karnataka, which is underdeveloped as far as Railways are concerned so that you do not leave all of us under the mercy of the hon. Prime Minister, who has been much burdened with the country's entire problems. I request you to visit Karnataka so that you will take note of all these suggestions and make some amendments in your Supplementary Budget.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The House now stands adjourned.

22.00 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the
Clock on Thursday, July 25, 1996/Sravana 3,
1918 (Saka)*