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**STANDING COMMITTEE
ON RAILWAYS
(1998-99)**

TWELFTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

[Action Taken by Government on Recommendations/Observations Contained in the Sixth Report of Standing Committee on Railways (1996-97) (Eleventh Lok Sabha) on 'Ministry of Railways — Demands for Grants 1997-98']

SECOND REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

August, 1998/Shravana, 1920 (Saka)

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Demands for Grants—1997-98']*

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LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

August, 1998/Shravana, 1920 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING
COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS
(1998-99)

Kumari Mamata Banerjee — *Chairperson*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Jagdambi Prasad Yadav
3. Shri Ritlal Prasad Verma
4. Smt. Thakkur Jayaben Bharat Kumar
5. Shri Sohan Potai
6. Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey
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29. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan
30. Shri T.R. Baalu

Rajya Sabha

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43. Shri V.P. Duraisamy
44. Shri Anil Sharma
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SECRETARIAT

1. Dr. A.K. Pandey — *Additional Secretary*
2. Shri John Joseph — *Joint Secretary*
3. Shri R.C. Gupta — *Deputy Secretary*
4. Shri S.N. Dargan — *Under Secretary*

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson of Standing Committee on Railways (1998-99) having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Second Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in their sixth Report (1996-97) on 'Ministry of Railways—Demands for Grants—1997-98'.

2. The Sixth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 22.04.1997 and contained 44 recommendations/observations. The replies of the Government in respect of 41 out of 44 recommendations contained in the Report were received on 06.08.1997. These replies were considered by the Committee on 13.8.1998.

3. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 13.8.1998.

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

NEW DELHI;
August, 1998
Shravana, 1920 (Saka)

MAMATA BANERJEE,
Chairperson,
Standing Committee on Railways.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations and observations contained in the Sixth Report of Standing Committee on Railways (1996-97) on 'Demand for Grants 1997-98'. The Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 22nd April, 1997, and it contained 44 recommendations/observations.

2. The Action Taken notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 44 recommendations/observations and the same have been broadly categorized as follows:

- (i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by Government:

Para Nos. 1.80, 1.83, 1.88, 1.91, 2.65, 2.75, 2.76, 2.77(i), 2.77(xi), 2.78, 2.79, 2.80(G) & 2.80 (H) (C).

- (ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies:

Para Nos. 1.71, 1.75, 1.76, 1.77, 1.79, 1.81, 1.82, 1.89, 2.60, 2.63, 2.64, 2.66, 2.71, 2.77, (ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xii, xiv, xv), 280 (A, B, C, D, E, F, H(a), H(b ii), H(b iii), H(d).

- (iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration :

Para Nos. 1.72, 1.73, 1.74, 1.78, 1.85, 1.90, 1.92, 2.61, 2.67, 2.69, 2.70, 2.72, 2.74, & 2.80 H b(i).

- (iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final replies of Government are still awaited.

Para Nos. 1.84, 1.86, 1.87, 2.59, 2.62, 2.68, 2.73 & 2.77 (xiii).

3. The Committee expect that final replies in respect of the recommendations to which only interim replies have been furnished by the Government would be furnished to them expeditiously.

4. The Committee will now deal with Action Taken by the Government on some of their recommendations/observations.

Freight Transportation

5. The Committee had, in para 1.72 of their Report, observed:—

“The Committee note that Railways have maintained that there will be no diversion of traffic to road due to increase in freight rates. The Ministry, however, did not supply the information of percentage of total freight carried by Railways *vis-a-vis* road traffic for the last 10 years to enable the Committee to know the pattern of change over the period. What is more surprising to the Committee is the fact that such data is even not, as stated by the Railways, available with the Planning Commission or any other agency. This only shows the apathy of the Government to such an important matter. The Committee, therefore, desire that Railways should atleast now start maintaining such data through RITES systematically so that they can monitor any diversion in traffic to road and take immediate corrective steps. The Committee also desire that a joint working group which used to work very successfully be again constituted. The group should comprise of the representatives of various Apex Association of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Railway authorities, Planning Commission, etc. so that the Railways can have a clear perception of the increase in freight traffic on the basis of which rational increase in the freight rates could be made.”

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

“The issue of total freight movement in the country and its break-up into different modes is a subject of study recommended to the Planning Commission by the Railways. A transport Policy Committee is to be set up having representatives from various Ministries of the Government as also representatives of trade and international experts. Once this is done, it will be easier to arrive at conclusion regarding inter-modal mix. Investments can also be decided thereafter”.

7. The Committee are unhappy to note that during the last one year the Government have not been able to set up a Transport Policy Committee. They would like to know the specific action initiated by the Government stating *inter-alia* the *modus operandi* being adopted by them and the response from the representatives of various trade organisations and international experts on setting up of this Committee. The Committee hope that the Government would take this matter seriously and constitute the Transport Policy Committee within three months.

Earnings of Freight

8. In Para No. 1.73 of their Report, the Committee had noted that Zonal Railways had been given powers to reduce freight rate to the extent of 10 per cent in case of an empty direction. They were, however, constrained to note that these powers had been used by these zones very rarely. The Committee had felt that Zonal Railways should be encouraged to make use of this power more often so that it may result in higher freight earnings for the Railways.

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

“The views of Standing Committee on Railways in Para 1.73, that Zonal Railways rarely use their powers to grant concession upto 10 % in freight for commodities moving in the direction of flow of empties and should be encouraged to make its use more often have been noted, and Zonal Railways are being suitably advised.”

10. The Committee note that the reply of the Government is too general and ambiguous. It does not specify the methodology being exercised by the Ministry to encourage the use of powers by Zonal Railways to grant concession upto 10% in freight in the direction of flow of empties.

The Committee would, therefore, like to have necessary details from Government in this regard.

Computerisation in Freight Traffic

11. In Paras 1.74 & 2.72 of their Report, the Committee had found that Railways, who had successfully introduced computerisation in passenger traffic, had not been able to extend it to the freight traffic. During evidence, the representatives of Confederation of Indian

Industry, had suggested that the Computerisation of Freight movement would induce confidence amongst the customers as they would be able to know the movement of any of their wagons at any points of time. The Committee had asked the Railways to take necessary steps to introduce computerisation in freight traffic urgently as it would also help the Railways in better monitoring of movement of freight traffic.

The Committee had also found that there had been substantial reduction in allocation for Computerisation in Budget Estimate-1997-98 over Revised Estimate 1996-97. One of the reasons given by the Ministry of Railways was that the 90% of passenger reservation system had already been computerised. The Committee had therefore stressed the Railways to take up suitable steps for computerisation of freight traffic as well, so that the freight trains could also be monitored efficiently.

In this connection, the Committee had noted that the Government decided to set up a Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) in 1982. It was to be a major Computer Communications Network for the management of Indian Railways freight operations. For taking up the software development and modification required for the project, Centre for Railways Information Systems (CRIS) set up a Development and Simulation Centre. After finalising the basic network architecture for FOIS, a team of software professionals and railway managers embarked upon the detailed design and software development. Traffic Reporting and Control System (TRCS) operating on CN Rail was adopted as a base for the Central System Software. CRIS however, modified and enhanced the package to meet with Indian Railways' needs and conditions. Keeping in view the above facts the Committee had recommended that the CRIS should be given all financial assistance required for the development of FOIS so that computerisation in freight traffic could be introduced effectively.

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

“The Committee of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi has critically analysed the status of implementation of the project by Centre for Railways Information System (CRIS), technically evaluated the outputs on offer as also the software development process, identified the causes of the problems and deficiencies in the software which is under trial at present, commented upon various technical and managerial aspects of the software and its

development process, and made **certain** short-term and long-term recommendations so that a **workable and useful** system becomes available. The report is under consideration and necessary decisions would be taken shortly”

13. The Committee would like to have a copy of the Report of the Committee of IIT alongwith the action taken by the Government on the short-term and long-term recommendations therein so that the freight traffic could be monitored effectively.

Reduction in freight Traffic

14. In Para 1.78 of their Report, the Committee had found that there had been reduction in freight target for ‘other goods’ from 37 million tonne in RE (1996-97) to 36 Million tonne in B.E. (1997-98). The Committee had expressed their surprise over the manner in which the target for freight traffic was fixed by Railways. According to Railways, first the total target for freight was fixed and thereafter the targets for various individual commodities were fixed. The total of these targets of individual commodities was then subtracted from total freight target to get the target for ‘other goods’. This only showed that ‘other goods’ which moved in piecemeal was of no importance to the Railways. The Committee were of the firm view that the Railways should not have neglected this traffic as there was a scope for quantum jump in it if proper planning was done by the Railways to achieve this end. Though the Railways had entered into the multimodal business of containerization to cater to the piecemeal traffic, the Committee had recommended that this service should be further strengthened, and the policy adopted by Railways more than 10 years back not to carry piecemeal traffic needed to be reviewed.

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

“Railways are basically carriers of bulk and high volume traffic moving in train loads from one end to another. In view of the severe resource constraint to build up rolling stock and line capacity to desired extent, IR adopted the strategy of train load operation with higher throughout for end-to-end running. With this strategy Railways have been able to improve its operating efficiency and increase its revenue loading from 195.9 million tonnes in 1980-81 to 390.7 million tonnes in 1995-96.

Nevertheless, IR have been conscious of the need to take appropriate measures to divert high rated piecemeal traffic from road to rail. A major step taken in this direction is aggregation of this traffic and its movement in containers by the Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR) set up by the Ministry of Railways. CONCOR has been doing good work as a marketing arm in IR in providing multimodal container service to the customers at their door-step. As a result of this strategy, the container traffic handled by CONCOR has increased from 40232 TEUs in 1994-95 to 594118 TEUs in 1995-96 registering a growth of 48%

CONCOR has recently started running containerised full train loads between selected points like Tughlakabad-Chennai, Moradabad, Lucknow, Kanpur, Calcutta, etc. on nominated days. Railways are also taking steps to tap the empty flows to improve its loading. As a result of these steps the loading of 'other goods' has registered an improvement from 31.11 MT in 1993-94 to 35.66 MT in 1995-96. During April-January of current year, against prorata target of 28.15 MT, loading of 'other goods' has been 29.31. MT."

16. The Committee had specifically asked the Railways to undertake a review of the policy not to carry piecemeal traffic which was adopted by them more than 10 years back. The Committee are constrained to observe that the Government have not shown any keen interest in reviewing their policy on carrying piecemeal traffic. They, therefore, reiterate their earlier recommendation that the Government should undertake the review without any further delay and send the review report within six months to the Committee for their consideration and necessary action as may be deemed appropriate.

Redeployment of Surplus Staff

17. In Para 1.85 of their Report, the Committee had found that there had been increase in allocation for 'Repairs and Maintenance of Steam Locomotives' even though the Railways have phased out 87 Steam Locomotives during 1996-97. One of the reasons for this increase, as stated by the Ministry of Railways, was that 'wages of staff rendered surplus from steam shed is charged on this head while

under deployment'. The Committee were informed during evidence that 5700 persons out of total staff of 14300 have been declared surplus and the Railways were finding it difficult to redeploy them due to various reasons. Accordingly the Committee had recommended that all the surplus staff be suitably redeployed and a time bound programme be drawn for their redeployment.

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

"It is imperative to ensure early redeployment of the surplus staff generated from steam traction against suitable vacancies by retraining them for newer jobs. Railways have been suitably advised to plan managing their activities in the most optimal way by making best use of surplus manpower and by creating additional posts wherever justified. In order to ensure that surplus staff are effectively redeployed, instructions have been issued to the Railways to accord highest priority in matters of redeployment of surplus staff."

19. The responsibility of the Ministry of Railways in the matter does not end by merely issuing instructions to the Zonal Railways. The Committee desire the Ministry of Railways to pursue the matter vigorously for conclusive action in this regard by setting up an institutional monitoring mechanism ensuring redeployment of surplus staff within a time-bound programme. The total number of surplus staff which could not be redeployed so far may be intimated to the Committee alongwith the reasons therefor.

Reduction of Crime in Trains

20. In Para 1.90, of their Report the Committee had expressed their concern to large scale increase in crimes like dacoities and robberies in running trains. The Ministry of Railways had shown their helplessness in this regard since 'Law and Order' is the State subject which they discharge through GRP. The Committee were of the view that since the Railways share 50% of the expenditure on GRP, they should take up this matter with State Governments and evolve some suitable mechanism in consultation with concerned States, Ministry of Home Affairs so that they could have effective control over their functioning.

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

“Separate Mechanism is already available to monitor the working of GRP of the State. For achieving this aim close liaison is maintained with GRP and State Police authorities and joint drives of GRP and RPF are organised to ensure proper security and to effectively tackle problems like theft of railway property and passengers’ luggage and alarm chain pulling etc.

Regular Co-ordination meetings at the State/Zonal, Divisional and Post level are held between Railway officials and State Police authorities in which matters relating to law and order are discussed and appropriate strategies for control of crime and emerging situations evolved. Whenever there is any deterioration in the law and order situation, the same is immediately brought to the notice of the State Government authorities.

Recently, a meeting with Hon’ble Minister was held on 8.4.97 to discuss crime on the Railways and measures to control crime on the running trains”

22. The Committee are deeply concerned with the rising trends of crimes in the Indian Railways. The Committee, therefore, desire to know, *inter-alia* the periodicity of holding coordination meetings at the State/Zonal Divisional and Post level to combat the menace of crime alongwith deliberations held, details of such minutes, action taken on the proposals put forth in such meetings etc. The Committee would like to be apprised in this regard within 3 months.

Modernisation of RPF

23. In para 1.92 of their Report, the Committee had felt that there was an urgent need to modernise RPF. The Committee had desired that a proper plan should be worked out to provide RPF with modern gadgets so that they could perform their duty more effectively. The Committee had also recommended that necessary amendment should be made in the RPF Act to remove the lacunae in the Act, as making them Armed Force of the Union has not served the purpose.

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

“Modernisation of RPF has been taken up. The requirements for better mobility (vehicles transport), better training (procurement of Audiovisual aids like LCD overhead and slide projections,

electronic aiming devices, walkie talkies, computer network etc.), better communication (Walkie talkies, wireless sets, cellular phones), modern Security Gadgets (CCTV, Binoculars, Infra-Red Detectors, Night vision Devices, bullet proof jackets etc.) and better weaponry (more small arms to improve effectiveness of fire power) have been projected.

As regards the Amendment in RPF Act, it is pointed out that the Railway Protection Force was constituted under the Railway Protection Force Act 1957, as amended by the Act of 1985. The preamble of the Act states that this Act has been enacted for the purpose of providing for the Constitution and regulation of an Armed Force of the Union for the better protection and security of railway property and for matters connected therewith. Although the RPF derives limited legal powers of arrest, search, registration of cases, enquiry and prosecution of the offenders under the provisions of Railway property (unlawful Possession) Act, 1996 and the RPF Act, 1985, yet the Force is well-trained and legally well equipped and has adequate powers to effectively combat the crimes against the Railway property, which is the statutory responsibility and duty of the RPF".

25. The Committee note that the Railways have projected to modernise the RPF with better mobility, better training, better communication, modern security gadgets and better weaponry. The Committee desire the Ministry of Railways to draw a time-bound programme for modernising the RPF so that RPF staff may be able to combat the crimes against Railway property.

Review of BOLT Scheme

26. In para 2.61 of their Report, the Committee had found that the BOLT scheme had not given the desired results due to tight money position in the market, inspite of the scheme being in operation for the last 3-4 years. They had also found that many urgent and important projects had been delayed due to poor response to the scheme. The Ministry of Railways had also admitted that the bidders had been quoting high rates due to unforeseen risks such as price escalation, changes in statutory taxes/levies etc. and non-availability of adequate benefits under extent tax laws. The Committee had therefore, desired the Ministry of Railways to review the scheme in the light of the experience of other Departments whilst implementing such schemes

without any further delay and recommended that in case of non-materialisation of projects under BOLT scheme within a year, it should immediately be put under their planned scheme.

27. The Ministry of Railways in their Action Taken reply have stated:

“Committee’s instructions have been noted. Projects earmarked for BOLT scheme have been included in the Railway budget for funding”

28. The Committee are constrained to observe that the Ministry, while furnishing the Action Taken Note to the recommendation, have simply noted their instructions. The Government’s reply should be comprehensive and not evasive, vague or couched in general terms like ‘noted’ or ‘accepted’.... Also, the reply of the Government is silent on the recommendation of the Committee that the Ministry should review the BOLT scheme in the light of the experience of other Departments while implementing such schemes. The Committee would like to be apprised about the action taken in this matter.

Signalling and Telecommunication

29. In paras 2.67 and 2.80 [Hb(i)] of their Report, the Committee had found that there had been drastic reduction of Rs. 50 crores in the budget allocation in Signalling and Telecommunication works. The need for modernising the signalling and telecommunication had been emphasised by various committees including this Committee from time to time. As it relates to safety of train operations which had been greatly affected due to increase in density of trains and greater utilisation of tracks, the Committee had desired that a perspective and systematic plan for further modernisation of signalling and telecommunication be drawn up and substantial allocation of funds should be made under this Head.

30. The Ministry of Railways, in their action taken reply stated as under:—

“Due to resource crunch during 1997-98 an allocation of Rs. 201 crores + Rs. 40 crores (BOLT) has been made under S&T Plan Head. The allotment during 1996-97 was Rs. 256 crores + Rs. 50 crores

(BOLT). However, the allotment of funds for Signalling Safety Works during 1997-98 is kept at Rs. 150 crores, which is only marginally less than that of Rs. 161 crores for 1996-97.

The induction of modern technology for improvement of signalling system is a constant endeavour. All efforts are being made to ensure adequate funds for safety related S&T works"

31. The Committee, in their original Report, had recommended that perspective and systematic plan should be drawn up for further modernisation of the Signalling and Telecommunication System of the Railways and for that substantial allocation of funds be made under this Head.

The Committee are, however, surprised to note the reply of the Ministry of Railways wherein only the budget allocation under this Head has been given. The Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation and desire the Ministry of Railways to give proper attention to Signalling and Telecommunication works, keeping in view the safety of passengers and train operations.

The Committee would also like to have details of the teams of Officers sent abroad to study the Railway Signalling and Telecommunication System alongwith the outcome, amount spent on such visits and the improvements brought about in Signalling and Telecommunication System in the light of such foreign jaunts.

Production of Wagons, Passenger Coaches, etc.

32. In para No. 2.69 of their Report, the Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the procurement of only 25000 wagons against the target of 30000 wagons to be procured in 1996-97. As stated by the representatives of CII during evidence, the orders for wagons were not being placed on the industry by the Railways in time. They had opined that there should be a five year plan for procurement of wagons so that industry could plan their production in advance. As recommended by the Committee, earlier it was stressed that the wagon orders be placed on the wagon industry at least 2 years in advance so that they get sufficient time for production of wagons. The Committee had also desired that in order to augment the production capacity of wagons, immediate steps be taken to start manufacturing of wagons at Jamalpur workshop. The free supply items should also be restarted

to be supplied to manufacturing units as recommended in the Report of the Railway Wagons Committee appointed by the Chairman Rajya Sabha through an announcement made by him on the 9th August, 1995.

As there has been shortage of passenger coaches, overaged coaches were being used. The Committee had desired that the Railways should plan for more passenger coaches. As MEMUs and DMUs have also become very popular, more such coaches are required to be introduced in electrified sections. The manufacturing of more such coaches should be planned by the Railways. The Committee had also recommended that lavatories should be provided in all MEMUs and DMUs without any further delay.

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

“The shortfall in the production of wagons during 1996-97 was not so much due to delay in placing of orders but due to several factors like floods in the factory of M/s. Cimmco Birla Ltd., affecting the production of July and August’ 96, the closure of M/s Hindustan General Industries due to the Supreme Court’s orders and internal problems in some of the public sector units etc. Most of the wagon builders, particularly PSUs had reasonable orders. Wagon acquisition is a need based activity and is decided on a year-to-year basis considering the transport out-put required, in consultation with Planning Commission and funds available. Hence, it will be difficult to place order 2 years in advance and commit funds to that extent. Major inputs needed like steel, wheel sets, bearings and air brakes are presently being procured and supplied by the Railways. The wagon manufacturers have to organise only minor components needing a shorter lead time.

Therefore, no problems is envisaged in the procedure of annual ordering. Regarding free supply items, it may be stated that presently wheelsets and bearings continue to be free supply items, steel and air brakes are procured centrally by the Railway Board on behalf of the wagon builders; and only bogies and couplers are procured by the wagon builders themselves. Since the last two items are freely available from different sources, no difficulty is envisaged in procurement of these items by wagon builders. There were some teething problems which have since been sorted out.

The issue of setting up a facility for manufacture of wagons in Jamalpur workshops is under consideration of the Railway Board.

A requirement of 12500 coaches has been assessed in the IX Plan projections which corresponds to acquisition of 2500 coaches per annum. Since the present coach manufacturing capacity in the country is also about 2500 p.a., no need is felt to plan manufacture of more coaches.

Main line Electric Multiple Units and Diesel Multiple Units are introduced as replacement of short distance passenger trains on the pattern of EMUs particularly for Commuter Traffic. The manufacture of these coaches is also planned accordingly.

Only on such trains, where the journey time is less than four hours and the distance is less than 160 kms., toilets are not provided in the Coaches. This enables reuse of such trains soon after reaching the destinations as the Coach cleaning time is reduced.

Further, if toilets are provided on Commuter train Coaches, the passenger capacity will substantially reduce and the weight of the Coaches will also increase. Besides being uneconomical, there will also be the need for redesign of the diesel engine drive and transmission system on DMUs. Without the toilets it has been possible to maintain high standards of cleanliness and reliability of these short distance trains. Hon'ble Standing Committee are requested to review the proposal of providing toilets in DMUs and MEMUs".

34. The Committee are disgusted to note the reply of the Government. No doubt, wagon acquisition is a need based activity, yet the Railways could assess their requirement of wagons on account of replacement and the freight traffic estimated to be carried in a particular year. It was brought to the notice of the Committee during evidence that even the orders for procurement of wagon could not be placed well in time and it had resulted in idle labour in most of the wagon units. Keeping in view the above facts, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that orders for procurement of wagons should be placed with the manufacturing units at least two years in advance. The Committee would also like to know the latest position for setting up a facility for manufacturing of wagons at the Jamalpur and other workshop.

35. Most of the representatives of Wagon India Limited had, during evidence, requested the Committee to ask the Ministry of Railways to make available to them free supply items. The Committee would like the Ministry of Railways to settle the matter in consultation with the Wagon India Limited under intimation to them.

36. The Committee hope that while assessing the requirement of 12,500 coaches during the Ninth Plan, the Ministry of Railways must have included the requirement of coaches on replacement account. The Committee want a firm commitment from the Ministry of Railways in this regard. They also desire that the coaches which have outlived their coded life should be removed from service.

37. The Ministry of Railways have not given any reply to the Committee's recommendation for manufacturing of the more MEMUs and DMUs. As these coaches are becoming popular among commuters, the Committee reiterate their earlier recommendation that manufacturing of more such coaches should be planned by the Railways so that there may not be any shortage of these coaches in future.

38. The Committee are also not convinced to the reply of the Ministry of Railways for not providing lavatories in all MEMUs and DMUs. They reiterated their earlier recommendation that lavatories should be provided in all such coaches without any further delay.

Transfer of Technology

39. In para 2.70 of their Report, the Committee had noted that there was a proposal before the Railway Board for import of new technology for diesel locomotives from General Motors, to be inducted at Diesel Locomotives Works, Varanasi who had been using an obsolete technology. The Committee had desired the Ministry of Railways to take an early decision in this regard so that modernisation programme of DLW could be drawn without any further delay.

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

“21 Nos. of high horse power 'state-of-art' diesel locomotives are being imported from M/s. General Motors, USA, out of which 13 will be imported in fully assembled condition and 8 in knocked down condition to be assembled at DLW, Varanasi. The delivery

of the locomotives is expected to commence from June '98 onwards. Transfer of technology for manufacture of these locomotives in India will take place in stages, over a period of 10 years. It is expected that DLW/Varanasi will start assembly of PKD (Partially knocked Down) kits in 1998-99 and the series manufacture of these locomotives is expected to commence in the year 2000-2001.

A Committee of Executive Directors in Board's office was set up to examine the requirement of augmentation of facilities at DLW, Varanasi to absorb the imported technology. The Committee has recently submitted their report which is presently under consideration of the Board."

41. The Committee are happy to note that the Government will start the assembly of PKD kit of high horse power 'state-of the art' diesel locomotives imported from U.S.A. in 1998-99 and the series manufacture of these locomotives in the year 2000-2001. In order to examine the requirement of augmentation of facilities at DLW, Varanasi to absorb the imported technology, the Government had set up a Committee of Executive Directors in Board's Office and this Committee has submitted its Report. The Committee would like the Government to complete its examination expeditiously and apprise the results to them within 3 months.

Modernisation of Workshops

42. In para 2.74 of their Report, the Committee had noted that during the Study Tour to Calcutta, the Committee were informed that the estimates for phase-3 of the Circular Railway were ready. The Committee had desired that the necessary action in this regard should be taken immediately so that the work on the project could be started. Keeping in view the transport needs of the Calcutta in the near future, the Committee had desired that a White Paper, as was done in the case of Mumbai in 1990, be brought out by the Railways as early as possible.

The Committee had also desired that sufficient funds be made available for Shalimar coaching terminal in Calcutta so that it might become functional as soon as possible. They had further desired that Shankrail goods terminal in South Eastern Railway which had since been completed, be made functional immediately.

The Committee noted that there has been reduction in plan head 'Doubling'. As there are certain sectors like Mindnapur-Kharagpur and Burnpur-Asansol where doubling of lines are urgently needed. The Committee desired the Railways to increase the funds under this head so that the above proposals could be completed expeditiously.

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

"The work of techno-economic studies of the entire Calcutta Circular Railway with doubling and electrification has been taken up. On completion of the studies, Planning Commission will be approached to sanction the work. Regarding the issue of "White Paper", the desire of the Committee shall be sent to Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment who are the nodal ministry for all Urban Transport Systems including rail-based ones."

Phase I of Shalimar coaching terminal was sanctioned at an anticipated cost of Rs. 14.85 crore. About Rs. 12.61 crores have been already spent on this work. Commissioning of this terminal requires a number of other works such as provision of proper approach road etc. For this, necessary action is to be taken by the local Government of Calcutta.

A developmental plan for Shankrail is under preparation to meet that needs and demands of the trade. Further action will be taken on finalisation of the plan.

Funds allocation in the plan head "Doubling" is likely to be enhanced during the course of the year. Midnapur-Gokulpur sub-section of Midnapur-Kharagpur section is already a double line. From Gokulpur traffic branches off towards Kharagpur and Nimpura, therefore, 2 single lines have been provided. Doubling of Gokulpur-Kharagpur will be considered at appropriate time. Burnpur-Asansol section is not fully saturated. Its doubling will be considered at the appropriate time".

44. The Committee are not satisfied with the reply of the Ministry of Railways. They desire the Ministry to expedite the studies undertaken for doubling and electrification of the Calcutta Circular Railways so that the Planning Commission could be approached to sanction the work. A definite time frame may be worked out on the

progress in regard to issuing a white paper in consultation with the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment and action taken in the matter should be intimated to the Committee.

The Committee also observed that the coaches attached to the Calcutta Circular Railways are antiquated, shabby and in dilapidated condition, causing great monetary loss to the Railways. The Committee desire that the existing coaches attached to the Calcutta Circular Railways should be phased out and instead new attractive coaches with ample facilities be put on lines to allure the common commuters. The Coaches should be colourful and effective.

45. The Committee also desire that the matter regarding approach road, etc. required for commissioning of Shalimar Coaching Terminal should be expeditiously taken up with the Government of West Bengal, under intimation to them. The Committee would also like to know whether development plan for Shankrail has been prepared and if so, the action taken in this regard may be intimated to the Committee.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

Recommendation (Para No. 1.80)

The Committee find that Railways have stopped the manufacturing of First Class coaches and these are being replaced by the AC coaches. The Committee are of the view that First Class coaches should not be withdrawn altogether as some people suffering from health problems or otherwise prefer First Class coaches to AC coaches. The Committee therefore desire the Railways to review their decision and undertake manufacturing of First Class coaches.

Reply of the Government

AC coaches have found much higher acceptability amongst railway passengers as better comfort and passenger amenities are available in these coaches in comparison to the First Class coaches. Also, AC travel has become cheaper than First Class after introduction of AC-III Tier Passengers who cannot use AC coaches on health grounds may prefer travelling in non-AC class accommodation which is available in all trains.

In view of the above, reviewing of the policy to stop manufacture of AC coaches does not seem to be advisable. However, provision of FCZ (I Class chair car) on trains serving commuters is under review.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.83)

The Committee are distressed to find that operating ratio is expected to increase from 87.4% in 1996-97 to 91.4% during 1997-98 due to implementation of V Pay Commission. The Committee desire the Railways to take steps to bring more efficiency in the day-to-day working and increase the productivity of employees as emphasised by the Fifth Pay Commission to bring down the operating ratio.

Reply of the Government

Noted. All such steps emphasised by the V Central Pay Commission as accepted by the Government will be implemented suitably on the Railways so as to bring about more efficiency in Railways working and to increase the productivity of Railway employees.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.88)

The Committee find that there has been decrease in the head "Safety" of the Demands in R.E. (1996-97) over B.E. (1996-97) from Rs. 2.17 crores to 1.72 Crores. On further scrutiny of the Budget papers, it is seen that there has been reduction in allocation for "Safety Camps and Training Courses" and "other expenses" also, thereby indicating that less number of safety camps and training courses were organised during the year than envisaged in the Budget. The allocation has been substantially raised to Rs. 2.58 crores in 1997-98. The Committee are of the view that since Safety is the foremost importance, more Safety Camps be organised and intensive training provided to the Officers and Staff. The Committee strongly recommend that the railway should utilise the full amount during 1997-98 and create more Safety awareness amongst the employees by organising more safety camps and by providing intensive and refresher courses on safety.

The Committee find that the loco running staff is often forced to do duty for more than 10 hours many times against stipulated safety rules. As this is a Safety hazard, the Committee feel that the Loco Staff in no case be made work for more than the prescribed time. There should be strict observance of Rules as far as Safety is concerned.

Reply of the Government

The training to the staff on safety aspects (including refresher courses) and specialized safety camps have always been given highest priority. In addition to the above, seminars and counselling sessions are also undertaken, to keep the staff conversant with the latest technological developments on the railways. The recommendations of the Standing Committee in regard to creating more safety awareness amongst the staff by organising more Safety Camps and by providing

intensive and refresher courses on safety are noted. Suitable instructions will be issued to Railway Units in this regard.

Observance of duty hours of the loco running staff as per the rules is being given due importance for improving safety. There are clear instruction to Zonal Railways that this aspect should be monitored regularly both at the Divisional and Headquarter level to ensure that crew are not put to work for more than 10 hours at a stretch. Compliance of these instructions is being monitored.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.91)

The Committee find that in pursuance of the matter raised in GRP officers conference, a decision has been taken where any person can lodge his (FIR) complaints of loss of goods etc. with guard in the train itself and it will be immediately acknowledged at the adjoining station and the person concerned will get FIR number. The Committee desire that this information be displayed in each compartment of the train, so that the passengers can know about the revised procedure for lodging FIR with the Guard of the train itself.

Reply of the Government

The matter was considered by the Ministry of Railways and the recommendation of Standing Committee on Railways regarding display of information about the procedure of filing of FIR in the coaches of running trains has been accepted.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.65)

The Committee are happy to find that there has been substantial increase in allocation for new lines in 1997-98 due to increased thrust given by Railways for development of backward regions. They are however, constrained to note that neither have the Railways any perspective plan for development of the backward areas or inaccessible areas nor have they identified any such areas. What is more intriguing to the Committee is the fact that the Railways have not yet laid down any criteria for identifying the backward areas. The Committee fail to understand how the Railways can take up the onus of developing the

backward regions without any perspective plan. They, therefore, recommend that a perspective plan be prepared by the Railways in consultation with Planning Commission for developing the backward, hilly and tribal areas by taking into account the inaccessibility of these areas immediately so that these areas can be connected with the national mainstream.

Reply of the Government

Planning Commission have agreed to lay down criteria for identifying backward areas and also to prepare a perspective plan, in consultation with al concerned, for developing backward, hilly, and tribal areas, which will include railway development as well.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.75)

During the Study Tour to Mumbai, the Committee observed that out of the total passengers travelling on Indian railways, nearly 50 percent *i.e.* 54 lakh people travel daily on Mumbai Suburban System in the world's highest heavily crowded trains and that though all other suburban services of other Metropolitan cities were in loss. Mumbai Suburban System earned a profit of Rs. 82.24 crore approx. during 1995-96. The provisions made in the Budget for Mumbai are not adequate and commensurate with the needs of efficient and punctual running of the Suburban System. The main reason being lack of sufficient funds and also unified attention to the problems. The amount of Rs. 1.917 crore to be provided for 1997-98 as indicated by the Ministry of Railways in their publication "Action Plan—Mumbai 2001" has not been provided. The Committee also note that the issue of commercial utilisation of surplus Railway land is pending for decision with the Government for the last more than four years.

The Committee therefore desire that:

- (i) All efforts be made to implement the projects indicated in the 'Action Plan Mumbai 2001';
- (ii) A separate autonomous corporation on the lines of the Konkan Railway Corporation be constituted so that proper attention could be paid to the development needs;

- (iii) A decision for commercial utilisation of the surplus Railway land in Mumbai be taken without any further delay and the proceeds be used for development of Suburban System;
- (iv) A separate series of 'Mumbai Suburban Railway Bonds' be issued to garner more funds; and
- (v) Twelve coach rakes be used for all services upto Borivali and beyond on Western Railway and upto Thane and beyond on Central Railway.

The Committee desire that all the above recommendations be examined by the Ministry of Railways expeditiously under intimation to them.

Reply of the Government

The desire of the Committee have been noted. Action is already in progress to set up "Mumbai Rail Development Corporation" in consultation with the State Government. A proposal for commercial exploitation of surplus railway land is already pending with the Government. Introduction of 12-coach rake is being progressively both on Western Railway and Central Railway depending upon the availability of rolling stock and other facilities.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.76)

The Committee note that a survey for inner circular corridor from Chennai Beach to Velachery covering a distance of 25.47 km. had been completed. The portion from Chennai Beach to Luz forming the fourth corridor has been sanctioned and the work is in progress beyond Chepauk. The MRTS system is being constructed on the surface upto Chennai Park town. Beyond that, it is on the elevated track for the distance of 6.22 km upto Luz. The Committee desire that sufficient funds be provided for completion of inner circular corridor from Chennai Beach to Velachery.

Reply of the Government

The work of extension of MRTS in Chennai from Luz to Velachery has been sanctioned in 1996-97. Adequate funds have been provided to cater to the needs for the current year.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (i)]

The Committee desire to know that action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representation received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Electrification of Barasat-Hasnabad and Bongaon-Ranaghat sections.

Reply of the Government

Barasat-Hasnabad section is a single line section of 52 Route kilometres and is a part of Sealdah-Barasat-Hasnabad section of Eastern Railway. This section predominantly serves the requirements of daily commuters. Sealdah-Barasat section is already electrified. Action to conduct cost-cum-feasibility survey for electrification of Barasat-Hasnabad has since been initiated. Final decision on electrification of this section will depend upon the outcome of the survey report. So far as electrification of Bongaon-Ranaghat section is concerned, this work is proposed to be taken up after completion of electrification of Ranaghat-Gede section which has been included in the Railway Budget for the year 1997-98.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (xi)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Shatabdi type train from Howrah/Sealdah to New Jalpaiguri.

Reply of the Government

It is proposed to introduce a tri-weekly express train between Howrah and New Jalpaiguri during 1997-98. Introduction of a Shatabdi type train between these cities is however not feasible at present due to operational constraints. Also since the transit time is more than 10 hours the "Shatabdi" concept train is not relevant for this section since "Shatabdi" services are provided only if the outward and inward journeys are completed with a maximum of 16 hours.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.78)

The Committee note that the allocation of Railway Development for Kerala which was Rs. 127 crores in the Budget 1996-97 has been reduced to Rs. 34 crs. without any justification. This should be restored. Long standing demands like doubling of Mangalore-Shoranur line to keep pace with opening of Konkan Railway line is a matter deserve urgent consideration. Present provision of Rs. 17 crores for this doubling should be enhanced by reappropriation for speedy completion. Likewise Kollam-Trivandrum doubling should also be completed soon. Funds for only new line in Kerala namely Angamelli-Shabarimala for which nominal amount of Rs. 1 lakh is provided should be enhanced. Long pending surveys like Feroke-Nilampur, Tirur-Edapeeli, construction of Feroke Railway bridge should be completed soon. Tellichery-Mysore Railway line for which survey has been completed years ago should be taken up. In view of heavy rush of passengers, new trains like Delhi to Kerala, Shatabdi between Trivandrum-Calicut, introduction of Diesel Multiple Unit of Push Pull train between Calicut and Kasaragod deserve active consideration. Delay in electrification of Railway lines Palakkad-Trivandrum section and Palakkad-Mangalore section are matters of concern of the travelling public of Southern Railway.

Reply of the Government

Besides increasing the frequency of Nizamuddin-Trivandrum Rajdhani Express, it has been decided to introduce a weekly express train between Nizamuddin (Delhi) and Ernakulam and also to extend 6315/6316 Howrah-Cochin Express upto Trivandrum during 1997-98. Moreover, after commissioning of Konkan Railway line, direct train services will be available from Kerala to Gujarat, Maharashtra and Delhi on this shorter route with less journey hours as compared to the present route.

As present, push-pull services are available on Guruvayaur-Trichur-Ernakulam-Kayankulam-Quilon & Ernakulam-Alleppey-Quilon sections. Introduction of an additional push-pull service on these sections or on other sections *viz.* Trivandrum-Quilon and Mangalore-Cannanore-Shoranur sections is presently not feasible due to operational and resource constraints.

As regards Shatabadi Express between Calicut and Trivandrum, it is presently not feasible due to operational constraints and the distance/running time between Calicut and Trivandrum, which would not make it feasible to operate a Shatabadi type of day time intercity service between these two points. However, demands have been noted.

Doubling of the section from Mangalore to Kuttipuram is a sanctioned on going project. It has also been decided to extend the doubling from Kuttipuram to Shoranur, based on the representations received. In addition, a new line from Kuttipuram to Guruvayoor has also been sanctioned which will also serve as a double line between Kuttipuram and Trichur. Work is in good progress. As announced during the budget speech, doubling of 4 block sections would be completed by June'97. However, it has been decided in deference to the views of the Standing Committee, that the allotment will be increased from Rs. 17 crs. to Rs. 50 crs. for this work in 1997-98.

As regards Trivandrum-Quilon doubling, the work is making good progress and the section from Trivandrum to Kochuvalli has just been completed and would be commissioned shortly. The progress is hampered due to slow progress of land acquisition by the State Government. However, it has been decided in deference to the views of the Standing Committee to increase the outlay for this work from Rs. 12 crs. to Rs. 15 crs. in 1997-98.

As regards the nominal outlay for Angamalli-Sabarimala line, the position is that the work has been included in the budget 1997-98. The work is yet to be cleared by the Planning Commission, Expanded Board and CCEA before it can be started. For this work, the outlay would be suitably increased once the clearances have been received and we are in a position to take up the work.

As regards the Feroke-Nilambur, Trirur-Edapalli surveys, as desired by the Committee, the Railway has been advised to accord top priority to these surveys. Further consideration of the project will be possible once the survey report becomes available.

For Telicherry-Mysore, updating survey is still in progress and further consideration of the project will be possible once the survey report becomes available.

On Palghat-Trivandrum route, Palghat-Shoranur section has already been electrified. Electrification work on Shoranur-Ernakulam is in progress and targeted for completion by March, 2000, subject to availability of funds in time. There is no proposal to electrify Ernakulam-Trivandrum section at present.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.79)

The Committee find that Telchar-Sukhinda Road (90 km Broad Gauge line South Eastern Rly.) costing Rs. 577 crores with the highest rate of return of 29.83% has received all clearances i.e. Planning Commission, Expanded Board and CCEA. The Committee recommend that this line should immediately be taken up as it serves backward mineral rich and tribal areas connecting rich coal fields with Steel Plants with Paradeep Port.

Reply of the Government

The required clearances for this line have been obtained. The work is being taken up, as a part of the 1997-98 budget as already stated by the Minister for Railways in the budget reply.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (G)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representation received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works.

Gauge Conversion works from Pipar to Bilara in Rajasthan; Rupsa to Bangraiposi in Orissa and Gonda-Balrampur-Gorakhpur in U.P. be taken up urgently.

Reply of the Government

Ministry of Railways' intention is to take up this work in the current year as soon as necessary clearances are received, for which action has been initiated.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H) (C)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representation received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works.

Regularisation of more than 1200 *ad hoc* Group B employees.

Reply of the Government

It is presumed that the reference is to the Group B officers working on *ad hoc* basis in Senior scale.

As per Rules, only Group A officers with ordinarily not less than 4 years service in Junior Scale are eligible for regular promotion to Senior Scale. In the absence of eligible Group A Officers, Group B officers are also allowed to officiate in senior Scale on *ad hoc* basis.

Eligible Group B officers are first considered for promotion to Group A/Junior scale in terms of the provisions of the Recruitment Rules for each Railway Service. Thereafter they are considered for regular promotion to Senior scale subject to their fulfilling the eligibility conditions for such promotions.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

CHAPTER III

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

Recommendation (Para No. 1.71)

The Committee find that Railways are the principal mode of transportation for freight traffic and are bulk carrier of commodities like coal, steel, cement, foodgrains, petroleum products etc. They are constrained to note that the Railways have increased the freight rates by 12 percent in the budget 1997-98. The Committee feel that this massive increase in freight rates is bound to have cascading affect on the prices of all commodities and would push up inflation. They, therefore, desire that instead of increasing the freight rates to such an extent, the Ministry of Railways should have contained wasteful and non-plan expenditure, deployed surplus Railway Staff gainfully; brought about economies in their working expenses by better utilisation of Rolling Stock etc. The Committee also suggest to the Railways to find ways and means to bring down the present increase in freight rate so that the common man is not burdened with increasing prices.

Reply of the Government

Railways are making constant efforts to contain wasteful expenditure and improve the efficiency of the railways, the Committee's suggestion in this regard has been noted. The impact of the 12 percent increase in freight rates on the Wholesale Price Index is estimated at 0.27%. This increase is also not expected to burden the common man, mainly because items of mass consumption like Foodgrains, Kerosene, Salt, LPG etc. have been exempted from this increase. In the absence of adequate budgetary support from Central Government, internal resource mobilisation has become necessary to keep the railways financially viable.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.75)

The Committee are concerned to note that there has been less materialisation of traffic in high rates commodities like POL, Cement, etc. from the anticipated load during 1996-97 resulting in the downward trend in the goods earnings in the Revised Estimates. This is rather paradoxical, since there have been 10% increase in consumption of these items. The Committee desire that a detailed study in this regard be made in order to specially find out the reasons for decrease in traffic of these commodities.

Reply of the Government

1. CEMENT :

Loading of cement in 1996-97 registered a growth of 4.39% over 1995-96. At 33.54 million tonnes, it was 1.41 million tonnes more than the previous year. Loading of cement suffered badly in the first six months of 1996-97 on account of sluggish demand from the cement manufacturers. Apart from recession in the economy, the other main reason for less movement by rail than targeted was increased road movement. The Railways in 1995-96 made a concerted effort to procure more wagons. In addition, Container Corporation Limited also increased container rakes in the cement clusters of Bilaspur, Jabalpur and Ratlam. With there being no shortage of wagons now and reliability of wagon availability having gone up, it is expected that industry will come back to rail.

Cement industry has been talking of concessions in rail freight as road freight, according to them, is cheaper. Since road movement is dependent exclusively on subsidised fuel to be cheap, the subsidy should be removed and a level playing field ensured.

2. POL :

Loading of POL during 1996-97 declined by 0.34 million tonnes over 1995-96. There were three main reasons as to the decline of this traffic:

- (a) Loading of POL suffered in the first six months on account of decline in demand from the industry. As against a demand of 3783 wagons per day in 1995-96, the demand was only 3672 wagons in 1996-97 thereby registering less demand by

111 wagons per day. Although loading did pick up in the second half of the financial year, it was not sufficient to cover the shortfall of the previous six months.

- (b) The commissioning of Kandla-Bhatinda product pipeline with 6 million tonnes capacity reduced the need for movement for North.
- (c) The industry was moving product by road equivalent to 1200-1300 tank wagons per day. This road fleet has been developed over the past two years while offer to rail has been reduced.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.76)

The Committee are dismayed to find that though there is surplus capacity with Railways for transportation of POL, the Government have taken up construction of pipelines for carrying petroleum. This is a contrary to the decision taken by the Government that where pipeline is to be laid and railway investment is to be made, the railway investment should be preferred because pipeline can be used for clearance of POL only whereas railway can be used for clearance of all commodities including POL. The Committee strongly recommend to the Government to review the decision of laying new pipelines taking into consideration the capacity available with the Railways.

Reply of the Government

The views of the Standing Committee have been conveyed to Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas and Ministry of Finance as the pipeline proposals are initiated by Ministry of Petroleum and the Public Investment Board (PIB) clearance is given by Ministry of Finance. The Railways have always put forward their views stating that Railways is a better option as Railways can be used for clearance of all commodities and not just POL.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.77)

The Committee note that there has not been much increase in freight offering of iron and steel during the last eight or nine years

though there has been increase in supply of raw materials to steel plants. During evidence the Chairman, Railways Board has not been able to give any reason for this trend. However, it is amply clear that all increase in traffic in iron and steel sector is being diverted to road transport. The Committee desire the Ministry of Railways to analyse this trend and identify the reasons therefor. Simultaneously corrective steps also be taken so that this freight traffic is diverted to the Railways.

Reply of the Government

The target and actual loading of finished steel during the VIIIth plan period has been as under:

Year	Target	Loading	Variation over Target
1992-93	12.00	12.04	+ 0.04
1993-94	12.25	12.08	- 0.17
1994-95	12.00	12.02	+ 0.02
1995-96	12.00	12.05	+ 0.05
1996-97	12.00	11.72	- 0.28

It is a fact that a portion of steel traffic has got diverted from rail to road. Meetings have been held with M/s SAIL as well as M/s TISCO—the two major producers of steel to retrieve this traffic. The contention of the steel industry is that rail freight has become costlier than road fare at present.

Recommendation (Para No. 1.79)

The Committee find that Railways have introduced several new trains like Rajdhani and other Express trains and increased the frequency of some trains. They are however, constrained to find that no new ordinary passenger trains have been announced and these trains are being introduced by reducing the passenger trains or coaches in the existing passenger trains. The Committee are of the firm opinion that the Railways will have to change this attitude of neglecting these

poor passengers. They therefore desire the Railways to look into this aspect and introduce some more Janta trains for the benefit of long distance poor passengers. In addition to this, long distance trains should also have atleast two unreserved coaches for those people who cannot plan their journey in advance. There is need to increase in suburban services also.

Reply of the Government

Railways are very much alive to the needs of common man as is demonstrated by the fact that during 1996-97, out of a total of 92 new trains introduced, more than half *i.e.* 63 trains were stopping passenger trains with predominantly/only second class serving short distance/commuter's traffic. The three Swaranjayanti Expresses *viz.* between Delhi & Ranchi, Nizamuddin & Bangalore and Nizamuddin & Visakhapatnam, announced in M.R.'s Budget speech will carry more 2nd class unreserved accommodation.

An experiment in running fully unreserved long distance trains was made in 1995-96 and these were called 'Jansewa Express'. Following four busy routes were selected for these trains:—

1. Amritsar-Barauni
2. Bhagalpur-Muzaffarpur
3. Puri-Ahmedabad
4. Surat-Varanasi

On two sectors *viz.* Puri-Ahmedabad and Surat-Varanasi there were strong demands from public for providing reserved accommodation and accordingly reserved sleeper and upper class accommodation had to be provided on the trains.

The Railways appreciate the needs of passengers travelling at the last moment without reservation and therefore have already provided a minimum of two unreserved 2nd class coaches in addition to the two second-cum-luggage-vans on all mail/express trains except Rajdhani/Shatabdis.

During 1996-97 a total of 119 additional suburban services were provided in the 3 Metropolis, the bulk of 93 being in Mumbai area. Further in the Mumbai suburban section, Railways are increasing the

number of services run with 12 car rakes, the increase during 1996-97 being 105.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.81)

The Committee find that Railway have managed to effect a saving of Rs. 192 crores in fuel expenditure during 1996-97. The Committee are happy to note that this particular aspect has been given special attention by the Railways. However, they are constrained to find that there are only 13% fuel efficient diesel locos in Railways. In this connection, the Committee were informed that all the new diesel locomotives being manufactured by Diesel Locomotives Works are fuel efficient and kits are being provided in the existing locomotives during their rebuilding at DCW, Patiala. The Committee desire the Railway to find out ways to provide fuel efficient kits in all diesel locos even before these are sent for rebuilding.

Reply of the Government

Presently fuel efficient diesel locos are being produced only at DLW/Varanasi & DCW/Patiala. Conversion of existing diesel locomotives to fuel efficient version involves modification of the engine block and fitment of steel cap pistons, fuel-efficient turbocharger, modified camshafts etc.

We have not been able to extend provision of fuel efficient kits in other diesel locos since there are constraints of availability of costly machine tools for reconditioning & modification of the engine block, availability of steel cap pistons and fuel efficient turbocharger. However, with gradual improvement in the availability some of the items, it is proposed to start conversion of existing to fuel locos efficient version during POH.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.82)

The Committee further note that the various railways are showing different figures for specific energy consumption in electric locomotives. While specific fuel consumption is least in Northern Railway being 6.37. It is over 10 in Southern Railway and Central Railway. The

Committee desire that this aspect should be examined and concerted efforts be made to bring down fuel consumption in Railways showing higher figures.

Reply of the Government

There is no direct method of measuring specific energy consumption for various loads. By assuming fixed specific energy consumption for passenger trains and EMU's services the specific energy consumption for freight train is calculated. This is one of the main reasons for considerable variation in the specific energy consumption figures for freight trains on different Railways. In addition the specific energy consumption is dependent on type of terrain, type of load, average load per train, flow of loaded stock/empties and speeds etc.

Following steps have already been taken by Railways to reduce electric traction energy consumption :

- (i) Installation of shunt capacitor banks at traction sub-stations.
- (ii) Switching off stand by traction transformers.
- (iii) Switching off locomotives idling in yards.
- (iv) Improving by constant training the driving techniques of drivers to ensure maximum saving of energy, particularly at the time of acceleration and braking.
- (v) Training of drivers on loco simulators, so as to further improve driving techniques of the drivers.
- (vi) Provision of wheel lubricatflang on some of the locos for trials and evaluation.
- (vii) Introduction of 3 phase drive systems for electric locomotives and Electric Multiple Unit with regeneration facility.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 1.89)

The Committee find that the loco running staff is often forced to do duty for more than 10 hours many times against stipulated

safety rules. As this is a safety hazard, the Committee feel that loco staff in no case be made to work for more than the prescribed time. There should be strict observance of rules as far as safety is concerned.

Reply of the Government

The working hours of Railway employees on Indian Railways are regulated as per the provisions contained in Chapter-XIV of the Railways Act, 1989. In accordance with the Railways Act, 1989, the railway servants are classified as 'Intensive', 'Continuous' and 'Essentially Intermittent' and 'Excluded'. The maximum hours of work are 45, 54 and 75 hours per week for 'Intensive', 'Continuous' and 'Essentially Intermittent' categories respectively. No limit is prescribed in respect of Excluded, since this category comprise mainly managerial and supervisory staff.

Running staff on Railways are classified as 'Continuous' and as such they are statutorily required to work for 54 hours a week on an average in a two weekly period of 14 days, but their rostered hours have been fixed 52 hours per week on an average in two weeks.

Due to the very nature of their duty and keeping in view round the clock operation of Railways, running staff are not put on daily fixed roster/shift duties. As per existing instructions which are based on the guidelines given by Central Administrative Tribunal/Ernakulam who had examined the whole gamut of problems in regard to the working hours of running staff, running duty at a stretch of running staff should not ordinarily exceed 10 hours from departure of the train and overall duty from 'signing on' to 'signing off' should not exceed 12 hours, save in exceptional circumstances. Efforts are made to contain the duty hours within the parameters laid down.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.60)

The Committee also note that the Railways have been resorting to market borrowings to meet the resource gap of the plan. In 1997-98 they propose to raise an amount of the Rs. 2050 crore through IRFC. The Railways are paying a lease hire charges to IRFC at a very high

rate of 22% on the money borrowed. In 1996-97 alone they paid lease hire charges to the tune of Rs. 1850 crore to IRFC & Rs. 1815 crore have been earmarked for payment under this head during 1997-98. The Committee recommend that the role of IRFC should be examined so that the burden of high lease charges is not transferred to the Railway Users and the Nation.

Reply of the Government

Railways have been resorting to market borrowing since the Seventh Plan Years in order to meet the resource gap for the Plan. This is because the budgetary support from General Revenues to the Railways has been coming down and could not be fully made up by generation of additional internal resources while at the same time, the total plan since had to be enhanced to meet the needs of capacity generation, modernisation and rehabilitation of worn-out assets. IRFC was therefore incorporated under the Companies Act in December '86 with the approval of the Cabinet for purpose of borrowing money in the capital market. Without the extra budgetary resources thus mobilised, the plan effort will fall seriously short. During 1997-98. IRFC is required to raise an amount of Rs. 2150 crore through borrowings.

Lease rental payable to IRFC for the funds invested in Indian Railways, provided for both payment of interest to the investors by IRFC and also for redemption of the principal. The cost of capital raised by IRFC depends on the market conditions which are dictated by various economic factors. In the initial years, money was raised through issue for tax-free bonds at 9% to 10.5%. However, IRFC had also to resort to borrowing later through issue of taxable bonds at the interest rate of 16.5% p.a. This rate has now come down to 14.25% p.a. in the current year. So far Railways have not paid lease charges at the rate of 22%. From 1987-88 to 1992-93 lease rent was paid @ 14.5% p.a. For the amount invested from 1993-94 to 1996-97, lease rental was paid @ 17.5% p.a. For the year 1996-97 a provision of Rs. 1677 crore was made for payment of lease charges to IRFC but the actual payment amounted to Rs. 1541 crore only. In the current year 1997-98 Rs. 1815 crore have been provided to meet this requirement. This works out to about 14% of the total investment made by IRFC on Railway rolling stock.

It may also be pertinent to mention that during the period of secondary lease of 20 years i.e. beyond 10 years of primary lease period, a nominal lease rental @ 2.5 p.a. only is payable to IRFC.

In order to take advantage of lower interest rates prevailing in the international capital markets. IRFC has raised a sum of US\$ 70 million through floating rate note issue during 1995-96. During this year also IRFC is making efforts to raise a sum of US\$ 150 million. IRFC is also exploring the possibility of securing long term overseas funds with maturities of 10 years and more which will reduce not only the cost of borrowing but also the repayment of principal which would be spread over a longer period.

Incidentally, though the corporation has built up an asset base of around Rs. 10,000 crore as of now, it is functioning with a bare minimum organisational setup administrative overheads of the Corporation at Rs. 1.28 crore, are less than 0.1% of the yearly revenue of the Corporation of about Rs. 1500 crore.

The concern of the Committee over the growing burden of lease charges is noted. While the level of borrowing each year is kept at the minimum possible, consistent with a reasonable plan size, the Committee may kindly appreciate that it is not feasible at present to avoid it altogether, for reasons brought out earlier. Consequently, no change in the role of IRFC is visualised at this juncture.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.63)

The Committee find that the budgetary support to the Railways have been increased in 1997-98 by Rs. 400 crore over the year 1996-97 from Rs. 1431 crore to Rs. 1831 crore. The Committee feel that it is still much less than the present requirement of the Railways. In this connection, the Ministry of Railways have informed that they hope to get an additional budgetary support of Rs. 170 crore during the year. The Committee desire that the Railways would be provided at least this support during 1997-98.

Reply of the Government

Noted. The matter is being pursued both with the Planning Commission and the Ministry of Finance.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.64)

The Committee find that the Railways are paying a dividend of 7% on the capital it has borrowed as budgetary support more than 50 years ago. An interesting feature is that the Railways are paying more by way of dividend than they are getting as budgetary support from General Exchequer. The Committee note that this aspect was examined by the Railway Convention Committee (1991), who had in their 9th report *inter-alia* recommended that pre-1952 capital investment on the Railways amounting to Rs. 850 crores be exempted from dividend liability of Rs. 51 crores as the pre-revised dividend rate of six percent. The recommendation was again confirmed by RCC in their 12th Report. The Committee are, however, constrained to note that the above recommendation of RCC has not been incorporated in the Budget while calculating dividend for the year 1995-96 and 1996-97. The Committee firmly recommend that the above recommendation of the RCC be immediately given effect by the Government and henceforth pre-1952 capital investment on the Railways be exempted from dividend liability.

Reply of the Government

Railway Convention Committee (1991) in their 9th report recommended for exempting the pre-1952 capital invested on Railways from payment of dividend. This recommendation was reiterated by the RCC in their 12th Report. This has not yet been adopted because of the resistance being shown by the Ministry of Finance in accepting the same. The matter was referred to the Cabinet for a decision being taken who in turn sent it to the Committee of Secretaries. The Committee of Secretaries have since considered this issue and recommended as follows:—

“The recommendations of the RCC were not acceptable in principle. However, considering the fact that their recommendations have been adopted by way of a resolution of both Houses of Parliament, the dividend payable for 1995-96 and 1996-97 could be computed after excluding the capital invested upto 1952. The dividend payable

in subsequent years would continue to be calculated as in the past. i.e. prior to the RCC (1951) recommendations."

The matter alongwith the recommendations of the Committee of Secretaries has been referred to the Ministry of Finance for their concurrence before implementation of the RCC recommendations.

The table below indicates the figures of Budgetary support received and Dividend paid to the General Exchequer from 1993-94 to 1996-97 :

(Rs. in Cr.)

Year	Budgetary Support	Dividend
1993-94	974	1296
1994-95	1145	1362
1995-96	1140	1264
1996-97 (RE)	1439	1515

Incidentally, it may be mentioned that in 1997-98 dividend of Rs. 1630 crores has been estimated to be paid to the General Exchequer, whereas the budgetary support being provided to the Railways is Rs. 1831 crores.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.66)

The Committee are surprised to find that several new line projects have been included in the Budget 1997-98 without the necessary clearance of Planning Commission and Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA). The Ministry of Railways have informed the Committee that this practice has been going on for the last two or three years. The Committee feel that this practice is highly improper as any project for which budget has been passed by the Parliament becomes a commitment to the nation. They, therefore, strongly recommend that no project should be included in the budget unless it has final clearance from the Expanded Board, the Planning Commission and CCEA.

Reply of the Government

Generally, only those projects are included in the Budget where necessary clearances/approvals have been obtained. However, sometimes due to popular aspirations and demands from Members of the Parliament, projects are included with the proviso the necessary procedural clearances would be obtained subsequently and expenditure incurred only thereafter. Since Parliament's will has to be honoured and waiting for supplementary budget is not considered advisable, such a contingency is resorted to. However, this is done only in a few cases and money on such projects is spent only after necessary approvals are obtained.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation (Para No. 2.71)

The Committee are happy to find that indigenisation of ABB Locomotives has been progressing satisfactorily and the Railways hope to overcome the teething problems shortly. The Committee hope that the Railways would be able to produce ABB Locomotives at CLW as per schedule and the cost of locomotives also be brought down substantially to make it economical. The cost effectiveness of manufacturing of the ABB Locomotives should also be examined.

Reply of the Government

Efforts are being made to produce prototype indigenous freight locomotive with three phase technology by the end of the year 1997-98.

Indian partners to manufacture major items with the transfer of technology from ABB have been selected and process of transfer of technology and indigenisation of major items has already started. With this phased indigenisation considerable reduction in costs is anticipated. The cost of indigenously produced locomotive is expected in due course to be substantially lower as compared to that of imported locos. It is also expected that the indigenously manufactured locomotives will be cost effective on account of substantial energy saving reduced cost of operation and maintenance and higher load hauling capabilities.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (ii)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(ii) Completion of Rail line between Eklakhi and Balurghat.

Reply of the Government

The position is as under :

Completion of Rail line between Eklakhi and Balurghat.

This work was taken up in 1983-84 but remained frozen for several years due to low priority and constraint of resources. However, based on the recommendations of the Standing Committee and demands from MPs of West Bengal, this work was defrozen last year and Rs. 1 cr. was provided in 1994-95.

Earthwork and bridges have been completed in the first block section from Eklakhi to Gazole (12 kms). Similar work is in progress in the next block section. The outlay for this work has been increased from Rs. 5 cr. in 1996-97 to Rs. 10 crs. in 1997-98 to speed up the progress on this work which is expected to be completed by the end of the 9th plan subject to availability of resources in the coming years.

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (iii)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Establishment of the rail line between Gunjuria and Ghajole.

Reply of the Government

A survey for this line was done in 1988-89. The report received in Jan '89 revealed that the cost of this 131 km line would be Rs. 71 crs. with a negative ROR. The project would now cost not less than Rs. 175 crs.

In view of the acute constraint of resources and the grossly unremunerative nature of the line it has not been found possible to take up the work on this project.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (iv)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Conversion of Radhikapur line from metre gauge to broad gauge.

Reply of the Government

Radhikapur-Barsoi line is a part of the rail route being used for freight traffic from Bangladesh to Nepal. The connecting line in Bangladesh is metre gauge. Gauge conversion of Mansi-Forbesganj has already been taken up and as indicated by the Minister for Railways in his budget reply, the scope of this work is to be extended upto Katihar. Once this line and Forbesganj-Jogbani are converted to broad gauge, conversion of this line would also be considered. It is not considered desirable to take up this line in isolation as it would involve double transshipment of Bangladesh-Nepal traffic from MG to BG and back to MG.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (v)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Railway connection between Sealdah and Hill.

Reply of the Government

It has not been found possible to locate Hill on the map of West Bengal. In view of this, the Standing Committee are requested to indicate the location of the place to enable the matter being examined further.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (vi)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Doubling of Habra-Bongaon section.

Reply of the Government

A survey for the doubling of Habra-Bongaon section has been taken up. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the results of the survey become available.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (vii)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Doubling of Duttapukur-Habra section.

Reply of the Government

This work has been completed and commissioned.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (viii)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Reconstruction of railway line from Bongaon to Petrapole.

Reply of the Government

A survey for restoration of this line is in progress. Further consideration for sanctioning of the work and funds required can be dealt with later after the survey report becomes available.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (ix)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Fourth line from Howrah to Panskura and third line from Panskura to Kharagpur.

Reply of the Government

The updated project report is under examination. Before 3rd and 4th lines are laid, terminal facilities at Shalimar and shifting of goods shed to Sankrail are essential. Necessary action in this direction is being taken.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (x)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Extension of Metro from Dum Dum to Barasat.

Reply of the Government

The work of survey for extension of Metro from Dum Dum to Barrackpore is in progress. However, under the revised Allocation of Business Rules, proposals for such rail based urban transport projects are now to be developed and processed by the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment. However, Railways would provide all technical assistance.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (xii)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

A fast train from Bankura to Howrah.

Reply of the Government

Bankura and Howrah are presently connected by one passenger and one express service. The proposal for introduction of a fast passenger train from Bankura to Howrah has been examined but not found feasible due to operational and resource constraints.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (xiv)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Doubling of Bandel-Katwa section in Eastern Railway.

Reply of the Government

Doubling of single line section is taken up when their carrying capacity is saturated, freight intensive sections being given priority. The traffic on Bandel-Katwa section has not yet reached the level to justify doubling. As and when the traffic warrants its doubling, the same would be considered.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (xv)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Electrification of Andal-Sainthia section in Eastern Railway.

Reply of the Government

Due to constraint of resources and relative priority for electrification of other high density routes, there is, at present, no proposal to electrify Andal-Sainthia section in Eastern Railway.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (A)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(A) Gauge Conversion works from Pipar to Bilara in Rajasthan; Rupsa to Bangraiposi in Orissa and Gonda-Balrampur-Gorakhpur in U.P. be taken up urgently.

Reply of the Government

The work of gauge conversion from Pipar Road to Bilara has been sanctioned as a material modification to the Phulera-Jodhpur gauge conversion project. The work would be started shortly.

The work of Rupsa-Bangraiposi gauge conversion, is already sanctioned and the work is being started.

As regards gauge conversion of Gonda-Balrampur-Gorakhpur, this work is included in the first phase of the action plan under Project Unigauge which is being implemented in a phased manner based on the availability of resources and the relative priorities of the lines on operating/strategic considerations. The work of conversion of this line would be taken up in the coming years.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (B)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(B) Work on New Lines (i) Kapadvanj to Godara in Gujarat in Western Railway should be completed expeditiously, (ii) action taken for acquiring land as per survey for constructions of new lines from Bhagalpur to Mandanhill *via* Hansdia-Dumka be completed expeditiously, (iii) Proposal sent by Department of Coal; that Rajmahal be linked to Godda *via* Hansdiya be cleared by Railway Board and work on this line be started immediately, (iv) Bilara to Bar and Jodhpur to Udaipur be taken up, (v) Balrampur to Khalilabad *via* Utrela be also taken up, (vi) Rupsa-Bangraiposi be extended to Badan Pahar or to Gorumhisane and more funds provided, (vii) Speedy implementation of the already sanctioned new line project Karur-Salem, (viii) allocation

of sufficient funds for construction of new line Khurja-Hapur-Meerut City-Saharanpur.

Reply of the Government

(i) Kapadvanj-Modasa—The line is from Kapadvanj to Modasa and not to Godara. The work on this line is in progress. This work though sanctioned in 78-79 remained frozen for several years. The gauge conversion work between Nadiad and Kapadvanj which was a part of the sanctioned project was completed in 92-93. The new line portion was defrozen in 94-95. Work is now in progress and would be completed by March'99. It has been decided to increase the outlay from Rs. 5 to Rs. 10 cr. in 97-98 after the addl. budgetary support become available to expedite the work.

(ii) Bhagalpur to Mandirhill—The final location survey is in progress. Preparation of land acquisition plans and papers has been taken up and these would be submitted to the State Govt. in the coming months. The work would be started once the land becomes available.

(iii) Proposal sent by Department of Coal that Rajmahal be linked to Godda *via* Hansdiya be cleared by Railway Board and work on this line be started immediately—

A new survey has been included in the Budget 97-98 to examine this proposal. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the survey report becomes available.

(iv) Billara to Bar and Jodhpur to Udaipur be taken up.

A survey for the line from Bilara to Bar has been completed and is under examination in this Ministry. Once the results of the survey are finalised. Further action to obtain the requisite clearances from the Planning Commission, Expanded Board and CCEA would be processed.

(v) Balrampur to Khalilabad *via* Utrela be also taken up.

It has been decided to taken up a survey for a new line from Khalilabad to Naugarh which coupled with the gauge conversion of Gonda-Balrampur-Gorakhpur which is already included in the first phase of the action plan and would be taken up in the 9th plan period, would provide the desired linkage. Further consideration of

the project would be possible once the results of the survey become available.

(vi) Rupsa-Bangariposi be extended to Badan Pahar or to Gorumohisane and more funds provided

A survey for the extension of this line to Badam Pahar/ Gorumohisane is already in progress. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the results of the survey become available.

(vii) Speedy implementation of the already sanctioned new line project Karur-Salem

The requisite clearances for taking up this work have recently been received. The final location survey is now being taken up. This will be followed by land acquisition and the work would start once the land becomes available.

(viii) allocation of sufficient funds for construction of new line Khurja-Hapur-Meerut City-Saharanpur.

Khurja-Hapur-Meerut City-Saharanpur is already an existing BG line.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (C)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(C) Doubling of Lucknow-Gonda-Gorakhpur-Barauni and Muradnagar-Meerut-Saharanpur lines be taken up urgently and sufficient funds provided for the same.

Reply of the Government

There have been demands for doubling Lucknow-Gonda-Gorakhpur-Barauni line. Doubling of this line has already been taken up in a phased manner. Work is already in progress on Gonda-Jarwal Rd and Karpurigram-Siho sections. Gorakhpur-Sajanwa doubling has been included in the budget 97-98. While the section from Barauni to

Karpurigram-Siho to Muzaffarpur are already double line, doubling between Muzaffarpur and Gorakhpur is planned to be achieved by the gauge conversion of the line *via* Khadda and Narkatiaganj, which work is already commissioned between Raxaul and Narkatiaganj and which will be completed on the rest of the section in 98-99. The doubling of the line would thus be accomplished in a phased manner in the coming years.

(ii) Doubling of Moradnagar-Meerut-Saharanpur. doubling of Moradnagar-Meerut City is already a sanctioned work, in progress. Doubling of Meerut City-Saharanpur is planned to be taken up in the coming years in a phased manner as per availability of resources.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (D)]

The committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Daily Superfast trains from Varanasi to Delhi *via* Ayodhya/Faizabad and Jodhpur to Dehradun be introduced.

Reply of the Government

It is proposed to introduced a weekly express train between Delhi and Muzaffarpur *via* Faizabad, Ayodhya, Varanasi during 1997-98. Introduction of a train between Jodhpur and Dehradun is presently not feasible due to operational and resource constraints, including lack of spare terminal/maintenance facilities at both ends. However, passengers can avail single changeover facility at Delhi.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (E)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(E) The proposal of the former Railway Minister linking East-coast and West-coast by a new line from Pondicherry to Mangalore *via* Dharmपुरi and Bangalore may be taken up expeditiously.

Reply of the Government

Gauge conversion of Pondicherry-Villupuram has already been included in the budget 1997-98 to be taken up after obtaining the concurrence of the Planning Commission. Villupuram-Madras gauge conversion project is in progress and would be completed by March'98. Madras to Bangalore is already a BG line. A new line is under construction from Bangalore to Hassan. Gauge conversion of Hassan-Mangalore is already an ongoing work in progress. Completion of the above works would provide the desired linkages.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (F)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(F) Though the Salem-Bangalore BG conversion has been completed, the connected work of extension of Platform, additional passenger amenities and more retiring and waiting rooms at the stations has not been taken up and completed. The unspent amount of Rs. 20 crores may better be utilised for these important works to enable to give better facilities to the passengers and public due to this conversion.

Reply of the Government

The Railway has been advised to review the passenger amenities on Salem-Bangalore section and to plan for making up any deficiencies, on priority.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H)(a)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Sufficient funds be provided for construction of over-bridge at Sakoti Crossings.

Reply of the Government

A Road Over Bridge in lieu of level crossing at Km. 91/8-9 has already been sanctioned at a cost of Rs. 243.62 lakhs on cost sharing

basis in 1996-97. The General Arrangement Drawing and Estimate for the bridge have been approved/sanctioned. However, the State Government has not yet started the construction of approaches. In view of this an outlay of Rs. 10 lakh has been proposed in the Budget during 1997-98. Railway will start the construction of bridge as soon as State Government starts work on approaches. Adequate provision of funds will be made commensurate with the progress of the work.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H) b (ii)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Reasons for making less provision of Rs. 27 cr. for computerisation in Railways.

Reply of the Government

The trend of budget allocation and the actual expenditure incurred in the Computerisation Plan head is as follows:

(Rs. in Cr.)

Year	B.E.	Actuals
1992-93	45	16
1993-94	60	26
1994-95	80	58
1995-96	100	45
1996-97	75	63 (RE)
1997-98	45	

The budget allocation is done on the basis of activities to be taken up under a particular Plan head during the next financial year. The allocation for 1997-98 for the Planhead Computerisation is to the tune of Rs. 45 cr. i.e. Rs. 35 cr. through Railway Funds and Rs. 10 cr. to be raised through BOLT scheme.

Major expenditure has been under FOIS and PRS schemes, and replacement of Zonal and Production Units computers. More than 90% of passenger reservation has already been completed. The work of replacement of Zonal and Production Units computers is also complete. Hence, the allocation has been reduced to match the requirement.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H) b (iii)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Decreasing the amount allocated for passenger amenities from 103.54 crores to 80 crores.

Reply of the Government

On account of allocation of Rs. 3500 crores for implementation of the Fifth Pay Commission's recommendations, the allocation to plan outlay for various plan heads from the internal funds of Railway has been adjusted. Therefore, reduction in the proposed outlay for Passenger Amenities works has also become inescapable.

Important on-going and newly sanctioned works, however, will not be allowed to suffer on this account.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H) d (i)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(H d) Reasons for less expenditure than the budget amount:

- (i) Rs. 4.15 crores were spent against an allocation of Rs. 5.90 crores in 1995-96 for doubling of a line between Danapur and Howrah.

Reply of the Government

(i) There is no doubling work between Danapur and Howrah. However, Rs. 5.99 crs. were provided for Duttapukur-Habra doubling project in 1995-96 budget. An amount of Rs. 4.15 crs. was spent during

the year. This saving was due to slow progress of signalling and electrical work.

The required amount has been provided in subsequent budgets and the work has since been completed.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H) d (ii)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

(H d) Reasons for less expenditure than the budget amount:

(ii) Similarly, only Rs. 1.89 crores were spent against an allocation of Rs. 5.17 crores in 1995-96 for laying new line between Lakshmikantpur to Namkhana.

Reply of the Government

(ii) The work is already in progress. The funds were provided in the budget for speeding up the progress on this work. However, owing to public agitation for provision of an extra halt station, the work could not be progressed at the planned pace. This resulted in lesser utilisation of funds. However, the problem has since been resolved and the next block section of the line from Karanjali to Nischantapur has since been completed and commissioned on 3.9.96. Work is now progressing between Nischantapur and Kashinagar and thus would be completed by Dec' 98.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Recommendation [Para No. 2.80 (H) d (iii)]

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Action taken for coordination between signalling and electrical divisions.

Reply of the Government

For 1995-96, the expenditure was Rs. 208.90 crores against an allotment of Rs. 257.00 crores under S&T Plan Head. The shortfall was mainly due to slow progress of certain microwave projects.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

CHAPTER IV

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

Recommendation (Para No. 1.72)

The Committee note that Railways have maintained that there will be no diversion of traffic to road due to increase in freight rates. The Ministry, however, did not supply the information of percentage of total freight carried by Railways *vis-a-vis* road traffic for the last 10 years to enable the Committee to know the pattern of change over the period. What is more surprising to the Committee is the fact that such data is even not, as stated by the Railways, available with the Planning Commission or any other agency. This only shows the apathy of the Government to such an important matter. The Committee, therefore, desire that Railways should atleast now start maintaining such data through RITES systematically so that they can monitor any diversion in traffic to road and take immediate corrective steps. The Committee also desire that a joint working group which used to work very successfully be again constituted. The group should comprise of the representatives of various Apex Association of Commerce, Industry and Trade, Railway authorities, Planning Commission, etc. so that the Railways can have a clear perception of the increase in freight traffic on the basis of which rational increase in the freight rates could be made.

Reply of the Government

The issue of total freight movement in the country and its break-up into different modes is a subject of study recommended to the Planning Commission by the Railways. A Transport Policy Committee is to be set up having representatives from various ministries of the Government as also representatives of trade and international experts.

Once this is done, it will be easier to arrive at conclusion regarding inter-modal mix. Investments can also be decided thereafter.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 7 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 1.73)

The Committee note that Zonal Railways have been given powers to reduce freight rate to the extent of 10 percent in case of an empty direction. They are, however, constrained to note that these powers have been used by these zones very rarely. The Committee feel that Zonal Railways should be encouraged to make use of this power more often so that it may result in higher freight earnings for the Railways.

Reply of the Government

The views of Standing Committee on Railways in Para 1.73, that Zonal Railways rarely use their powers to grant concession upto 10 % in freight for commodities moving in the direction of flow of empties and should be encouraged to make its use more often have been noted, and Zonal Railways are being suitably advised

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 10 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 1.74)

The Committee find that Railways, who have successfully introduced computerisation in passenger traffic, have not extended it to the freight traffic. The representatives of Confederation of Indian Industry, during evidence suggested that the Computerisation of Freight movement will induce confidence amongst the customers as they will be able to know the movement of any of their wagons at any point of time. The Committee desire the Railways to take necessary steps to introduce computerisation in freight traffic urgently as it would also help the Railways in better monitoring of movement of freight traffic.

Recommendation (Para 2.72)

The Committee find that there has been substantial reduction in allocation for Computerisation in Budget Estimate 1997-98 over Revised Estimate 1996-97. One of the reasons given by the Ministry of Railways is that the 90% of passenger reservations system has already been completed. As recommended earlier by the Committee in this Report, the Railways should take up suitable steps for computerisation of freight traffic as well, so that the freight trains could also be monitored efficiently.

In this connection, the Committee find that the Government decided to set up a Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) in 1982. It was to be a major Computer Communications Network for the management of Indian Railways freight operations. For taking up the software development and modification required for the project, Centre for Railways Information Systems (CRIS) set up a Development and Simulation Centre. After finalising the basic network architecture for FOIS, a team of software professionals and railway managers embarked upon the detailed design and software development. Traffic Reporting and Control System (TRCS) operating on CN Rail was adopted as base for the Central System Software. CRIS however, modified and enhanced the package to meet with Indian Railways' needs and conditions. The Committee recommended that the CRIS should be given all financial assistance required for the development of FOIS so that computerisation in freight traffic could be introduced effectively.

Reply of the Government

The Committee of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi has critically analysed the status of implementation of the project by Centre for Railways Information System (CRIS), technically evaluated the outputs on offer as also the software development process, identified the causes of the problems and deficiencies in the software which is under trial at present, commented upon various technical and managerial aspects of the software and its development process, and made certain short-term and long-term recommendations so that a workable and useful system becomes available. The report is under consideration and necessary decisions would be taken shortly.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG), dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 13 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para 1.78)

The Committee find that there has been reduction in freight target for 'other goods' from 37 million tonne in RE (1996-97) to 36 Million tonne in B.E. (1997-98). The Committee are rather surprised to know the way the target for freight traffic is fixed by Railways. According to Railways, first the total target for freight is fixed and thereafter the targets for various individual commodities are fixed. The total of these targets of individual commodities is then subtracted from total freight target to get the target for 'other goods'. This only shows that 'other goods' which moves in piecemeal is of no importance to the Railways. The Committee feel that Railways should not neglect this traffic as there is a scope for quantum jump in it if proper planning is done by the Railways to achieve this end. Though the Railways have entered into the multimodal business of containerization to cater to the piecemeal traffic, the Committee recommended that this service should be further strengthened. A review be undertaken in regard to the policy adopted by Railways more than 10 years back not to carry piecemeal traffic.

Reply of the Government

Railways are basically carriers of bulk and high volume traffic moving in training loads from one end to another. In view of the severe resource constraint to build up rolling stock and line capacity to desired extent, IR adopted the strategy of train load operation with higher throughout for end-to-end running. With this strategy Railways have been able to improve its operating efficiency and increase its revenue loading from 195.9 million tonnes in 1980-81 to 390.7 million tonnes in 1995-96.

Nevertheless, IR have been conscious of the need to take appropriate measures to divert high rated piecemeal traffic from road to rail. A major step taken in this direction is aggregation of this traffic and its movement in containers by the Container Corporation of India Ltd. (CONCOR) set up by the Ministry of Railways. CONCOR has been doing good work as a marketing arm in IR in providing multimodal container service to the customers at their door-step. As a

result of this strategy, the container traffic handled by CONCOR has increased from 40232 TEUs in 1994-95 to 594118 TEUs in 1995-96 registering a growth of 48%.

CONCOR has recently started running containerised full train loads between selected points like Tughlakabad-Chennai, Moradabad, Lucknow, Kanpur, Calcutta, etc. on nominated days. Railways are also taking steps to tap the empty flows to improve its loading. As a result of these steps the loading of 'other goods' has registered an improvement from 31.11 MT in 1993-94 to 35.66 MT in 1995-96. During April-January of current year, against prorata target of 28.15 MT, loading of 'other goods' has been 29.31. MT."

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG), dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 16 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 1.85)

The Committee find that there has been increase in allocation for 'Repairs and Maintenance of Steam Locomotives' even though the Railways have phased out 87 Steam Locomotives during 1996-97. One of the reasons for this increase, as stated by the Ministry of Railways, is that 'wages of staff rendered surplus from steam shed is charged on this head while under deployment'. The Committee were informed during evidence that 5700 persons out of total staff of 14300 have been declared surplus and the Railways are finding it difficult to redeploy them due to various reasons. The Committee therefore recommended that all the surplus staff be suitably redeployed and a time bound programme be undertaken for their redeployment.

Reply of the Government

It is imperative to ensure early redeployment of the surplus staff generated from steam traction against suitable vacancies by retraining them for newer jobs. Railways have been suitably advised to plan managing their activities in the most optimal way by making best use of surplus manpower and by creating additional posts wherever justified. In order to ensure that surplus staff are effectively redeployed,

instructions have been issued to the Railways to accord highest priority in matter of redeployment of surplus staff.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG), dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 19 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para 1.90)

The Committee are concerned to note that there has been large scale increase in crimes like dacoities and robberies in running trains. The Ministry of Railways have shown their helplessness in this regard since 'Law and Order' is the State subject which they discharge through GRP. The Committee are of the view that since the Railways share 50% of the expenditure on GRP, they should take up this matter with State Governments and evolve some suitable mechanism in consultation with concerned States, Ministry of Home Affairs whereby they have effective control over their functioning.

Reply of the Government

Separate Mechanism is already available to monitor the working of GRP of the State. For achieving this aim close liaison is maintained with GRP and State Police authorities & joint drives of GRP and RPF are organised to ensure proper security and to effectively tackle problems like theft of railway property and passengers' luggage and alarm chain pulling etc.

Regular Co-ordination meetings at the State/Zonal, Divisional and Post level are held between Railway officials and State Police authorities in which matters relating to law and order are discussed and appropriate strategies for control of crime and emerging situations evolved. Whenever there is any deterioration in the law and order situation, the same is immediately brought to the notice of the State Government authorities.

Recently, a meeting with Hon'ble Minister was held on 8.4.97 to discuss crime on the Railways and measures to control crime on the running trains.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG), dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 22 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para 1.92)

The Committee feel that there is an urgent need to modernise RPF. The Committee desire that a proper plan should be worked out to provide RPF with modern gadgets so that they could perform their duty more effectively. The Committee also recommend that necessary amendment should be made in the RPF Act to remove the lacunae in the Act, as by making them Armed Force of the Union has not served the purpose.

Reply of the Government

“Modernisation of RPF has been taken up. The requirements for better mobility (vehicles transport), better training (procurement of Audiovisual aids like LCD overhead and slide projections, electronic aiming devices walkie talkies, computer network etc.), better communication (Walkie talkies, wireless sets, cellular phones), modern security Gadgets (CCTV, Binoculars, Infra-Red Detectors, Night vision Devices, bullet proof jackets etc.) and better weaponry (more small arms to improve effectiveness of fire power) have been projected.

As regards the Amendment in RPF Act, it is pointed out that the Railway Protection Force was constituted under the Railway Protection Force Act 1957, as amended by the Act of 1985. The preamble of the Act states that this Act has been enacted for the purpose of providing for the Constitution and regulation of an Armed Force of the Union for the better protection and security of railway property and for matters connected therewith. Although the RPF derives limited legal powers of arrest, search, registration of cases, enquiry and prosecution of the offenders under the provisions of Railway property (unlawful Procession) Act, 1996 and the RPF Act, 1985, yet the Force is well-trained and legally well equipped and has adequate powers to effectively combat the crimes against the Railway property, which is the statutory responsibility and duty of the RPF”.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG), dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 25 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para 2.61)

The Committee find that the BOLT scheme has also not given the desired results due to tight money position in the market, inspite of the scheme being in operation for the last 3-4 years. The Committee find that many urgent and important projects have been delayed due to poor response to the scheme. The Ministry of Railways have also admitted that the bidders have been quoting high rates due to unforeseen risks such as price escalation, changes in statutory taxes/levies, etc. and non-availability of adequate benefits under extant tax laws. The Committee, therefore, desire the Ministry of Railways to review the scheme in the light of the experience of other Departments whilst implementing such schemes without any further delay and recommended that in case of non-materialisation of projects under BOLT scheme within a year, it should immediately be put under their planned scheme.

Reply of the Government

Committee's instructions have been noted. Projects earmarked for BOLT scheme have been included in the Railway budget for funding.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG), dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 28 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para 2.67)

The Committee find that there has been drastic reduction in the Budget allocation in signalling and Telecommunication works. The need for modernising the signalling and telecommunication has been emphasised by various committees including this Committee from time to time. As it relates to safety of train operations which has been greatly affected due to increase in density of trains and greater utilisation of tracks, the Committee desire that a perspective and systematic plan for further modernisation of signalling and telecommunication be drawn up and substantial allocation be made under this Head.

Recommendation, Para No. 2.80 H b(i)

In addition, the Committee have also received the representations from the Members of Parliament for reasons for making less provision for:—

“There has been a decrease of Rs. 50 crores under signalling and telecommunication works.”

Reply of the Government

Due to resource crunch during 1997-98 an allocation of Rs. 201 crores + Rs. 40 crores (BOLT) has been made under S&T Plan Head. The allotment during 1996-97 was Rs. 256 crores + Rs. 50 crores (BOLT). However, the allotment of funds for Signalling Safety Works during 1997-98 is kept at Rs. 150 crores, which is only marginally less than that of Rs. 161 crores for 1996-97.

The induction of modern technology for improvement of signalling system is a constant endeavour. All efforts are being made to ensure adequate funds for safety related S&T works.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 31 of the Report)

Recommendation, Para No. 2.69

The Committee are unhappy to find that against the target of 30000 wagons to be procured in 1996-97, only 25000 wagons could be procured as wagon manufacturing industries could not meet the above target. As stated by the representatives of CII during evidence, the orders for wagons were not placed on the industry by the Railways in time. They have opined that there should be a five year plan for procurement of wagons so that industries could plan their production in advance. As earlier recommended by the Committee, the wagon orders be placed on the wagon industry at least 2 years in advance so that they get sufficient time for production of wagons. The Committee also desire that in order to augment the production capacity of wagons, immediate steps be taken to start manufacturing of wagons at Jamalpur workshop. The free supply items should also be restarted as recommended in the Report of the Railway Wagons Committee appointed by the Chairman Rajya Sabha through an announcement made by him on the 9th August, 1995.

As there is a shortage of passenger coaches, more overaged coaches are being used. The Railways should plan for more passenger coaches. As MEMUs and DMUs have become very popular and more such coaches will be required to be introduced in electrified sections. The manufacturing of more such coaches should be planned. The Committee also recommend that lavatories should be provided in all MEMUs and DMUs without any further delay.

Reply of the Government

The shortfall in the production of wagons during 1996-97 was not so much due to delay in placing of orders but due to several factors like floods in the factory of M/s. Cimco Birla Ltd., affecting the production of July and August' 96, the closure of M/s. Hindustan General Industries due to the Supreme Court's orders and internal problems in some of the public sector units etc. Most of the wagon builders, particularly PSUs had reasonable orders. Wagon acquisition is a need based activity and is decided on a year-to-year basis considering the transport output required, in consultation with Planning Commission and funds available. Hence, it will be difficult to place orders 2 years in advance and commit funds to that extent. Major inputs needed like steel, wheel sets, bearings and air brakes are presently being procured and supplied by the Railways. The wagon manufacturers have to organised only minor components needing a shorter lead time.

Therefore, no problems is envisaged in the procedure of annual ordering. Regarding free supply items, it may be stated that presently wheelsets and bearings continue to be free supply items, steel and air brakes are procured centrally by the Railway Board on behalf of the wagon builders; and only bogies and couplers are procured by the wagon builders themselves. Since the last two items are freely available from different sources, no difficulty is envisaged in procurement of these items by wagon builders. There were some teething problems which have since been sorted out.

The issue of setting up a facility for manufacture of wagons in Jamalpur Workshops is under consideration of the Railway Board.

A requirement of 12500 coaches has been assessed in the IX Plan projections which corresponds to acquisition of 2500 coaches per annum. Since the present coach manufacturing capacity in the country is also about 2500 p.a., no need is felt to plan manufacture of more coaches.

Main line Electric Multiple Units and Diesel Multiple Units are introduced as replacement of short distance passenger trains on the pattern of EMUs particularly for Commuter Traffic. The manufacture of these coaches is also planned accordingly.

Only on such trains, where the journey time is less than four hours and the distance is less than 160 kms., toilets are not provided in the Coaches. This enables reuse of such trains soon after reaching the destinations as the Coach cleaning time is reduced.

Further, if toilets are provided on Commuter train Coaches, the passenger capacity will substantially reduce and the weight of the Coaches will also increase. Besides being uneconomical, there will also be the need for redesign of the diesel engine drive and transmission system on DMUs. Without the toilets it has been possible to maintain high standards of cleanliness and reliability of these short distance trains. Hon'ble Standing Committee are requested to review the proposal of providing toilets in DMUs and MEMUs.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 34 of the Report)

Recommendation, Para No. 2.70

The Committee also note that there is a proposal before the Railway Board for import of new technology for diesel locomotives from General Motors, to be inducted at Diesel Locomotives Works, Varanasi who have been using an obsolete technology. The Committee desire that an early decision in this regard be taken and modernisation programme of DLW be drawn without any further delay.

Reply of the Government

21 Nos. of high horse power, 'state-of-art' diesel locomotives are being imported from M/s. General Motors, USA, out of which 13 will be imported in fully assembled condition and 8 in knocked down condition to be assembled at DLW, Varanasi. The delivery of the locomotives is expected to commence from June'98 onwards. Transfer of technology for manufacture of these locomotives in India will take place in stages, over a period of 10 years. It is expected that DLW/Varanasi

will start assembly of PKD (Partially knocked Down) kits in 1998-99 and the series manufacture of these locomotives is expected to commence in the year 2000-2001.

A Committee of Executive Directors in Board's office was set up to examine the requirement of augmentation of facilities at DLW, Varanasi to absorb the imported technology. The Committee has recently submitted their report which is presently under consideration of the Board.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 41 of the Report)

Recommendation, Para No. 2.74

During the Study Tour to Calcutta, the Committee were also informed that the estimates for phase-3 of the Circular Railway were ready. The Committee desire that the necessary action in this regard should be taken immediately so that the work on the project could be started. Keeping in view the transport needs of the Calcutta in the near future, the Committee desire that a white paper, as was done in the case of Mumbai in 1990, be brought out by the Railways as early as possible.

The Committee also desire that sufficient funds be made available for Shalimar coaching terminal in Calcutta so that it may become functional as soon as possible. They further desire that Shankrail goods terminal in South Eastern Railway which has since been completed, be made functional immediately.

The Committee note that there has been reduction in plan head 'Doubling'. As there are certain sectors like Midnapur-Kharagpur and Burnpur-Asansol where doubling of lines are urgently needed. The Committee desire the Railways to increase the funds under this head so that the above proposals could be completed expeditiously.

Reply of the Government

The work of techno-economic studies of the entire Calcutta Circular Railway with doubling and electrification has been taken up. On

completion of the studies, Planning Commission will be approached to sanction the work. Regarding the issue of "White Paper", the desire of the Committee shall be sent to Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment who are the nodal Ministry for all Urban Transport Systems including rail-based ones.

Phase I of Shalimar coaching terminal was sanctioned at an anticipated cost of Rs. 14.85 crores. About Rs. 12.61 crores have been already spent on this work. Commissioning of this terminal requires a number of other works such as provision of proper approach road etc. For this, necessary action is to be taken by the local Government of Calcutta.

A developmental plan for Shankrail is under preparation to meet the needs and demands of the trade. Further action will be taken on finalisation of the plan.

Funds allocation in the plan head "Doubling" is likely to be enhanced during the course of the year. Midnapur-Gokulpur sub-section of Midnapur-Kharagpur section is already a double line. From Gokulpur traffic branches off towards Kharagpur and Nimpura, therefore, 2 single lines have been provided. Doubling of Gokulpur-Kharagpur will be considered at appropriate time. Burnpur-Asansol section is not fully saturated. Its doubling will be considered at the appropriate time.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 44 of the Report)

CHAPTER V

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE STILL AWAITED

Recommendation (Para No. 1.84)

The Committee also note that there has been substantial increase in allocation for surveys during 1997-98 due to increase in number of surveys sanctioned. They however note that surveys are not being completed in time as the organisation responsible for doing the surveys is not able to take up so much of work. The Committee, therefore, desire that either the organisation be expanded or some other arrangements be made so as to complete all the surveys sanctioned expeditiously.

Reply of the Government

The Railway is aware of the fact that there is a substantial increase in allocations for surveys and also the number of surveys being carried out at most of the places. Since the existing survey organisation is not sufficient to carry out the required surveys in time, therefore, the agencies like RITES, IRCON and other established institutions are being contacted to do the field work for the Railways so as to complete all the sanctioned surveys within the time frame available.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 1.86)

The Committee are further distressed to find large arrears of overdue POH of electric locomotives. The representatives of Railways during evidence informed the committee of their proposal to increase the POH capacity of some of their workshops. The Committee

recommend that the necessary steps should be taken expeditiously to increase the POH capacity in the country so that POH arrears in electric locomotives be wiped out as early as possible.

Reply of the Government

Following works are in progress for enhancing POH capacity from 156 locos per annum to 270 per annum :

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Perambur Loco Works conversion for undertaking POH of BG-AC Electric locos Phase-II sanctioned in the year 1996-97. | Capacity is being increased from 36 to 72 locos per annum. |
| (2) Dahod—Electric Locomotive POH/rehabilitation facilities. Western Rly. | Facilities are being set up for POH/rehabilitation of 54 locos per annum. |
| (3) Bhusaval—Repaid facilities for AC Electric loco Transformer sanctioned in the year 1992-93 | Capacity is being increased from 120 locos to 144 locos per annum. |

Efforts are being made for early completion of these works so as to reduce the number of locos overdue POH.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 1.87)

The Committee are happy to find that POH arrears of coaches and wagons have declined from 10.26% and 10.19% to 7.39% and 7.53% respectively during 1996-97. They were also informed that the Railways have also taken up refurbishing of 500 coaches in 1997-98

where they redo Interior furnishing. The Committee desire that this programme be taken up on a bigger scale so that the coaches may look better and cleaner. The Committee find that the capacity which has been created for POH is not being utilised leading to POH arrears. They are of the firm view that there should be no idle capacity in the workshops & the capacity created should be fully utilised to clear all the POH arrears. The Committee also find that the maintenance facilities sanctioned are not coming up. They therefore, desire that the maintenance facilities sanctioned should be created within the time frame work.

Reply of the Government

The details of BG coach POH capacity utilisation for the last 3 years are given below:—

Aveg. monthly POH capacity	94-95	95-96	96-97
Target	2825	2891	3012
Actual	2682	2771	2896
Cap. utilisation %age	94.9%	95.7%	96.2%

It would be seen from the above that the shop capacity utilisation has consistently improved.

The POH targets for the workshops are achieved with the availability of programmed feed and other infrastructural inputs. However, feed at times had to be regulated as per traffic requirement *i.e.* for running summer/puja specials etc. Moreover, sometimes feed also gets affected due to local agitations and other disturbances.

In spite of these constraints, all out efforts will be made to further improve the capacity utilisation of available POH capacity.

At present, the following four workshops are undergoing MG to BG conversion for undertaking POH of BG coaches:

Name of W/Shop	Year of sanction	Target Date of completion	Planned capacity
Jodhpur (NR)	95-96	March '98	100 FWUs
Dibrugarh (NFR)	95-96	March '98	75 FWUs
Hubli (SCR)	95-96	March '98	150 FWUs
Ajmer (WR)	95-96	March '98	150 FWUs

This will increase POH capacity in workshops.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.59)

The Committee find that the Railways had in their Draft Annual Plan, proposed a plan size of Rs. 11,000 crore for 1997-98. However, it was pruned down to Rs. 8300 crore by the Planning Commission. Therefore the Railways have to cut down their annual plan size to Rs. 8300 crores for 1997-98 which is although the same as in 1996-97, yet when taken in term of real value it has virtually gone down. The Committee are of the considered view that the present Plan allocation for 1997-98 is grossly inadequate to meet the resources required by the Railways for their planned projects. In this connection, the Ministry of Railways have stated that though the plan allocation for 1997-98 is short of the projected requirements, they would be able to meet the increased demands in the short run but in the long run the plan allocation would have to be increased. The Committee feel that Railways cannot go on deferring the required investment in capacity augmentation as it would lead to severe shortage of capacity in the near future. They, therefore, desire that the Planning Commission should review the Railways Plan size so as to increase it substantially for meeting the challenges ahead in 21st Century.

Reply of the Government

Ministry of Railways agrees with the recommendation for increased Railways' Plan size and has forwarded the same to the Planning Commission.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.62)

In regard to 'Own Your Wagon' Scheme, the Committee find that initially there was a good response to that scheme but at present, users are not showing much interest in it. The representatives of Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), during evidence have brought some lapses in the scheme to the notice of the Committee. The Committee desire that the Railways should have a dialogue with the users and make the necessary changes in the scheme so that the entrepreneurs could be encouraged for greater participation in the scheme.

Reply of the Government

The response to the 'Own Your Wagon' Scheme (OYWS) has been, by and large, encouraging. So far orders for 13357.5 (in terms of four wheelers) have been received from major companies in private and public sector:—

The year-wise break-up of the orders placed and wagons procured under OYWS is given below:

(In terms of 4 wheelers)

Year	Orders placed	Wagons procured
1993-94	1560.00	Nil
1994-95	697.5	680.0
1995-96	4572.5	2625.0
1996-97 (Upto Jan'97).	6527.5	4567.5

Based on the feedback and suggestions being received from time to time from the existing and potential customers, certain features of the scheme are already being reviewed to attract better response to the scheme. The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) is also being addressed to ascertain their specific suggestions in this regard for consideration and follow-up action as warranted.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.68)

The Committee note that the V Pay Commission has recommended for creation of an additional post of Member (Signalling & Telecommunication) to give more attention to the area of Signalling and Telecommunication. The Committee desire that this recommendation of V Pay Commission be implemented on priority basis.

Reply of the Government

The V Pay Commission in their report have recommended for creation of an additional post of Member (Signalling & Telecommunication) to give more attention to the area of signalling & Telecommunication. The recommendations of the V Pay Commission are yet to be accepted by the Government.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please *see* paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation (Para No. 2.73)

The Committee find that survey for extension of Calcutta Metro Railway from Tollygunge to New Garia has been completed and this matter of extension of Metro Railway is under consideration of the Government as the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment is the Nodal Agency for taking up such projects. As Calcutta Metro Railway is very important for the future of Calcutta, the Committee desire that the work relating to the extension of Metro Railway in Calcutta be re-allocated to the Ministry of Railways. They also strongly recommend that extension of Calcutta Metro from Tollygunge to New Garia should be urgently taken up and sufficient allocation of funds be provided for it.

They further desire that construction organisation should not be disbanded until the Calcutta Metro Railway is completed.

Reply of the Government

Committee's instructions have been noted. A Memorandum for consideration of the Cabinet is under preparation requesting *inter-alia* provision of funds for extension of Metro from Tollygunge to New Garia outside the Railways Plan head and providing subsidy for off setting the maintenance and operation losses including renewals/replacement of assets.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 3 of the Report)

Recommendation [Para No. 2.77 (xiii)]

The Committee desire to know the action taken by the Ministry of Railways on the representations received from members of Parliament for undertaking the following works:—

Nationalisation of Sankura Damodar River Railway and its conversion to Broad Gauge.

Reply of the Government

A decision for taking over of the Bankura Damodar River Railway by the Government from the owning private Company has been taken. Enabling provision of funds has been made in the Railway Budget for 1997-98.

A survey sanctioned in the Budget of 1996-97 at a cost of Rs. 7.5 lakh for conversion of gauge of Bankura Damodar River Railway is already in progress. After the survey report is received further steps will be taken in accordance with the report.

[No. 97/BC-II/SCR/XI/2 (DFG) dated 21.7.1997]

Comments of the Committee

(Please see paragraph 3 of the Report)

APPENDIX I

MINUTES OF THE EIGHTH SITTING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (1998-99)

The Committee sat on Thursday, the 13th August, 1998 from 14.00 hrs. to 16.45 hrs. in Committee Room 'B', Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Kumari Mamata Banerjee — *Chairperson*

MEMBERS

Lok Sabha

2. Shri Jagdambi Prasad Yadav
3. Shri Ritalal Prasad Verma
4. Smt. Thakkur Jayaben Bharat Kumar
5. Shri Sohan Potai
6. Shri Jagannath Singh
7. Shri M.A. Kharabela Swain
8. Shri Kishan Lal Diler
9. Shri Pankaj Choudhary
10. Shri Ram Pal Singh
11. Smt. Panabaka Lakshmi
12. Shri Rajo Singh
13. Shri N.J. Rathwa
14. Shri Dinsha J. Patel
15. Shri Ashok Namdeorao Mohol
16. Shri Bhajan Lal
17. Shri Moinul Hassan Ahmed

18. Shri Paras Nath Yadav
19. Shri Kanchi Panneersavalam
20. Shri Hari Kewal Prasad
21. Shri K.P. Naidu
22. Dr. Prasanna Patasani
23. Shri V.V. Raghavan
24. Smt. Satwinder Kaur Dhaliwal
25. Shri T.R. Baalu

Rajya Sabha

26. Shri Sitaram Kesri
27. Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee
28. Shri Gopalsinh G. Solanki
29. Prof. Ram Baksh Singh Varma
30. Chowdhary Chunni Lal
31. Dr. (Smt.) Chandrakala Pandey
32. Shri Naresh Yadav
33. Shri Anil Sharma

SECRETARIAT

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

The Chairperson informed the Committee about the formation of Study Groups of Standing Committee on Railways and authorised the Convenors of the respective Groups to hold the sitting of the Study Group on the dates suited to them.

2. The Committee also decided to undertake Study Tours to Mumbai from 31st August to 1st September, 1998 and Calcutta and Chennai from 11th to 16th September, 1998.

3. Thereafter the Committee considered and adopted the Draft Report on the recommendations/observations contained in the Sixth Report of Standing Committee on Railways (1997-98) on 'Demand for Grants (1997-98)' of the Ministry of Railways with amendments/modifications shown in Annexure.

4. The Committee authorized the Chairperson to finalise the Report after making consequential changes, if any, arising out of factual verification by the Ministry of Railways or otherwise and to present the Report to both the Houses of Parliament.

The Committee then adjourned.

AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS MADE BY STANDING COMMITTEE
ON RAILWAYS IN THE DRAFT REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS/
OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SIXTH REPORT OF
STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (1997-98) ON
'DEMANDS FOR GRANTS—1997-98' OF THE
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

S. No.	Page No.	Para No.	Line	
1	2	3	4	
01	09	19	5	<p>Substitute for the existing para :</p> <p>'19. The responsibility of the Ministry of Railways in the matter does not end by merely issuing instructions to the Zonal Railways. The Committee desire the Ministry of Railways to pursue the matter vigorously for conclusive action in this regard by setting up an institutional monitoring mechanism ensuring redeployment of surplus staff within a time-bound programme. The total number of surplus staff which could not be redeployed so far may be intimated to the Committee alongwith the reasons therefor'.</p>

1	2	3	4
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02	11	22	
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Substitute for the existing para :

'22. The Committee are deeply concerned with the rising trends of crimes in the Indian Railways. The Committee therefore, desire to know, *inter-alia* the periodicity of holding coordination meetings at the State/Zonal Divisional & Post level to combat the menace of crime alongwith deliberations held, details of such minutes, action taken on the proposals put forth in such meetings etc. The Committee would like to be apprised in this regard within 3 months'.

03	15	31	
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After existing para, Add sub-para :

'The Committee would also like to have details of the teams of Officers sent abroad to study the Railway Signalling and Telecommunication System alongwith the outcome, amount spent on such visits and the improvements brought about in Signalling and Telecommunication System in the light of such foreign jaunts'.

1	2	3	4		
04	18	34	01	Substitute	'The Committee are disgusted to note'
05	18	34		After 'Jamalpur'	Add 'and other workshop'
06	18	36	Last	After 'in this regard'	Add 'They also desire that the line coaches which have outlived their coded life should be removed from service'.
07	23	44	After existing para		Add sub-para : 'The Committee also observed that the coaches attached to the Calcutta Circular Railways are antiquated, shabby and in dilapidated condition, causing great monetary loss to the Railways. The Committee desire that the existing coaches attached to the Calcutta Circular Railways should be phased out and instead new attractive coaches with ample facilities be put on lines to allure the common commuters. The Coaches should be colourful and effective'.

APPENDIX II

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN SIXTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS (1996-97) (ELEVENTH LOK SABHA) ON 'MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS DEMANDS FOR GRANTS—1997-98'.

Total number of Recommendations/Observations		44
(i) Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government:		11
[<i>vide</i> Recommendations/Observations Para Nos. 1.80, 1.83, 1.88, 1.91, 2.65, 2.75, 2.76, 2.77(i), 2.77(xi), 2.78, 2.79, 2.80(G) and 2.80 (H) (C)].		
Percentage of Total		25%
(ii) Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's replies:		13
[<i>vide</i> Recommendation/Observations Para Nos. 1.71, 1.75, 1.76, 1.77, 1.79, 1.81, 1.82, 1.89, 2.60, 2.63, 2.64, 2.66, 2.71, 2.77, (ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix, x, xii, xiv, xv) and 280 (A, B, C, D, E, F, H(a), H(b ii), H(b iii), H(d)].		
Percentage of Total		29.5%
(iii) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration:		13
[<i>vide</i> Recommendations/Observations Para Nos. 1.72, 1.73, 1.74, 1.78, 1.85, 1.90, 1.92, 2.61, 2.67, 2.69, 2.70, 2.72, 2.74, and 2.80 H b(i)].		
Percentage of Total		29.5%
(iv) Recommendations/Observations in respect of which final reply of Government are still awaited.		7
[<i>vide</i> Recommendations/Observations Para Nos. 1.84, 1.86, 1.87, 2.59, 2.62, 2.68, 2.73 and 2.77 (xiii)].		
Percentage of Total		16%