

I would, therefore, request the Union Government to make appropriate arrangements for live telecast of Krishna Janmashtami Celebrations from Dwarakadhish Temple like the live telecast of Krishna Janam celebrations from Mathura and the Rath Yatra celebrations from Jagannathpuri.

12.22 hrs.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: DISAPPROVAL  
OF THE BUILDING AND OTHER  
CONSTRUCTION WORKERS (REGULATION OF  
EMPLOYMENT AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE)  
THIRD ORDINANCE, 1996.

BUILDING AND OTHER CONSTRUCTION  
WORKERS (REGULATION OF EMPLOYMENT  
AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE) BILL.

STATUTORY RESOLUTION RE: DISAPPROVAL  
OF THE BUILDING AND OTHER  
CONSTRUCTION WORKERS' WELFARE CESS  
THIRD ORDINANCE, 1996

AND

BUILDING AND OTHER CONSTRUCTION  
WORKERS' WELFARE CESS BILL - CONTD.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Item Nos. 9 to 12 were postponed on the motion moved by the hon. Minister, Shri M. Arunachalam because the Government has to come out with the amendments as agreed to by the Party leaders. I am given to understand by the letter received from the hon. Minister that the amendments are not yet ready. I will take the sense of the House that these items can further be kept pending.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

12.22 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET, 1996-97 GENERAL  
DISCUSSION

AND

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT  
(RAILWAYS)—CONTD.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now we go to Railway Budget.

Shri N.N. Krishnadas—not present

[Translation]

SHRI RAMASHRAYA PRASAD SINGH (Jahanabad).  
Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity

to speak on the Railway Budget. I support the Railway Budget for 1996-97 presented by the Railway Minister. This Budget has been prepared keeping in view the aspirations of the poor people of the country.

12.23 hrs.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

The second class fare has not been hiked. This is one proof. The North-Eastern Region connected by Railway network. This is another commendable step. These areas remained cut off from the capital of the country for want of railway lines and these proposals will work for the integration of the country. There is imperative need for laying double line on Gaya-Patna section. We have been endeavouring to secure this facility and we are successful today. I congratulate the hon'ble Minister for including the proposal in the Budget for doubling the Gaya-Patna Section Track. There have been many railway Ministers from Bihar like Ramasubhag Singh but they did not do it.

I would like to draw the attention of the House towards a very important point. The hike in Railway freights has resulted in general price rise.

This will affect the poor consumer. This hike has been avoided by improving the railway management. I would suggest that the hon'ble Railway Minister should reconsider it.

Sir, the average goods movement speed has been 22-23 kms per hour for the last many years. There has been no improvement inspite of changing the tracks.

Modernisation of Railways and procurement of Fast Speed engines on which thousands of crores of rupees have been spent. The Railway officers have become complacent and they are not making efforts to improve this speed. In case, the average speed is increased by 5 km per hour with better administration and other efforts then I think, we can move greater amount of goods and utilise the wagons in a better manner. This will also obviate the necessity of further hike in freights. I would suggest that a Parliamentary Committee should be constituted to analyse the mismanagement which is plaguing the Railways and to suggest measures to increase the average freight traffic speed. The Committee would submit its recommendation and the Ministry can implement them.

Sir, I would like to give one or two more examples of such mismanagements. New trains are introduced, new railway tracks are laid but the staff required for proper maintenance thereof is not recruited for years which results in additional work load for the workers already working there. The trains run late and cause consideration loss to the Railways as well as the passengers who lose their valuable time. Late running of trains also puts pressure on tracks and signals. As a result the rails get loosened and accidents take place causing loss of life and property. Therefore, I

would request the hon'ble Railway Minister to allocate funds for maintenance head so that tracks are kept in good condition.

Sir, the unemployed youth is not getting employment under Railways. The responsibility for this squarely lies on Railway offices who mismanage the Railway affairs. They should be held accountable. It is seen that some times only the lower officers are punished but the big officers go scotfree.

Sir, in 1979, 50 percent promotion quota was provided for junior and class II Railway officers. But the decision has not been made effective even after a lapse of seven years. Will it not breed discontentment among Railway workers and result in consequent loss to Railways? If such things go on the railway administration cannot be termed as an efficient administration. I would request him to implement this decision so that officers take greater interest in their work.

Sir, I would like to submit that the allocation made in the Budget is not sufficient to meet the requirements of Railways because of price rise. This cannot be considered adequate for implementation of schemes meant for Eastern region and for backward areas. The hon'ble Minister has introduced many new schemes which would require adequate funds. He should provide maximum budgetary provision for these areas so that the railway network is expanded, the unemployment youth is given some job and we get maximum economic benefit. The provision at a level of Rs 2000 crore is totally insufficient it will have adverse impact on the maintenance of Railway assets and invite accidents. So, there is imperative need for higher budgetary provision.

Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a submission about Bihar, because I come from Bihar. There was Fatuha-Islampur narrow gauge line in Bihar which was operating since the time of Martin Company by which I used to travel alongwith my family members. Today this rail line is lying inoperative even after nationalisation. Infact, this line should have been converted into broad gauge after its nationalisation. It has deprived thousands of people of rail facilities. The people now have to go to Jahanabad to catch trains.

Sir, there are several backward regions in Central Bihar. This train was of immense use to these areas. The people are facing great difficulty in the absence of that railway line. They have to spend Rs 20-25 by way of fare if they have to go from Akangar Sarai to Patna. I would request that Fatuha-Islampur line should be connected to Bodh Gaya. This will benefit the railways to a great extent because Bodh Gaya is an international tourism place. This would also benefit the people of Central Bihar.

Sir, there is a lot of corruption in railways. If the hon'ble Minister wants to be an efficient administrator, he must try to minimise corruption. As one of my hon'ble friends has said, if railways are free from corruption,

they can lay golden rail tracks and the railways will also not suffer the loss they are suffering today. Today, most of the income of the railways is siphoned off, is being wasted.

Sir, we have two sets of Police Force i.e. GRP and RPF. There is no coordination between these two Forces. I would suggest that entire security arrangements should be entrusted to RPF to ensure better results and check corrupt practices at Railway Stations. This should be done even if the relevant regulations have to be changed by this House. Dual responsibility does not ensure proper security. He can himself see the Conditions prevailing at various Railway Stations.

I would like to say one thing more. Jahanabad is a backward area and we have a junction Station there. During the 10th Lok Sabha, the then Railway Minister Shri Kalmadji had in the meeting of Advisory Committee invited proposals from us for the beautification of Railway Stations or for providing retiring rooms in our respective areas costing upto Rs. 20 lakh and I had submitted the proposal which he sanctioned the same day. I would like that that proposal should be implemented. I had proposed construction of a retiring room at Jahanabad and beautification of Torgana-Masaudi Station.

With these words I conclude.

SHRI KANSHI RAM RANA (Surat) Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. In his speech, my colleague Shri Satya Dev Singh, M.P., has termed this Budget as political and populist. I would go a step further and say that this is a misleading, misconceived Budget. It does not contain any proposals for balanced development of the entire country. Therefore, this is an imbalanced Budget. I call it a non progressive Budget and I will place some facts before you in support of my contention.

The hon'ble Railway Minister desires rapid Railway development but keeping in view our bad economic condition, I don't think his desire will be fully filled. The Budget proposals depict the same rosy picture as was depicted in the last year's Budget. Many of my friends say that this is a very good Budget. Naturally, only those people will like this Budget whose areas are going to be benefited. The Bihar people say that no railway development took place there earlier and if it takes place now, there is nothing wrong in it. I admit there should be development in Bihar but there are many other States which are lagging much behind in the matter of development of railway network. Their needs should also be taken care of.

I would like to mention the figures contained in the budget. I don't know he will be able to implement all these schemes during the current year or there after. The budget provision for 1995-96 for new railway lines was Rs. 281.71 crore whereas it has been reduced to Rs. 220.55 crore for 1996-97. Similarly, last year a

provision of 1174.97 crore was made for conversions which has been reduced to Rs. 829.26 crore for the current year. For doubling the Railway tracks, the last year's provision stood at Rs. 247.37 crore while a provision of Rs. 193.91 crore has been made for this year. What I want to submit is that he should have made budget provision on the basis of priorities decided in the railway budget. But this is not so.

He has announced with great fervor that augmentation of rolling stock renewal of tracks would be his priority, we will pay full attention to gauge conversion and electrification. But from the provisions made in the budget, it appears to me that he will find great difficulty in completing all the Small Schemes he has formulated. As Shri Basu Deb Acharia was saying yesterday, there is considerable shortage of coaches and wagons because of which we are unable to load and move the Coal from Coal Pitheads. For rolling stock he has made a provision of only Rs. 1678.56 crore as against the provision of Rs. 2030.56 crore made last year.

Similarly, 6 percent lower allocation has been made for the electrification projects. With regard to relaying of dismantled tracks, 30 percent lower amount has been provided compared to the provision of last year. As per his announcement, we would need a budget expenditure of Rs. 250.70 crore for laying new tracks. But against this, a sum of Rs. 4.80 crore only has been provided. This Rs. 250 crore Scheme is not going to be completed in one year, nor even in 5 years but the provision of Rs. 4 crore against the requirement of Rs. 250 crore obviously creates a doubt whether this Scheme will ever be implemented.

Similarly, an expenditure of Rs. 368.20 crore is required for the Conversion Schemes he has announced. But actual provision made amounts to Rs. 19.90 crore only. I would therefore, like to know from the hon'ble Minister in spite of all the announcements made by him, how is he going to implement these schemes with these meagre provisions? The hon'ble Minister has tried to appease all the sections and sought to bring about all round development. It is not possible to please all always, somebody has to be displeased. It appears to me that he will face lot of difficulties in completing all the Schemes this year or thereafter, with the Provision included in the budget.

We have a bitter experience about railways. We have been listening the budget speeches of various Railway Ministers during the last many years and I feel this does not help in proper development of railways. Therefore, I would urge the hon'ble Minister to increase the provisions made in the budget.

The Railway Minister always resort to hiking of railway fares and freights to meet the budget deficit. No other measure is conceived. This year also, revenue amounting Rs. 927 crore is proposed to be raised through this budget. This will put a big burden on the

commuter and common man. It is claimed that this hike will not have adverse effect. This is not true. Perhaps 15 essential commodities have been exempted from this freight hike of Rs. 970 crore but there are other essential commodities also for which we are paying the highest tariff the world over. I would submit that this hike in freight would definitely cause the price rise and increase inflation. I would, therefore, urge him to withdraw the increase in freights. The passenger fares have been increased, but I am thankful to the hon'ble Minister that he has exempted 200 Km travel from this increase. But those travelling long distances do not go sitting, they travel by sleepers and this hike will definitely affect them. Many hon'ble Members said that the trains have almost all the bogies reserved. Only one or two bogies are left unreserved and the passengers travelling by these bogies face a lot of difficulties. Therefore, it was suggested that they should be exempted from the levy of fare increase. But this hike will definitely affect those travelling beyond 200 Km. This hike should also be withdrawn. While suggesting this, I do not mean that resources should not be mobilised for the development of railways. I appreciate the gesture of exempting the travel upto 200 Km and also the season ticket holders from this hike.

Last year goods traffic accounted for 39 crore tonne but this year's budget expects an increase of only 2 crore tonne while we have greater potentiality. Last year, the increase accounted for 2.5 crore tonne. Why this year this target has been brought down? We should be able to increase goods traffic by even more than 2 crore tonne. This will give us more revenue.

I would like to say something about corruption prevailing in Railways. It is generally observed that passengers get stranded at railway platforms for want of reservation and the trains steam off empty. We can mobilise far greater resources if corruption is eliminated in the Railways.

I was going through the report of the Parliamentary Standing Committee which has a reference about scraps. Lower targets are fixed for the sale of scraps. In 1993 the target was Rs. 750 crore while actual earning went to Rs. 850 crore. This shows how faulty estimates are prepared by our officers. We will have to improve our estimation criteria. A target of Rs. 965 crore was fixed for 1994-95 while actual proceed amounted to Rs. 1017 crore.

When he was sitting in the opposition benches along with us, I heard him speak on General Budget and Railway Budget on many occasions. He used to say that burden should not be put on common man. Now he has himself put burden on those people. It is true they will bear the burden but the difficulties are not going to be resolved. So it is necessary to eliminate corruption in order to be able to raise more resources. By doing so, we can also increase goods traffic and passenger traffic to ensure greater revenue receipts.

Sir, I feel the Railway officers have misguided the Minister in certain matters. For example, he has announced introduction of 15 new trains. I would like to point out that the Ashram Express is already operating in Gujarat on Meter gauge, the Ahmedabad-Delhi mail train is also operating on meter gauge. These two trains are included in the 15 new trains proposed to be introduced. These are not new trains. He is being misguided in this way. However urge upon the hon'ble Minister to introduce two more trains for Gujarat which will benefit not only Gujarat but entire country. As I said, this is not a balanced budget. I have no objection to making greater provision for the development of the railways in Bihar and Karnataka. I have also no objection for creating 6 new Railway Zones. But the report submitted by the Railway Reforms Committee, 1984 did not include Bhubneshwar and Hazipur. It is good that Hazipur has been made a new Railway zone because Bihar is a backward State. 70-80 percent railway track of Western Railway passes through Gujarat and the Western Railway Zone's Head Quarters are in Mumbai. The people from Palampur and other far off areas have to go to Mumbai to get things done concerning railway matters. All the M.Ps. have not demanded creation of new zones. But there has been along demand from Gujarat, through which 70-80 percent railway line pass that the railway Head quarters should be shifted to Gujarat. I would therefore, request the hon'ble Minister to shift the Western Railway Zone Headquarters from Mumbai to Ahmedabad or Gandhinagar.

Now, I would like to make some points about my Parliamentary Constituency. Surat is a cosmopolitan city. People from all parts of the country come here in search of employment. Our Railway Minister comes from Bihar. Thousands of workers from Bihar come to this city. There are big traders of textile and diamond but there is not train from there for Bihar. I had a meeting with the hon'ble Minister 2-3 days ago and he had expressed his full sympathy. I would request him to introduce a direct train between Surat and Patna so as to facilitate easy travel for poor Bihari people coming to this city. They travel standing for hours together. I would not like to elaborate further because the other hon'ble Members have already narrated the pitiable conditions prevailing in second class bogies. The position of local and mail trains is equally bad. I would request the hon'ble Minister to consider augmentation of rolling stock to ensure increased supply of Coaches and wagons to meet the demand. I would like to point one thing more. Near about 6-7-8 lakh people of North India have settled in Surat because it has great employment potential. Thousands of people come to this city daily. Tapti-Ganga Express is operated between Surat and Varanasi to connect North India and it operates via Naini. I have been meeting the Railway Ministers and Railway officers during the last 4-5 years to impress upon them to run this train via Allahabad. But no progress has been made so far. I would also like this train should be run 4 days

a week instead of 2 days to provide better facilities for the people of North India to visit Surat, Ahmedabad and Balsaḍ. I have been informed by the Railway Board that this change will be affected after completion of two platforms in Allahabad. I understand these platforms have been constructed and I am now told that diversion of this train via Allahabad instead of Naini would involve more time and therefore it would not be possible to exceed to the request. They have been talking differently at different time. I think that they are not interested in doing the job. I would therefore, expect from the hon'ble Railway Minister that he would make arrangements for operating Tapti Ganga Express between Surat and Varanasi via Allahabad.

There is yet another point. The Surat city Railway Station was constructed in 1955. The population of Surat has now gone upto 25 lakh but there have been no improvements in the Station. The railway budget has been termed as a very progressive budget which will help speedy railway development but I think the Railway Ministry is not capable of providing better facilities because of the conditions prevailing in the Railways. I would request the hon'ble Minister to expand the Surat Railway Station which was constructed in 1955. An assurance was given for providing a new Railway Station on Northern end of the city. We were told that this station will be constructed early if the Local Corporation extended cooperation. So I would request now the hon'ble Railway Minister to take steps for the construction of a Second Railway Station at Surat.

I would like to place before the hon'ble Minister yet another serious matter. There is no railway track facility between Mumbai and Ahmedabad which I think is necessary. A third track is essential between these two cities. The work should be taken up right now, otherwise a situation may arise after 5-10 years when we would not be able to start any new train or operate goods train. There has been also a long standing demand for Khambat-Tarapore-Bhavnagar railway line and by providing this line we can improve track facility because the entire Baroda-Ahmedabad track will become available for trains after the introduction of Khambat-Tarapore-Bhavnagar train. That is why I request that a provision for a new track from Khambat to Bhavnagar via Tarapore should be made and a survey for Mumbai-Ahmedabad third track should be initiated.

**13.00 hrs.**

Sir, we have a Surat-Jalgaon railway line which passes through the tribal belt of Gujarat. Many trains for Trivandrum, Cochin and Hyderabad pass through this line which is a single line and as a result of which there is irregularity in the operations of trains and they get late by 8 to 10 hours. I would therefore, request that the Surat-Jalgaon Single line should be converted into double line.

He had assured surveying of Surat-Jalgaon line for electrification and doubling but I find there is no

provision for it in the budget. I would therefore, request that some provision should be included in the budget for doubling this line. The condition of Surat Railway Station is very bad. It has few booking windows while the population of the city has been increasing. People face great difficulty in purchasing tickets at these booking windows. There is lot of space for construction of a new Railway Station on the Eastern side but no provision has been made for this purpose. I would request that immediate steps should be taken to provide a second Railway Station for Surat to mitigate the difficulties of the passengers in the coming years because of the increasing population.

Sir, the City Booking Office in Surat was set up during British Rule. The space available there is quite inadequate and people encounter a lot of inconvenience while booking tickets. The Surat city has a population of 25 lakh and I would request that the Booking Office should be shifted to the new Building. The hon'ble Minister announced commencement of a reservation system which would cover 92 percent passengers. But the Booking Office building in Surat is so small that people stand in 2-3 Km long queue for hours in scorching heat or during rains to purchase their tickets. Therefore this building should be extended. Land is already available there. The trains have become irregular and run late. The trains like prestigious August Kranti train runs late. I thank the hon'ble Minister for creating catering, safety and punctuality cells but he should make adequate arrangements for efficient functioning of these Cells.

The previous Railway Minister had promised that the complaints of the Members of Parliament will be resolved by arranging a meeting with the concerned Zonal General Manager. But so far no meeting has been convened by the G.M. It is good that three Cells have been created by him. It is a good beginning, but he must ensure that People responsible for running these Cells should work in a dedicated manner.

He should also see that August Kranti train runs on time. The Howrah Express train has never arrived on time. It arrives late at Howrah and the long route passengers have to wait at the Railway Station for a long time. I will be grateful to him if punctuality is ensured in respect of these trains.

The Karunavati Express operates between Mumbai and Ahmedabad. Similar train should be operated from Ahmedabad to Mumbai. These Lines have industrial belts on both sides and people travel between Mumbai and Ahmedabad and vice versa in a large number. The Centre has discriminated against Gujarat whether it is in matter of railways or other matters. I have been hearing about Kaporvanj-Modasa railway line since 1977 but it has not been completed so far. He has said that he will take some concrete measures in this regard but our experience has been that Gujarat has been injusticed on several counts. At least Gujarat should not

be discriminated by the railway department. I shall request the hon'ble Minister to take all these points seriously and take appropriate steps.

[English]

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI (Howrah) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget because we are supporting the Government and also because the Railway Budget is quite good though not in all respects. It requires a lot of scrutiny. I would have been delighted if the hon. Minister of Railways mentioned a few of the performances of the previous Government which provided a new order in the rail movement in this country. However, the Railway authorities, perhaps thought that the change of Government is not merely political but also something substantial. So, they did not try to highlight those things. One of the unique things that took place during the tenure of the previous Government was the completion of 5 000 kilometres under unigauge conversion. It is a very unique thing in the history of Railways. Had it been mentioned, I think, the process of continuity and the progress of the Railways would have been linked without questioning as to who is heading the Government.

My dear friend, whose party is one of the constituents of the United Front, did mention yesterday that there was a total departure from the previous Government which did not care for the interests of the North eastern States. I would like to remind my hon. friend that this is not true. Perhaps, he did not closely scrutinise the earlier Railway Budget. He could have seen that while the previous Government was in office, in the modernisation programme, the South of entire Brahmaputra had been linked with the Railway upto Dibrugarh. Also, the provision of railway in Tripura upto Kumarghat was taken up while Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister and now a token grant of Rs. 1 crore was made. This year, it has only been repeated upto Agartala.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : I would like to clarify that the section was sanctioned in 1991 by Shrimati Indira Gandhi.

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : That is what I say. You simply say that the earlier Government did not take care at all. It is not politically correct. I want to clarify the statement.

I would also like to inform the House that while Mumbai and Madras can claim in terms of the traffic load to have the Metro first. I am indeed grateful to Shrimati Indira Gandhi who gave the highest priority to Calcutta to have the Metro transport system which is now operating in Calcutta. It was Shrimati Indira Gandhi's contribution and venture at that time. She visited Calcutta immediately after the spate of the Naxalite movement. I was a Member of the Fifth Lok Sabha then. She announced from that side that "Calcutta will get Metro." I have seen the horror of the people plying in the buses during the peak time of the office

hours." So, I think it is not correct to say that we did not take the interest of the people into consideration during the time of the previous Government. Maybe, we have not been able to take care of the remote areas.

The hon. Member sitting on the right side, Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury created a revolution in Bengal by linking railways to the remotest areas by providing new trains. The trains which are leaving today to remote areas are because of Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury. He gave the circular railway to Calcutta. He gave a number of trains linking here and there. The entire North Bengal dominated by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and by Muslims could not think of the long distance fast trains. It was Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury who did it.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Coochbehar) : What is the gain by it?

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Please allow me to speak. I am not yielding. Do not interrupt. There is no question of gain or loss. We travel by Gaur Express to reach Malda overnight. We are getting six trains to Coochbehar. The bogies may be bad. But do not say Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury has not done it. He did it.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : I do not acknowledge it.

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : It is your habit not to acknowledge. That is a different thing. But I am not in that habit. I acknowledge what Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and Shri H.D. Deve Gowda what they are doing. I acknowledge what has been done in the past. That is called history. You do not read history. I read history.

In so far as West Bengal is concerned, with all my support to Shri Ram Vilas Paswan who has done a very great job in the Railway Budget, we have been unnecessarily accused of being the supporters of Bihar. I think Shri Ram Vilas Paswan has done the right thing in the Railway Budget because Bihar has been deprived for the last many years of getting the remotest connection to various places. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan has done it as a spokesman of the Government for the weakest and the oppressed people of Bihar. There is no denying the fact that we are supporting Shri Ram Vilas Paswan for that.

I would like to remind the Railway Minister of a basic point. This Government, in its Common Minimum Programme, gives the highest importance to backward areas, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and minorities. I give two examples. There is no railway connection to a place in Bengal known as Balurghat where the struggle for freedom was fought vigorously in 1942. Balurghat is the district headquarters of South Dinajpur, border of Bangladesh since British days. It was Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury who got sanction and who approved the railway link line between Eklachi to Balurghat, the line which starts from

a tribal strip and ends in Scheduled Caste strip. The entire segment is a Scheduled Caste Parliament segment. The Assembly seats are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe seats. You can see the poor plight of the people of that area. In 1984, Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury conceived the whole project. A token sum of Rs. 1 crore or Rs. 2 crore only is given till this date. I do not say this because it is my home district. The people there say that "We are Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe people and so, only Rs. 1,50,00,000/- is given for this railway line. Some people come and dig some soil work here and there and then it is over and we cannot give any reply." The same thing has been repeated this year also.

The same thing has been repeated constituency after constituency. Here, I mean the reserved seats. The allocation of money is only Rs. one crore to Rs. two crore. I made another request. I have been trying for this. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, the hon. Railway Minister knows the station called Barsoi. It is just adjacent to the border of Uttar Dinajpur of Bengal. It starts with the reserved constituency called Raiganj followed by the reserved constituency Kaliaganj, followed by the reserved constituency of Kushmandi followed by the reserved tribal constituency of Tapan. In this whole constituency, there is only one metre gauge link. The suffering of the people is that after freedom, after the partition, they all became refugees. The Bangladesh border was sealed and from that time the metre gauge link is there. People come from Calcutta, wait the whole night in Barsoi junction and get the train in the early morning. On some days that train runs and it does not run on some other days. The distance is only 45-60 kilometres. Till now it has not been converted. The answer that the Railway Board always gives is that it is not viable. What does it mean by "viable"? What is viability? Is it not a common minimum task to take care of these issues?

Now, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the Radhikapur-Barsol line. Unless it is converted into broad gauge, people cannot reach their destinations. Recently, when the flood was there, we could not send any relief materials because all the relief materials have to come from Calcutta by broad gauge. We cannot load the materials in truck and send by the truck because the roads were flooded. How do you send it in such a situation? It is only by helicopter that you can send the relief materials to the marooned people. So the relief materials cannot be sent because the broad gauge line is not there. This is how I can cite example after example, the injustice done to the people even in this Budget also. I do not say that it was not there in the previous Budget. I say it was there. I am sorry to say one thing. Unfortunately, it has become the trend. Unless the Railway Minister is from that particular State, no special effort is being made. I do not say that the previous Government did anything correct for Bengal. I never say that. That is why I have already

mentioned his name because Shri Ghani Khan Choudhary took pains. He did it.

There is another line called the Digha-Tamluk line. Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, you know about Midnapore. Tamluk is the only place which defied the English people and declared freedom. When the whole country, the whole of India was surprised, and even Mahatma Gandhi was surprised, they declared freedom for seven days defying the British. The Digha-Tamluk line was conceived by the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi when he was the Prime Minister. The people of Digha supported Gandhiji's *salt satyagraha*. The day Mahatma Gandhi started that movement, the very same day the freedom started, the same day they were shot at and they died. That is the importance of that place. But look at the plight of the Digha-Tamluk line. We are celebrating the 50th year of freedom movement. Again, the Digha-Tamluk line figures. To complete this line, a huge amount is required. But the Government allocates only Rs. one crore which is just a peanut. Is it not an insult? Those who are sitting in the Railway Board neither read history nor geography. They only take care of their professional skills and explain something in the paper. They should understand the importance and sensitivity of certain zones. They do not study things. This is how things are being treated. This is what I wanted to say about the Digha-Tamluk line.

I am not talking of the Howrah Amta line because that line is not in my constituency. I am just mentioning about it because the Howrah-Amta line is such a sensitive line. The Railways have completed three-fourths of this line and one-fourth of it was not completed. Why? Here, I reveal the truth today before the hon. Railway Minister. That one-fourth of the line has not yet been completed because there is a connivance of the private bus operators with the Railway bosses there. If that line is completed, the private bus operators will not be able to ply and the commuters will be benefited. That has been going on for the last ten years. You see it with your own eyes that three-fourths of the work has been completed and only one-fourth of it has not been completed because of the private bus operators' lobby.

**SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA** This year they have announced it in the Budget.

**SHRI PR. DASMUNSI** I am grateful to you. You have reminded me that they have just announced it this year. So these are some of the projects which I mentioned just now so far as this railway zone is concerned.

I would now like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the toy train. I am grateful to the hon. Minister because he has been hearing me very patiently. In a way Shri Subash Gaishing has been kind enough to us. After the trouble started in Kashmir, there is some tourist traffic in Darjeeling. The West Bengal Government has developed the merry places nicely. Darjeeling is taking a new shape. The tourists, specially the

foreigners, love and enjoy the toy train. It is such a beautiful train. Perhaps, the Indian tourists may not love it but the foreign tourists love and enjoy it.

They say, "it does not matter if we take four hours but we will go by this toy train, catching the beauty, enjoying the scenery, cave etc." But the toy train does not operate regularly. Nobody takes care of it. My only request to you is to make it a little attractive, a little comfortable so that foreign tourists can come in large numbers. They do not buy the ticket in Indian currency. This way we will get more foreign exchange. It will provide a new direction to the Darjeeling hill station. There should be a computerised reservation centre at Darjeeling. Foreign tourists come here between February and May. At that time, you will not find a single place vacant for stay. There is a huge rush at that time to view the Sun rise from the Kanchenjunga. Therefore, my request to the Railway Minister is to take special care of Darjeeling in this matter.

Now I come to resource planning. A lot has been said about the resource planning. Yesterday I was glad to hear somebody from Maharashtra speaking about selling of air space. A proposal came from Maharashtra for selling of suburban air space. You can try a similar thing between Asansol and Howrah, Barackpore-Calcutta-Sealdah. Why do you not think of this? This way you can get a lot of money. Since you are accepting liberalisation policy, why do you not think of entire MTP Project of Bombay city? Why do you not negotiate with the private parties? Why do you not call Japanese parties for discussion? They are the best. The manner in which they have taken the entire project in Singapore is an ideal one. It is a wonderful thing. It was started only three years ago. I travelled by that. I suggest that instead of paying heavy interest, it is better to negotiate with them, ask the company to come here and give them the entire project. You do not have to spend anything. You can enter into an agreement with them for ten years or so. You can allow it. What is wrong in it? I do not understand. They will do better. You can have the similar thing for Madras. What has been done in Calcutta by Indian engineers is a remarkable thing. We feel proud of that. I thank the people of Calcutta for the manner in which they have cleared it. My only request to you is that in your MTP Calcutta Project, Third Phase, there was a provision to link Salt Lake with Ramrajatala. It is a very costly thing. You cannot do that. My submission is that you have a consultation with the Japanese group. They are prepared to negotiate with you. It is the easiest way. If you can connect Calcutta Maidan and Howrah Maidan, beneath the Ganges, then the plight of the commuters of both cities can be settled for ever. This way, Howrah bridge will be free from jam. This entire technology is available with Japan. They are the masters in it. Instead of having the control by the railway authorities, you can privatise this part. You can sort out the entire expenditure. Why do you think that you will spend the money yourself? Why do you think

of privatising some platforms in the New Delhi Railway Station. You can call for tenders and see the result. You can call a few groups. You can give a package consisting of one big station, one medium station and the one flag station to private persons to manage it. If you believe in the genuine thing, do not hesitate to take this step. You can try it on an experimental basis to find out whether railway is earning a revenue or not. You can find it out. What happened in Italy during the World Cup? They have brought a revolution in travel by train. I was travelling in a train from Rome. I was really amazed to see the train. I asked: Is it the Government train? I was told that that was a private train. I asked: How do they manage it? I was told that it was very well managed in all fields by the management. Only the security aspect is done by the Government and the private management jointly. In this, investment is nil. If you feel that in some other route you can plan like that, then budgetary support will not be a problem. You can then plan from your Ministry. The biggest draw-back is not the Railway Minister. You are a good thinker; you are a social thinker. Your thinking does not percolate down, because on the top you have got a professional management right from the Chairman, Railway Board.

In the middle it does not percolate. In the middle those who operate, they look for their promotion. At the grassroot you have the most unprofessional management who operate at the station. So, at the grassroot you have the unprofessional management, in the middle there are some who are waiting for their promotion and at the top you have professionals. Who will implement your ideas? Therefore, I think you have to revolutionize the entire management system. If you have a Junction Station Superintendent, he must have a professional outlook, he should understand what is happening today. He should not think that he is simply a Station Master, he will be promoted up to the Superintendent and then he will retire. A whole professional outlook must come in the Railways as a competitive business agency in the transport system. Otherwise you cannot improve the situation. This is what I submit to you both in terms of resource generation and in terms of management planning.

I do not say that even your Travellers' Ticket Examiners are corrupt people. It is no good to say so. They are very good people, they are very nice. You try to motivate them in a manner by which they can be also good public relations officers with the passengers. That will help.

Sometimes Railways do not run in time. Trains run late not because of any other reason, but because there is no coordination. I have seen the guard waiting in the station. Why? Because loading is going on in the parcel van. Why is that loading delayed? Because the loader did not come in time. Why did the loader not come in time? Because the mango loaded truck was blocked at the gate of the Railway Station. So, if you

connect this whole chain of events the result is that the train is delayed by 20 to 30 minutes and it ultimately leads to another two hours delay. It means there is no professional management. If there is a professional Superintendent, he would know that his duty today is to load 500 kgs. of mangoes, 10,000 tonnes of jute and this should be done two hours before the arrival; and the whole thing gets coordinated. But nothing is being done now. There is no macro level or micro level professional approach in the whole set up.

I tell you, delay is being caused everyday. You kindly revolutionize the system of professional approach in the whole management to curtail the delay process. Delay is caused because of small things, not because of bigger things. Everyday politicians do not go on a *Rail Roko* agitation. Some days we do it for which we have to be blamed. But everyday we do not do it.

The other point to which I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister is that when you invest money on some projects, why do you declare it abandoned? I can give you an example. In West Bengal, in my constituency, at Abada in the South-Eastern Railways, you have installed one of the biggest railway yard projects by the Plan sanctioned money. It is the land of the peasants. You took the land of the peasants. While you took the land of the peasants we politicians helped the Railways. They are deprived of their cultivation. They were given an assurance that they would be given some job; they would get the work of colliers, loaders, etc. But one fine morning you say people are not coming here. Why are people not coming? There is the Bombay road. Then the objection came that though the Bombay road is there, the second bridge is not opened. Then the second bridge, Vidyasagar Sethu, was got opened. Now what is the objection? Now the objection is that a lot of criminals are there. If criminals are there, what is the RPF doing? Is it logic to abandon a whole project after spending crores of rupees of money? Cultivators and peasants are suffering in the mean time. This is a funny thing.

As regards the RPF, I am sorry to say - I am not accusing an individual, I am not accusing Jawans - you do not know what is happening there. You go deep into the matter. Half-hearted, dejected, frustrated police officers and the cadres of senior IPS officers are taken into the RPF. They feel so frustrated, they just do not devote their time there and down the line you know what happens. You know what happened in the name of RPF recruitment a few days back. You know Mr. Railway Minister why the recruitment had been stopped. You also know who took money in what manner. I think investigation is going on in this regard. A terrible affair is going on in the name of RPF. You try to give a new morale to the force. In our State people say something else for RPF which I do not like to repeat in the House to demoralise them. I know they are good Jawans. You provide them with a new morale, a new concept.

In the name of the RPF, contempt of women is committed. If I say that there is an RPF centre on a road, I tell you honestly that women would not walk on that road. Such is their reputation at Liluah. Why has that happened? It has happened because there is no positive motivation as to what is it that they should do. This is how RPF is being managed.

I represent a constituency - unfortunately or fortunately - where all the trains come, that is Howrah. Every six out of ten voters there are affected, rightly or wrongly, by the railways. The biggest workshop, Liluah is there. The apprentices are trained there. When they finish their apprenticeships, not even five persons are considered to be absorbed when regular vacancies arise. This has been a standing crime against the genuine young apprentices who are trained. The Railways should make a policy. Let them take in only one apprentice. I do not mind that. But let them say that there is a policy that only those persons would be absorbed who are qualified apprentices from the Liluah workshop. Let the policy be that somebody from behind the scene is not taken in lieu of money.

When there is some trouble, the District Magistrate or the Superintendent of Police rings us up and says, 'There is a mob violence. Please help us save the situation'. We, politicians, go there and help them out.

We should draw some policy guidelines. For instance, there could be a policy guideline that only those who have been in the Liluah workshop as apprentices would be recruited. I do not mind if ten or twelve of them are recruited. But some policy should be there.

Who does not know Swami Vivekananda's Belur Mutt? International pilgrims and eminent scholars visit that place. I do not say that all of them visit that place by train. But, sometimes, they go by train. I have been repeatedly telling that the Belur Railway Station should be developed in an orderly manner, with a proper waiting room so that it looks like a proper tourist station. If you go there and see, Mr. Minister, you will find waterlogging behind the bridge at such a height that nobody can cross that or walk through. The railway station there is in a shambles. Just in front of the station, if you walk ten yards, you would reach Swami Vivekananda's Belur Mutt. I have been telling this year after year, but nothing has been done in this direction.

In the Howrah Station, trains are delayed every day. Every alternate night, I get calls about certain incidents. If some trains which have to reach there at ten o'clock arrive by one o'clock, the passengers do not get buses and many of them do not have enough money to pay for a taxi. What would be their plight, especially of the women? After two o'clock, the late night nightmare starts. Women are physically assaulted, robbed. There are incidents of even rape and that too in the presence of the RPF Jawans. I have been crying that there should be some special room where the late night arrived passengers, especially women and children, can safely

stay till dawn. They should be properly guarded by some sentry.

The Howrah Railway Station is a big station with nearly eighteen platforms. One night, around three o'clock, I got a message and went there and found that there was a massacre. People were running here and there. I asked them what had happened. Everybody was crying. Some *goondas* had entered there. In such a huge complex like the Howrah Railway Station, can you not provide a special place, where the late night arrived women could stay? We have the Howrah Yatri Niwas. We know the rates prevailing there. A regular passenger, who has to catch the next train can stay there if he or she pays Rs 200 for a night. (Interruptions)

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : It is mostly occupied by officers of the Railways.

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : It is occupied by them and not the passengers. (Interruptions) So, I request the hon. Railway Minister. (Interruptions)

MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER : One minute, Shri Dasmunsi. Shri Paswan may please get this matter looked into. It is a serious issue.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MINISTER OF RAILWAY (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN) : Mr Deputy Speaker Sir, I myself conducted a surprise visit at Delhi Rail yatri Niwas day before yesterday at 12 00 midnight and suspended four officers. We are doing whatever is possible. But I would like that the hon. Members should send complaints in writing to me about their areas and I shall take necessary action.

[English]

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : Well done, Mr. Minister.

[Translation]

SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : I thank you for this. The aim of Rail Yatri Niwas is to provide accommodation to the passengers.

[English]

I will conclude by saying only two things.

I am not making any allegation. I am only making a request to you that while deciding matters concerning formation and composition of the Zonal Consultative Committee and Divisional Railway Consultative Committees of the respective Divisions, please take the recommendations of the Member of Parliament concerned and their representatives from the constituencies. Please advise the DRM and General Managers not to treat them as strangers for a cup of tea. This is the kind of treatment they are getting every time. They may not be Members of Parliament but they

are our representatives. They go there to do the work of the people. When one Scheduled Caste MLA, Shri Nityanand went there, they gave him tea and told him whatever paper you want to give, you give them to us and go. This is not the way to treat. I only request you to infuse some democracy in the functioning of ZCCs and DRCCs so that the representatives can feel the effectiveness of the whole thing.

This is all I wanted to submit. With these words, I look forward to the Railway Minister's social outlook which has already been reflected in the Budget and shall further be reflected in the discussions of other pending matters.

[Translation]

SHRI JAI PRAKASH (Hissar) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I heard the speech of the hon'ble Railway Minister and also went through the Budget he has presented in this August House and it appeared to me that the entire budget is meant for Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. Haryana State also finds place in the map of India but there is no mention in the Railway Budget of any proposal for new rail tracks for Haryana. It is also silent whether survey will be conducted for the construction of any proposed new railway line. The problems of Haryana have been totally ignored in this Budget. My hon'ble friend Shri Hooda ji has made a demand and the Minister had accepted the same that the Jajjahaar-Rewari-Rohtak track will be included in the Supplementary Budget. The hon'ble Minister had committed this before all the Members of Parliament from Haryana and promised to make it functional. This belt of Haryana has the maximum number of army men who find it very difficult to go to Delhi. If this track is provided, this will reduce the traffic load of Delhi as well. The soldiers will be greatly inconvenienced by Rewari-Jajjahaar, Jajjahaar-Rohtak, Rohtak-Sonepat-Meerut railway line. Beside this, many new rail tracks are needed to connect religious and historic places of Haryana.

The Hissar-Fatehabad belt is a major cotton producing belt and cotton bales are sent to other States from here. If a railway line is provided there it will benefit the cotton growers to a large extent. The traders who use surface transport for the movement of the cotton bales will also benefit because the surface transport is comparatively costlier. If loading facility is provided in this belt it will enhance farmers' income. Agroha is a religious place of Aggarwal Community. A medical college is also located there. Students from the State and elsewhere come to this college for their studies and patients visit this College for treatment. Their parents and attendants also visit this place. The provision of a railway line will greatly facilitate their journey.

Sir, Haryana has there side borders with Delhi. On one side is Faridabad, which is a big industrial town of Haryana, which is visited by thousands of commuters

daily. The surface transport capacity is limited. I would like to know from the hon'ble Railway Minister whether he has any proposal for Rapid Rail Services covering Faridabad, Gurgaon and Bahadurgarh? These three towns are infact Delhi's Satellite towns.

Sir, the commuters face lot of inconvenience in travelling by buses and if Rapid Rail Service is introduced it will be a great help to the daily rail commuters and it will also reduce traffic load on Delhi.

The train operating between Delhi and Punjab pass through Jind and Jakhhal in Haryana, but I am sorry to say that these trains do not stop at the local stations in between and the local people are deprived of the benefit of these trains. They cannot go to Delhi or Punjab by these trains. So, I will request the hon'ble Minister to provide for stoppage of these trains at local stations in Haryana so that the people of Haryana may also make use of them for visiting Punjab or Delhi.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have yet another submission to make. I will request that a new train service should be started between Jind and Delhi which should start from Jind in the early morning and arrive Delhi in the morning. It should start from Delhi in the evening and arrive Jind at night so as to facilitate a convenient return journey to Delhi for the traders and residents of Jind. The daily commuters have very little facility of bus services. If this train is started, it will benefit the daily commuters tremendously.

Sir, Hissar is a major industrial town of Haryana. I had requested the hon'ble Railway Minister to attach an A.C. coach to Haryana Mail which operates between Hissar and Delhi via Bhiwani and Rewari, which he had kindly accepted. But now he says brakes are not available for A.C. car. It is for the Government to arrange for brakes. My request is that an A.C. coach should be attached from Hissar to the Haryana Mail and it should be arranged as soon as possible.

Sir, Hissar is a major industrial town of Haryana as is Ludhiana of Punjab. A train used to operate earlier between Hissar and Ludhiana but the same was discontinued following the murder of Indira Gandhi in 1984 on the plea that Punjab was infested by terrorism. But Sir, Punjab is now free of terrorism and complete normalcy has been restored. I would, therefore, request that this train should be restored immediately to provide convenient journey between Hissar and Ludhiana so that the Industrial and Mutual relations of both these towns are re-established.

Sir, there is a place in Hissar named Double Fatak. This railway level crossing remains closed 18 to 20 hours out of 24 hours. He can verify this from railway records. The people try to cross railway track and as a result 15 to 20 fatal accidents occur every year in which Children and Old people are generally involved. So, it is absolutely necessary to construct an overbridge at this place immediately to obviate the risk of accidents and facilitate easy movement.

Sir, the Railway Minister always Speaks of Dalits and oppressed people but there are many petty railway employees belonging to North India who have been posted in South India. There are many sweepers and other petty railway employees belonging to Haryana who have been posted in Mumbai. They have to waste a major part of their leave in coming to their native place even once a year. Sometimes, they are not sanctioned leave and if they come without leave their services are terminated. So my request is that such employees should be posted nearest to their native place or they should be provided 2-3 free passes every year so that their parents are able to go to meet them.

Sir, Yamuna Nagar is another important Industrial town of Haryana which should be linked with Chandigarh by rail. Yamuna nagar has large number of utensil producing units Jagadhari, Sadhora, Narayangarh, Panch Kula and Chandigarh should be inter connected by train services. Today, nobody likes to travel by road because of fear of accidents. So, they must be provided railway facility. About RPF, the hon'ble Minister was saying that they do not take law in their hands. But I dont agree with him. Many complaints have been received on this account at Jind Junction. Coal rakes are unloaded and food grains are loaded here and a large scale pilferage takes place. Buffaloes of Haryana are loaded from Jind for other States. These people are harassed. I would request the hon'ble Minister to exercise adequate control over RPF. The RPF people come from other States and they don't care for this area. So I would suggest that son of the soil policy should be adopted and the people should be given job in the State to which they belong. They will hesitate in indulging in corrupt practices.

Sir, RPF recruitment never takes place in Haryana. I would request that recruitment centres for the recruitment of RPF should be established in Haryana so as to provide job opportunities to the local people in their own area. This will also benefit the people at large in that area.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Delhi-Ambala railway track has been electrified but electric current has not been provided so far and no electric train has been introduced. This train should be commissioned as early as possible. The Delhi Firozpur defence track should also be electrified. This will reduce the price burden on Railways because of the hike in diesel prices.

SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI (Dumariaganj) : Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support fully the Railway Budget because it is a very balanced, development oriented and anti inflationary Budget. When petrol and diesel prices were hiked, the Press predicted big hike in railway fare and railway freight. But when this Budget was presented it was seen that the people affected by the hike in the fares and freight constituted just 3 percent of our entire population and in recent time, the hike is less than that of previous year. Is items used by common man or used as raw material have been exempted from

this hike. An effort has been made to minimise its burden on the common man because the number of second class, weaker section or poor railway commuters is far greater than the number of affluent commuters.

The special feature of this Budget is that the concept of development followed so far has been changed. So far stress used to be laid on the development of industrially developed places. But this Budget has for the first time, shifted emphasis on the areas inhabited by the poor, the adivasis and the weaker sections of the society. It is also proposed to bring under the railway network, the North Eastern region and the Uttaranchal region and all the backward areas. The Budget has taken special care of all the far flunged backward areas of the country. The Railway Minister has said in his speech that there are many areas in the country the people of which have not seen the trains even after 143 years of the inception of Railways. So it is the first time that efforts are being made to extend the railway network to far flung areas. This has on the one hand infused a sense of confidence among those people that they also belong to the main national stream. It has given a new dimension to and laid new stress on the national integration on. Therefore, I commend this Budget.

Many Members have complained that the Minister has favoured Bihar and Karnataka. But my complaint is that he has not paid as much attention to North Eastern regions, to the regions of North Bihar as they deserve. I think, he had no reservations. But he could not do it because of resource crunch. The Eastern region has a glorious past and it has played a prominent role in the national movement in the independence struggle. This region is most backward from the angle of industrial development, development of transport, education, per capita investment and per capita income. It has a large population and the poor people migrate to Delhi, Mumbai, Punjab and other regions in search of employment, to earn their livelihood. If you had the chance to see the trains coming from Bihar, you would have noticed thousands of passengers travel on train roofs. You cannot imagine the over crowding in second class bogies. Essential facility like drinking water is not available in these trains. We have the minimum railway facilities compared to the population. This region has always been neglected. The reason was the people in power were not honest. Kitchen dishonesty is most dangerous. This is not good. At least the Railway Minister has not indulged in this type of dishonesty. He has of course included some provisions for Eastern regions of Uttar Pradesh. But many schemes have been left unattended.

There is a long standing demand for conversion of Gorakhpur-Gonda loop line. This matter was raised in this House many times and a request was made to the hon'ble Railway Minister also. I am grateful to him that this time he has made a mention of it in his Budget Speech and promised that this scheme will be included in the 9th Plan. The Gorakhpur-Gonda loop line is very

important because it passes through areas bordering Nepal. There are four transits on this line from where people go to Nepal. In my Parliamentary constituency, Dumariaganj lies a place named Sidharthnagar-Barni. Four buses from Krishnanagar Barni Bazar which is in Nepal, come to Delhi which are always overcrowded. The main reason for which is non availability of railway services.

Besides, Kapilvastu and Shravasti which are Buddhist places or pilgrimage are also situated in this area. We have been making constant demand for gauge conversion of Gonda-Gorakhpur loop line. If this track is converted, direct goods train can be operated from there, passenger trains can be increased. It will also reduce pressure on Gorakhpur-Gonda main line. Therefore, I urge upon the Government to accept this proposal.

There was also a proposal for conversion of Anandnagar-Nautanwan line into broad gauge line. This track surveyed and technical reports submitted to the Railway Board. It was during the tenure of George Fernandes. Nautanwan Sunoli sector is an important transit for Nepal. It was proposed to extend this line by 4 km. Talks have been held with the representatives of Indo-Nepal Friendship Relations. There was also a proposal to lay a new track from Sunoli to Naugarh via Bhairawa-Lumbini. The Nepal Government was prepared to extend assistance for this track but that scheme has not been considered so far. I would request that this scheme should be considered and taken up for construction immediately.

In 1977-78, survey was ordered for Khalilabad-Pansi-Dumariaganj-Utoli-Balampur rail track and the survey report was submitted to the Railway Board but the same is eating dust till now. A large expenditure was incurred but the same was not taken up. I would request that this scheme should also be considered.

There was also demand for providing double track on Gorakhpur-Lucknow main line. The documents which were supplied to me and which I was going through indicate that the Railway Ministry and the Railway Board accept that there is heavy pressure on this line and traffic has increased tremendously. This is because he has now increased the number of trains on this route. He has linked several trains to Bihar. Trains operating between Katihar, Samastipur and Lucknow to Delhi, all operate on this single track. Leave alone goods trains, the passenger trains are delayed by six to eight hours because of pressure on this route. This track has to be made more viable because the Railway Ministers always talk of loss in Railways. The Railways must mobilise resources. The hon'ble Minister has himself admitted that the budgetary support will have to be raised for Railways. How is he going to tap the resources unless he makes these prominent tracks more viable, more profitable?

I am happy that an estimated expenditure of Rs. 45 crore is proposed for doubling the 45 Km track on Gonda and Jalval road section. But I am surprised to see that, a provision of Rs. 1 crore has been made for the current year. This is a Rs. 45 crore scheme and if a provision is made in this manner, then he can imagine how much time it will take for arranging Rs. 45 crore.

**14.00 hrs.**

I would plead that this work should be taken up on war footing. The Gorakhpur people have been demanding for long for construction of an overbridge near Dharamshala Bazar. Gorakhpur city has expanded considerably and Meharbanganj district is a transit place for Nepal. A ground level bridge exists there which is generally inundated and the traffic gets jammed. Last year hon'ble Governor has visited this place. The U.P. Government is prepared to bear 50 percent expenditure. So the demand of the residents of Gorakhpur should be considered seriously and action should be taken to start the construction of the overbridge.

The Railways are facing financial constraints these constraints could be removed in many ways. The capital restructuring is necessary. There is need to change investment pattern, there is need to change our way of working. Many hon'ble Members have printed out towards the corruption rampant in Railways. As a result of this the common man does not get as much benefit as he would. The result is that a major portion goes into the pockets of a few people. So, the disease of corruption has to be taken care of very seriously.

The efficiency in Railways has also been discussed here. The hon'ble Members have rightly said that the railways have some social obligations. We cannot run railways merely on commercial lines. It was also suggested that the railways should be privatised. But what will be the result? It is true that we will find resources for some time but how the people on whose hands the railway system and the management of railway Stations would be given exploit the common man, it is a matter for imagination and we have the experience of privatisation of other sectors. Our railway system, our efficiency should be customer oriented. We have beaurocratic attitude. Nobody cares for commuters whether it is Station Superintendent, Coach Assistant, T.T.E. or other petty workers. So much so, if a poor man goes to the inquiry counter for seeking some information, the Enquiry officer does not behave with him in a humane manner. Infact, we must have a system in which customers are treated with respect.

The concessions and facilities given to passengers are being curtailed continuously. Our Government has said that it wants to provide minimum facility to the people. Do the Railways have the essential facility of drinking water and toilets? The toilets provided at Railway stations are so stinting that one cannot use them. There is no arrangement for cleaning, for water. The number of passengers has gone up. The number

of trains has increased, but who is responsible for this type of management. The incidents of unauthorised occupation of waiting rooms, whether they are of A.C. 1st Class is increasing.

Many hon'ble Members have spoken about GRP. I would like to join them and say that the behaviour of GRP and RPF is most unbecoming and there are several complaints from common man. There are complaints that the labourers and poor people who return after earning something in Mumbai are looted in the trains, at the platforms.

14.05 hrs.

(Shrimati Geeta Murkherjee *in the Chair*)

The constables intimidate them and extract money forcibly. This is a very bad reflection on them. You visit Railway platforms. You will find many printed posters which say do not crowd Railway Stations only one or two persons should stay there. It will decongest the platform but the number of vendors is large and two thirds of the vendors belong to GRP who have the patronage of Railway officers. They are unauthorised and unlicensed. This should be checked. Lastly I would like to say something about the porters. They have been given good facilities but still there is scope for augmenting them. Their demand is that they should be provided with uniforms and free travel passes. The previous Government allowed 50 percent concessions which he has raised to 75 percent. But at the same time, there are unauthorised porters with criminal record who harass the passengers. They obtain uniform and harass passengers in an unimaginable manners. We have some personal experience of how the three-wheeler and taxi drivers harass the passengers when they come out of the railway platform, no matter whether it is Delhi Railway station or any other station. So, if the Government is really sincere in providing facilities to the passengers, all these systems will have to be set right. The population of the country is increasing continuously and we must formulate some National Traffic Policy, things will not change. The Government proposes to achieve 7 percent Growth Rate during the 9th Five Year Plan and if this growth is achieved, naturally economic activities will expand, trade will go up, the population is galloping. This all will necessitate expansion of railway network. But the Statistics which we have with use show that the share of railway traffic is declining vis a vis road traffic. There is no parity at all. If the railways expand we will need lower amount of energy, we will not face pollution problems. We will be able to provide cheap and convenient mode of transport to the people. So we must maintain a balance between road traffic and rail traffic. We should consider other modes of traffics non-competitive. They are infact supplementary. We must formulate such a Scheme. Only then can we save resources, mobilise maximum funds and provide a formidable and balanced traffic system to the country which will prove to be more beneficial to the

people. There is also need to curtail administrative expenses and utilise them for the development of railways. With these words I support the Railway Budget

[English]

SHRI M.N. KRISHNADAS (Palghat) : Respected Madam, I am extremely thankful to you for having permitted me to participate in the discussion on the Railway Budget. Since most of the important points have already been covered by the earlier Speakers, I would like to confine myself only to some other points.

Madam, we all know that the Indian Railways is a symbol of the national integration.

It is linking most of the major parts of this huge sub-continent.

Now, I would like to mention about the maintenance of bodies and passenger amenities. Most of the trains do not have proper electric connection, drinking water and toilet facilities. The quality, taste and condition of food served in the trains is very disgraceful. At the same time heavy charges are being collected from the passengers for these items. I hope the hon. Minister will take strict measures to correct these defects.

The Railways are having an acute shortage of workers, thousands of vacancies are still there in the Railways but the Railway authorities are not filling up those vacancies. Without adequate number of workers, the Railways cannot function properly. I hope the new Railway Minister will take this matter very seriously.

Now, I would like to mention about the problems relating to my state, Kerala. For the last so many years, the State of Kerala is being neglected by the Railway Ministry with the result that Kerala is below national average as far as development of Railways is concerned.

Madam, as you know, Kerala is having a lot of specialities. Lakhs of people from Kerala are working in several States of the country especially in the North of India. This way, Keralites are playing a very important part in national growth and national intergirty. But, the Railway Ministry is still discriminating against Kerala. There are no sufficient trains. There are no new lines as also not other developments pertaining to Railways.

Madam, the Railway authorities, only send the condemned bodies to Kerala. You know the density of population in our country. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to take special care to see that unmanned level crossings properly manned in Kerala. It is because Kerala is a thickly population State. The unmanned level crossings are the main cause for accidents in Kerala. It happens every month.

Madam, you know that there is not even a single Railway based industry in Kerala. When Shri Rajiv Gandhi was the Prime Minister, he came to Kerala and promised that the Central Government would start a Railway based industry, that is a coach factory in Palghat in Kerala. But after some time we gathered

from the newspapers that it was shifted to Punjab. We are not against giving it to Punjab but it was a clean violation of the promise made at that time to the people of Kerala.

Now, I humbly request our new Minister of Railway to please take immediate steps to start a Railway based industry in Kerala. On behalf of all the Keralites, I request the hon. Minister to start a wagon repair factory in Kerala immediately.

Madam, Last year the total Railway investment in Kerala was only Rs 47 crore. This year the Budget provision is for Rs 127 crore. I appreciate the new hon. Minister of Railways for this increase. But I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister that Kerala is far behind the national average with regard to Railways. It is because Kerala has been discriminated by the Centre for quite a long time in the past. So the increase in this year's Budget is very meagre. The people of Kerala want new trains, new railway lines and new Railway based development programmes in the State.

The doubling of the line from mangalore to Shoranur and from quilon to Trivandrum needs urgent attention of the Government. The Provision in this year's Railway Budget is not even enough for that.

After presenting the Railway Budget before this House, the hon. Minister of Railways invited all the Members of Parliament from Kerala and had a discussion about the problems faced by the people of Kerala. At that time he had made so many promises and we hope that he would fulfil all the promises made at that time. I would again request the hon. Minister of Railways to take up the matters relating to new trains, doubling of lines, conducting of survey and Railway based industries in Kerala immediately as these are the long standing demands of the people of Kerala.

I once again hope that our new hon. Minister of Railway will consider all these things and do a favour to the State of Kerala by meeting the demands of the people of Kerala.

I request the hon. Railway Minister to understand the real and the living railway problems of Kerala and take immediate steps to solve them.

Madam, I support the Railway Budget.

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil) Respected Madam, supporting the Railway Budget I wish to offer a few points.

The hon. Railway Minister has presented a soft, modest and balanced Budget without placing the burden on the common people. I congratulate him for presenting such a good Budget.

Sparing second class passengers and monthly, quarterly season ticket holders of second class and first class from the increase in fare and exemption of 15 commodities of mass consumption from freight increase are the positive aspects of this Budget. Introduction of

15 new trains; increase in the other notable features of this Budget.

The increase in fare and freight charges has been necessitated to meet in increase in the price of petroleum products and also to carry out expansion and modernisation programmes.

As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, the people of Tamil Nadu have been disappointed with the Budget proposals. The interest of Tamil Nadu has been ignored. Several demands have been put forward by the people of Tamil Nadu for additional allocation of funds, inclusion of projects and gauge conversion. Full justice has not been done to Tamil Nadu in Budget.

The train service between Jaipur and Madras in the only new train to Tamil Nadu. It cannot be said that this train is passing through Tamil Nadu. Immediately about one hour after entering Tamil Nadu, it reached Madras which is northern part of Tamil Nadu. So, it cannot be taken as a new train to Tamil Nadu.

Regarding Madras Rapid Transit Project, it took 13 years for completing twelve kilo metre line Beach Luz stage and the next stage of expansion is Luz-Velachery. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Railway Minister that adequate allocation has to be provided for the completion of this project at the earliest.

One of the most important grievances and demands of the people of Tamil Nadu — is the conversion of metre gauge railway line, Madras-Tambaram-Trichy-Dindigul, into broad gauge railway line.

About three years back, it the metre gauge the rail service operation was given up in this metre gauge route. This train was passing from Madras to Tirunelveli, Touching the most important towns of Tamil Nadu such as Villupuram, Trichy, Madurai and other important places. But since this facility is discontinued, there is a lot of trouble and inconvenience to the passengers and also to the common people. So this conversion meter-gauge line from Madras, Tambaram to Dindigul has to be done immediately without delay. It is the shortest distance from madras to the southern part of Tamil Nadu, Kanyakumari which is on the southern end. It touches the most important place, and towns of Tamil Nadu. So providing a broad gauge line along the previous metre gauge line is a necessity and it has to be done without any delay with adequate allocation. The distance is also shorter from Kanyakumari to Madras. Thus this route would save time and money.

There is one more metre gauge line which should be speeded up with conversion into broad gauge, i.e. from Virundhunagar to Quilon, touching Sivakasi, Rajapalayam and Srivilliputtur. This also has to be done at the earliest.

A day express from Madras to Kanyakumari via Salem and Dindigul and vice-versa was proposed but it was not put to action so far. There is a persistent demand from the passengers and others for the

operation of such a day express from Madras to Kanyakumari and from Kanyakumari to Madras.

There is a proposal for the operation of trains touching important pilgrim centres such as Tirupathy, Amritsar and Banaras. It is a welcome decision but Madurai, Ramanathapuram and Kanyakumari are left out. These places are important pilgrim centres and so they have to be included in that. As far as Rajdhani Express Trains, touching the metropolitan cities are concerned, there is daily services from Delhi-Mumbai, from Delhi to Calcutta, Delhi-Madras Rajdhani Express iron exception. So, the Rajdhani Express running between Delhi and Madras, has to be made a daily service.

Regarding Kanyakumari, this is the southern most end of our country. There is no direct railway service between Kanyakumari and the national capital, New Delhi. Kanyakumari is both a national and international tourist centre, it is a pilgrim centre too, a large number of tourists and passengers are visiting this tourist spot daily.

For promoting national integration also, it is highly essential to operate more and more express train services between Kanyakumari and other important cities of this country, namely, Delhi the national capital, Calcutta and other places.

Now there is a possibility for railway services though western side, i.e. Trivandrum side and also through Tirunelveli side. For the operation of trains from Kanyakumari to other parts of such as, Delhi and Calcutta, the distance is short through Tirunelveli and such operation can be made at the earliest. This would save time, and expenses.

Nagercoil-Mumbai Express via Madurai is now proposed to be a tri-weekly. It is a popular train and it can be made a daily service.

It is convenient for the people of Tamil Nadu to go to Bombay from Tamil Nadu. Several passengers are travelling by it. It is a very popular train and it can be made a daily service.

Now, instead of operating more and more train services from Kanyakumari, Trains already operating from Kanyakumari have been taken away. Kanoor Express which was operating from Kanyakumari previously is now shifted to Trivandrum. It to be reported from Kanyakumari. The passengers are facing a lot of difficulties without such a train. Guwahati-Trivandrum Express which was intended for Kanyakumari with the name "Vivekananda Express", reminding the memories of Swami Vivekananda, who meditated in Kanyakumari, has to be operated between Guwahati and Kanyakumari. Ahmedabad-Trivandrum Express has to be extended upto Kanyakumari. Coramandal Express can be extended upto Kanyakumari via Madurai. Kanyakumari is a terminus station. It is not adequately utilised. It is a national terminus. It has 78 acres of land

It has to be improved it is now functioning only like a way-side station. It has to be improved as a national terminus station with full facilities for operation of express trains and other trains.

There is a continuous demand for providing a coaching complex at Nagarcoil where there are 98 acres of land, water and electricity, and other infrastructural facilities are available there. Moreover, there are request from the people of the area that railway stations are not provided at Thengankuzhy and Parvathypuram in the Trivandrum-Kanyakumari railway line. These are important place where railway stations have to be provided. Eraniel should be made as a stopping station for all trains including express trains. Padmanabhapuram Palace, Indian Rare Earths factory, the Neyyoor Hospital and Monday Market are located near Eraniel.

Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister another important point and that is about the manning of the level crossing. Now, the responsibility is thrust on the local bodies and State Governments for manning the level crossing. That is not correct. The Railway Department has to man the level crossings by allocating more funds for this purpose.

Now, conflicting practices are followed in the operation of vehicles though unmanned level crossings. In certain unmanned level crossings, vehicles are permitted to pass though while in some other unmanned level crossings, vehicles are not permitted to pass through. (Interruptions) Palliady on the Trivandrum, Kanya Kumari railway line is one of the important places where an unmanned level crossing is there. But the railway authorities are not permitting the vehicles to pass through that level crossing.

Now the position is that the vehicles are not permitted to pass through that level crossing and it is not manned also. So, the vehicles as well as the passengers are put to a lot of difficulty and inconvenience. There is a overhead footpath close to the level crossing this overhead footpath, to has to be converted into an overbridge. the expenditure involved in not high. There are representations also from the common people in this regard.

Computerised reservation facility at Nagarcoil and Kanyakumari has to be provided immediately because of the importance of these station.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please conclude. It is taking quite a long time. I allowed you this much time.

SHRI N. DENNIS: I am going to conclude. Madam.

Electrification of Railway line between Ernakulam and Kanyakumari has to be done immediately. Doubling of the railway line between Kanyakumari and Trivandrum has also to be done.

Now I shall touch upon one or two general matters. Immediately after the work on a project is over, the

casual workers working in that project are relieved and they become unemployed. These casual workers have to be accommodated in some other project, instead of sending them out, and after that they have to be regularised.

The running time of trains should not be less than the running time of the bus service for the same distance.

The second class train fare should be at par with the bus fare and not more than that.

Shower-bath facilities are not provided in second class A.C. coaches. The difference that has to be provided in second class and upper class has to be narrowed down.

There is no arrangement for proper light, latrine and cleanliness in second class railway coaches. Railway stations in rural areas are kept in a bad condition. There are no bathing facilities or waiting halls and no proper reservation facilities.

When a train reaches a particular terminus, it has to be cleaned before the passenger are made to board. But the passengers are boarded even before the train is cleaned.

Lastly, I would like to say that punctuality in the running of trains has to be observed. There are delays of hours in the case of certain long distance trains and the passengers are facing a lot of difficulty and inconvenience because of this. So, that has to be corrected.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The next speaker is Shri M. Jagannath.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : See, I was given a list by the Deputy Speaker and I am trying my level best to go by that list.

*(Interruptions)*

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Mavelikara) : The names are to be called in this order, one Member from the U.F., one member from the Opposition and one Member from the Congress. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI E. AHAMED (Manjeri) : You are speaking only of U.F. and Congress. What about other parties. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : From TDP nobody has spoken as yet. So, are they not to be given a chance?

*(Interruptions)*

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Madam, please allow some Congress Members also. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : From the B.J.P. many have spoken and many will be speaking. Nobody has spoken from the Telugu Desam party. Can I not call them?

DR. GIRIJA VYAS (Udaipur) : Madam, it is not fair. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI E. AHAMED : You are asking only for the Opposition and the Congress. What about smaller parties? *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : From the Telugu Desam nobody has spoken as yet. Can they not be given time?

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Madam, he is the fifth person speaking continuously from that side. There should be rotation system in this.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Rotation is here. The question is not of States but the question is of parties. It depends on the Whips as to how they have arranged their speakers. It was upto the Whip of your party.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.C. CHACKO (Mukundapuram) : Madam it is not the point. You are not observing the rotation system.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have tried my level best to put one after the other. No Member from that Party did speak till now. So, naturally I have called one Member from that Party.

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Nobody speaks for the second time continuously.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You wait; your turn will also come.

DR. M. JAGANNATH (Nagarkurnool) : Madam, nobody participated in the debate from the Telugu Desam. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : What can I do? Both of you speak together.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI P.C. CHACKO : Madam, nobody speaks from the same side second time. Please observe rotation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let us not waste time. It is the best thing to do. We can quickly go over the list.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Our Party should get the chance. It is the question of back-benchers also.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Dr. Jagannath, you speak.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : Madam Chairperson, first of all I would like to compliment the hon. Prime Minister Shri H.D. Deve Gowda and the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Ram Vilas Paswan for presenting a balanced Budget. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : Madam, you fix up the time. *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Jagannath, wait for a minute. Shri Jain, when your people spoke there was no time limit. When somebody else speak you say there should be time limit. I will not do that. I will try my level best to accommodate all.

*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Madam, I am only asking for all; from both the sides. You give ten minutes to each.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I request all the members to be within the time. It is for you people to cooperate.

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : You give ten minutes to all - from this side and that side. Otherwise the list will not be completed. Only senior Members will speak and we will not get time.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : When you took one hour there was no objection...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : What can I do? I tried to stop Shri Dennis also.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : The rule must be the same for all.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Kurien, you come here and try.

Dr. Jagannath, please start your speech.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Madam, it is the United Front Government. The views of the United Front are coming again and again. As per the parliamentary procedure there should be some balancing. Only one-sided arguments are coming. Please allow somebody from this side.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Kurien, please take your seat. I have called him and I told the reason also.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : That reason is not fair.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may not agree. Unfortunately, I am in the Chair at the moment.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Continuously the ruling Party is getting the chance. Nobody from the Opposition and Congress is getting a chance.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Prof. Kurien, you bring a No-Confidence against the Chair. I will allow that.

*(Interruptions)*

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Madam, I have very great respect for the Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Let us not waste the time of the House. Shri Jagannath may start now.

DR. M. JAGANNATH : Madam Chairperson, I would like to compliment the hon. Prime Minister Shri H.D. Deve Gowda and the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Ram Vilas Paswan for presenting a balanced Railway Budget. I also compliment the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Ram vilas Paswan for giving importance to the most inaccessible parts of the country, that is the North Eastern States.

I also compliment him for exempting the second class passengers from the price hike and also giving concessions to the physically handicapped persons. The proposed hike for the upper class is not much as

the rich people can easily afford it. However, I would like to make an appeal to the hon. Minister. He has not increased the fare of Sleeper class in mail or express trains upto a distance of 200 kilometres only. I would request him to extend this concession upto a distance of 400 kilometres. This will go a long way in giving great relief to the poorer sections of the society who are compelled to move to long distances to earn their livelihood.

I would also like to mention that a lot of injustice has been meted out to Andhra Pradesh by not proposing any new railway line and also in the matter of budgetary allocation. Even clearance has not been given to the lines already asked for by the representatives of the local people. No new trains have been proposed from Andhra Pradesh or reaching Andhra Pradesh. Out of the six new zones proposed, Andhra Pradesh is ignored although the railway transport system in that State deserves reconsideration.

For example, though the budgetary allocations for Peddapalli-Karimnagar line was Rs 4 crore previously, this year it is Rs.2.2 only. I request the Railway Minister to increase it to Rs.25 crore so that the first phase of 35 kilometres can be finished in a time-bound programme. Then, the work on Tirupati-Katpadi line is going in a very slow manner. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to expedite this work so that it can be completed under a time-bound programme.

I am pained to point out that though the survey has already been undertaken for railway lines from Macheria to Raichur via Nagarkurnool and Gadwal, and Vikarabad to Krishna via Pargi and Kosgi, no projects have been cleared. They are the most backward areas of Andhra Pradesh where there is no adequate transport system. I, therefore, appeal to expedite the early sanctioning of the above projects. I am also requesting to give priority to the existing and sanctioned projects of Andhra Pradesh by allocating adequate funds during the current financial year and frame a time-bound programme for completing the projects already sanctioned for Andhra Pradesh.

I am also requesting the hon. Minister of Railways to start new trains, that is, the start one Rajdhani Express and one Shatabdi Express because they are not there to our Andhra Pradesh State capital. I also request the hon. Railway Minister to convert Visakhapatnam-Nizamuddin Link Express into a super fast train or introduce a new train. The hon. Minister of Railways said in his Budget speech that to encourage tourism there is a provision for five trains-Palace on Wheels and others-but only two trains are existing. I request the hon. Minister to provide one such train for South Central Railway Zone.

With this, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

DR. GIRIJA VYAS (Udaipur) : Madam, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I also want to express my anger, my agony before the Railway Minister. But first of all, I want to express my thanks to him for not hiking railway fare in the current Railway Budget presented in this House. Some hike has been made in the railway freights but it is the minimum. I also thank him for his announcement for introducing 15 new trains, for introducing 5 tourist travel trains to promote tourism and setting up a few a new Railway zones.

Throughout the country, more than 7700 trains carry more than 10 crore passengers daily and pass through 7730 Railway stations which is the symbol of unity and integrity of the country. I don't know how many of you travel by trains but I have devoted half of my life to railways and if there is any institution which can inculcate the sense of unity, integrity and communal harmony, it is the Railways which transports passengers from one place to another. The Indian Railways has a daily goods traffic of 11 lakh tonne and it is manned 16 lakh employees.

Each Railway employee, officer and the hon'ble Minister himself deserve congratulations for endeavouring for national unity.

Railways is the most important instrument of reducing regional and economic imbalance in the country. It is the cheapest and safe means of transport. There are very few chances of occurring accidents. Nobody can deny this. The incidence of accidents in Indian Railways is the lowest compared to that of the USA, Russia, Mexico and China. Therefore, Railways deserve priority even today. The hon'ble Prime Minister has repeatedly said that the budget would be poor oriented. As for budget provisions, a sum of Rs.220 55 crore has been provided for construction new tracks as against the provision of Rs.28171 Crore made in 1995-96 for gauge conversion, a sum of Rs.220 55 crore has been provided as against the provision of Rs 1174 97 crore made by our Government last year. The provision for rolling stock has been reduced from Rs 2030 56 crore to Rs 1630.56 crore. The total plan expenditure has been brought down from Rs 5573 crore to Rs 5380 crore. This creates a doubt in my mind how with this meagre amount we will achieve the height of development? How will we be able to promote communal harmony and tourism? How we will be able to carry out welfare measures and how the good traffic will be augmented?

I would plead with the hon'ble Minister not to depend only on budgetary support. The railways have been functioning for the last 150 years. They would have to tag their own resources. Yesterday, some hon'ble members made a point that railways will have to give priority to carriage of goods. The National Traffic Policy announced in 1980 provided that the Railway and Surface Transport should contribute in the ratio of 78:22

in matter of carriage of goods. But we observe that railways contribution in goods and passenger traffic is continuously declining. In 1950-51 the railways had a share of 89 per cent in the total goods traffic which has come down to a mere 45 per cent today. Only a 5 percent increase in goods traffic has been achieved by 1980. He will not be able to increase it appreciably. Goods traffic increased slightly in 1995-96 because of broad gauges which ensured timely and speedily arrival of trains. The statistics indicate a decline of 30 percent by 2000. In these circumstances, how railways will be able to lay more tracks? How will it be a profitable enterprise? I have my own doubts.

The statistics of the USA, Russia and China indicate that they accord priority to goods traffic while Japan and France have preference for passenger traffic. India is a country which is passenger oriented from output point of view and freight oriented from revenue point of view. The Railways have to consider this. I would request the hon'ble Minister to reduce the 10 percent increase in freight and direct his officers to prepare a specific policy in this regard. The goods bogies never arrive on time because of complacency of the railways. The average speed of goods trains remains 25-30 Km per hour and sometimes less. Then, how can we give priority to freights and this is the reason for increase in the incidence of Surface Transport, increase in the accident percentage. The railways will have to be more serious and pragmatic in that regard.

Madam, the hon. Minister has not made any provision for new rail- tracks. The railway lines laid since British days are in dilapidated condition for which we can only express our sorrow. If new rail lines are not laid we will not be able create employment potential which mean the proper people will to get employment to earn their livelihood. We can make the railways efficient only by reorientation of our policy. The hon. Minister should take note of two points first, the policy should be freight oriented. This will make a lot of difference. I thank him for introducing five train from tourism angle. He should not entertain inferiority complex for providing for more new trains for Bihar. But I am sorry to say that Buddhist sector has not been taken care of in his tourism oriented policy. This will cause great loss to the country.

Madam, when I was in charge of Tourism Ministry, Shri Rajiv Gandhi asked me to visit Buddhist countries and I visited those countries. They were prepared to extend financial assistance as and when necessary, of new rail tracks, for building new coaches to facilitate pilgrimage to Buddhist centers in India, provided we start train services from these places. He has proposed many new trains from tourism point of view. It is absolutely necessary to start a new trains connecting Buddhist sector so that the foreign Buddhist traffic gets direct approach to Buddhist sector.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : In which Buddhist Sector?

DR. GIRIJA VYAS : In Bihar.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : At which place in Bihar?

DR. GIRIJA VYAS : In the entire Buddhist sector of Bihar. There are five - six places there. It should be on the pattern of 'Palace-on-wheel' which covers entire Rajasthan.

He will have to introduce some more trains from budget tourism point of view. Tourist from West Bengal come to Rajasthan to see particularly the Mewar region. There are local tourist, domestic tourists. All have to be attracted. It will increase his revenue.

There is lack of sufficient air reservation facilities for foreign tourists. They cannot afford night-stay charges. The Railways will have to think for these budget tourist also so that they are not required to stay at night and can go straight to their destination and see that tourist places. Such a thinking is required.

Madam, tourism is either sector based or theme-based. The Railway cannot accord priority to theme-based tourism but can give priority to sector based tourism such as Palaces-of-India, Forests of India and Temples of India and all the sectors of the areas can be included in the tourist oriented train scheme.

Madam, I have referred Palace on wheel. We had placed a proposal before Shri Rajiv Gandhi and he immediately accepted it and sanctioned money for the creation of Palace on wheel which meets the need of both theme based tourism and sector based tourism of Rajasthan. From sector based tourism angle, he has to take into account three or four things. One is Golden Candle which covers Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. A new train should be introduced for this sector which should terminate at Agra the whole day and start for Jaipur at night. Next day it can stay at Jaipur and in the night it can return to Delhi from Jaipur. This will provide full days to the tourists to see important places in Agra and Jaipur. Second sector is Buddhist sector, which I referred to a little earlier and third can be the beaches sector. Many tourists are attracted by beautiful beaches. He can include Orissa and Madras in this beaches' sector. Train should be introduced for connecting these beaches.

Madam, senior citizens and some foreign tourists are always attracted by our places of pilgrimage. These tourists do not come to India to enjoy 5-star hotel amenities. They come here to associate themselves with our culture and heritage. He will have to include some new provisions for providing new railway link among various places of our pilgrimage. This will also help in increasing railway revenue and also integrate the scattered tourist community. This will also promote communal harmony and strengthen national unity and integration. He must give a new dimension to these proposals. He will have to create a new market for this purpose.

Madam, I would like to request the honble Minister that he should have wide deliberations with economists and tourist experts to bring dynamism in the Railways. Otherwise many difficulties will crop up in the desired development of the railways. Mr. John Naisbitts has written Megatrains. I would like to quote him about new leverage and influence.

[English]

Mr. John Naisbitts said the following words and I quote -

"In stable eras, everything has a name and everything knows its place and new players can leverage very little. But in times of great change, of great uncertainty those who have a vision of what the future could look like, have extraordinary leverage and influence?"

[Translation]

So he will have to adopt a new approach

15.00 hrs.

Now I come to my area. Many jobs are done only on papers. I would request the honble minister either to amalgamate my region with Bihar or Bihar with my region. There is yet another method we have law of adoption. He can adopt south Rajasthan. Only then can we get some benefit. In a way Bihar has been very fortunate. It has given us many Railway Ministers such as Kedar Panday, Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra, Shri George Fernandes and now Shri Paswan ji. Now Bihar is definitely. (Interruptions) The name of Shri Jagjivan Ram comes first. Bihar has given Railway Ministers and in turn they have tried to link Bihar with Railway network. It is the misfortune of Rajasthan that no Railway Minister has come from there so far. That is the reason why we are so backward even today. Just now my colleague from Kota was speaking. I would like to caution that the statistics he has given to the Minister are misleading. He was saying that 75 percent of Rajasthan has been linked with railway network which is totally wrong. In 1853 the then British Government constructed a railway line between Doli Nasirabad and Jodhpur for the movement of military. Thereafter the rulers of Udaipur, Jodhpur, Jaipur, Bikaner and Dholpur constructed their own lines. The Railways and BSF have together completed 100 km border railway line. Railways have not given us much. The southern and eastern areas of Rajasthan are still deprived of these facilities. He can verify this from the railways map. The Railway officers draw lines on the maps and indicate broad gauge, metergauge and narrow gauge lines. They have no practical experience of arduous journey of second class. The doctors counsel the heart patients by saying 'No hurry, no worry, No hurry'. What have we been given by the Railways?

Udaipur is only 740 Km. from here and it takes 22 hours to reach Udaipur.

The hon'ble Minister should travel with us in dilapidated bogies not in his special bogie. He can compare the 1st class coaches with bullock carts. Only one 11nd Class A.C. provided long ago remains out of order for all the time and we have to travel sweating. He would realise the difficulty only when he gets down at Udaipur station and bears the abuses of the passengers as a public representative. The tribals of Banswara and Dungarpur have not even seen the train. They come to Udaipur only to see a train this region is still cut off from Railway network...*(Interruptions)* I am blaming them also. The Congress also did not do anything and that is why I staged a dharna against my own Government. I did not forgive them even. What I am saying is that we have suffered because of the complacency of the officers. They misguide the Ministers. The Pink city starts in the morning and arrives at 12 midnight. That is why we counsel the heart patients 'no hurry, no worry and no curry'. Even tea is not available in between. This is the sort of new train railways have introduced.

Last year, Orrisa was connected with new railway line. Availability of Minerals in abundance was given as justification. These mineral are also found in southern region of Rajasthan. Two minerals are found in Eastern region of Rajasthan. 100 percent Zinc is in Udaipur. 100 percent raw Phosphate, 99 percent Maride, 90 percent granite and 10 percent Silver is mined from there. Now mining of Gold has also started. Besides, Lead, copper and many other minerals are found there. But the Railway Administration agrees that the area is not fully viable in the circumstances. I would say...*(Interruptions)*. I am speaking for the first time. I have never spoken on railway budget before. So I should be given more time. The construction of Rajasthan canal on eastern side of Rajasthan is going to promote colonisation and conversion of the track into broad gauge is also necessary.

I do not want to take much time. I would like only to urge that the schemes started by previous Government should be implemented. Shri Kalmadi ji had inaugurated broad gauge. The work could not progress on this line because his officers are unaware of this projects. The Palace on Wheels trains was started from Udaipur. But today Udaipur is not receiving benefit of the services of this train. Had he been in my place what would he do? No train has been introduced between Udaipur and Delhi during the last thirty years. Nor is there any direct train between Udaipur and Mumbai. The Ahmedabad-Udaipur train is hauled by steam engine and it covers 220 Km distance in 12-14 hours. The smoke emitted by the engine spoils the bedding of front 1st class bogie. I would like the Minister to travel by this train and see himself what is happening in southern area of Rajasthan. I would request him to take necessary steps for dissclisation of this train.

I would request the hon'ble Minister to introduce some new trains. A survey for new track between Udaipur and Delhi and Udaipur-Neemuch-Ballabh Nagar should be conducted. The Udaipur-Jodhpur line is very old. The rails on this line are being disseminated and taken away. Only the flag stations are there. This should be checked. The survey for Nathdwara-Toda-Raising Sahab track has been completed and the track should be laid for Ahmedabad, as I said, only diesel hauled train is required. But unless Ajmer-Udaipur-Bhilwara-Chittor are linked with broad gauge for which inauguration has also been done, the travel will continue to take us 22 hours. A promised by him the other day, the Jaipur-Chittor sector should be linked in the first phase and thereafter Chittor and Ajmer should be linked via Bhilwara so that we have the facility of visiting Udaipur and Mumbai. What sins have we committed? We give you the maximum finance, provide maximum minerals, attract maximum number of tourist and provide maximum support and even then if he continues to treat us in this way, how long will we tolerate it? That is why I had said whether I should start my speech by thanking him or by expressing my anger. I had started my speech by thanking him and now I conclude with anger and a end with this couplet.

Woh jo vade se mukar jayega

Asmanon se utar jayega

Jakhm Chehre ka hansega us par

Aina dekhkar woh dar jayega.

What I mean to say is if he does not honour his promise, he will lower his prestige, lose his respect in our eyes. He must consider the points made by me seriously and sympathetically.

SHRI RAMBAHADUR SINGH (Maharajganj) :  
Madam, during his visit to his constituency in Bihar after assuming the charge of the Ministry of Railways, the hon'ble Minister made many announcements. One of the announcement was that the areas so far neglected will get full attention and their aspirations would be fulfilled. I am happy to note that he has tried to incorporate most of his announcements in the Railway Budget which he has presented to this House. But I would like to point out certain disparities which go against his announcements and his concept. May be, these things conform to the mentality of the big officers of the Ministry. I am not saying this by way of complaints. I want to simply request him to keep our suggestions in mind and give positive response while replying to the debate. In North Bihar Maharajganj, which is my Parliamentary constituency, has a special place among the trade centres. Various goods particularly gur, jute and jute articles are exported to every corner of the country and the Britishers connected Maharajganj with railway line keeping these things in view. Unfortunately, in 1981-82 Maharajganj was delinked from the railway network during the gauge conversion between Barabanki and Katihar. When the local people launched

agitation then they were that Maharajganj will not be deprived of railway facility permanently. It would be relinked with railway network after completion of the job of gauge conversion. But it has not been linked with railway line so far. The net result is that the area has lost its economic viability by 25-30 percent.

In 1989-90 the Railway Ministry approved linking of not only of Maharajganj but Mushrak also. Survey was conducted but we don't know the result thereof. I have received the information that the Government, the Ministry say that this line is not viable. The honourable Minister has said many a times that they would not take into account the viability or non viability for railway links. He would work above these lines, because sometimes, a rail line which appears to be uneconomical otherwise becomes viable. But where is the justice when we have been deprived of the old railway facility we were enjoying since British Raj. I would request him not to allow these considerations to come in the way of restoring our old facility.

Secondly, in my parliamentary constituency we have a famous place of pilgrimage Mahendranath, which is visited throughout the year by the pilgrims from Uttar Pradesh, Central Bihar, North Bihar and Nepal. Some king of Nepal had constructed a temple there after the Sunoli Treaty and therefore, the people of Nepal have a special reverence for this temple. The Mahendranath halt was constructed from where the people used to board and alight the trains. But the halt was suddenly withdrawn and the trains did not stop there. The people were surprised to see this. As per the information I have received, the individual who was allotted the halt for running on contract basis suddenly gave in writing that the halt was not viable and he would not run it. I know, it is financially viable. The halt should be restored, the people of the area and particularly the pilgrims of other areas are encountering great difficulty.

There was yet another facility which has been withdrawn. Booking of goods used to be done at Daramuda station. This booking facilities was withdrawn and attached to other station. The traders are greatly inconvenienced. I would request that this facility should be restored. Otherwise, we will take it that justice is not being done to us and he is double facet.

Sir, I would like to strike a note of caution. There is Rivalganj-Ghat railway station in Chapra-Manjhi section under Varanasi Division. It is in existence since British rule. Now I understand this station is proposed to be closed down. This arbitrariness on the part of the rulers should stop. This Station should not be closed. It will create lot of difficulties for the people.

There has been a long standing demand for a new railway line between Muzaffarnagar and Gorakhpur of its gauge conversion. The work is lying incomplete. It should be completed. The progress of construction of the road-cum-railway bridge on the Gandak is very slow. I would request him to expedite its completion. I will

facilitate operation of trains on Muzaffarpur-Gorakhpur section.

The Ministry of Railways frequently write to local authorities not permit trains to carry passengers more than that authorised capacity. But these orders are not implemented. The Vaishali train which runs between Delhi and Barauni is an example. It has a passenger capacity of 1200, but double number is issued tickets and another thousands and kept on waiting list. The passengers are compelled to buy the ticket against this list. There are orders that a T.T.E. must bring two penalty cases to augment railway revenue. Therefore, the T.T.E.s pounced open Vaishali passengers like the vultures pounce on a deadbody. They extort money from them mercilessly but the passenger do not get sitting space even in toilets. It is obvious that more tickets are booked deliberately to earn money. I would request the hon. Minister to free passengers from this harassment. This can be done by introducing one or two additional trains, one hour before or one hour after the Vaishali train steams off, between Barauni and Delhi, one of which should run via Varanasi.

I would not term the Budget either the Budget for dalits or the Budget for fuidals. I do not want to involve myself in this controversy. I would most humbly request that, if possible, two more general bogies from Barauni and two from Gorakhpur may be added to the Vaishali train. The passengers are stashed in this train like salt-bags. If 200-300 passengers travel in a bogies with the sanctioned capacity of 72 passengers, naturally one will feel suffocated. People travel while standing on one foot. The passengers travelling by this train are mostly from the poorer section of the society. Those who travel with reservation have some relief but there is not much difference between the two. The passengers of this train are mostly from Dalit Category and sons it depends on his mercy whether he increase bogies or not. It is said that the platform is small and cannot accommodate more bogies. If this is so, as I have already said, he can introduce a second train between Delhi and Chapra via Varanasi which can start one hour before or one hour after. This will reduce over crowding to some extent and provide relief to the people.

While concluding with these words I would request him as I have mentioned earlier to restore our old facilities.

SHRI BASANT SINGH KHALSA (Ropar) : Madam Chairperson, I am grateful to you for giving an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. I have heard the Budget speech very carefully and also studied it. I feel this Budget will not pinch the common man, instead provide some concessions. The affluent people can pay, can bear the burden and it is Government's obligation to grants some concession to the poor. He has promised in his Budget Speech introduction of many new trains and construction of new lines and I am sure Government will fulfil its commitment. I have been sent

here as a representative by the people of Punjab and I must place before you the requirements of the people of Punjab.

Punjab is a border state and different types of movements are launched there. I will not go into the details as to who are behind these movements but Punjab is a Frontier state whose soldiers fight for the country, defend the country against any foreign aggression. Besides, Punjab supplies food grains to the whole country. But we do not get special trains for movement of 60-70 percent foodgrains contributed by us to the common pool. The foodgrains rot in the trains in the Railway Stations and are rendered unfit for human consumption. Therefore, as request Shri Paswanji to arrange for providing special trains for Punjab for the movement for food grains.

Then, he has not given any new line to us. Punjab has not got any new railway line since Independence except from Beas to Govindwal Sahib for which survey has been conducted and some expenditure incurred by previous Government. The hon'ble Minister says that all States will be connected with their capitals by railways. I don't know whether Chandigarh will be given to Punjab or not, this is a separate issue, but efforts are being made to provide Chambu bypass near Rajpura. But I would say that this is not going to benefit our state because Punjab's territorial jurisdiction commences from beyond Rajpura. This will not provide any benefit to Amritsar, Bhatinda, Gurdaspur and Kapurthala. The Chambu bypass is being provided to divert the traffic rush of Ambala. No effort has been made to connect bypass with the headquarters. The hon'ble Minister had convened a meeting, which we also attended, in which an unanimous opinion was expressed that there should be a direct train between Ludhiana and Chandigarh. He had agreed to the proposal and we are thankful to him. But his Budget Speech does not assure the Punjab People and, therefore, I want a categorical assurance from him now and here.

Madam, Golden Temple is the holiest religious place for us. Paswanji and our Prime Minister had paid a visit to the Golden Temple. They also visited the Durgiana Temple. We have the oldest demand for running an Express train after the name of the Golden Temple. The Frontier Mail operators from Amritsar which is a frontier city. I would request him to name this frontier mail as the Golden Temple Express. Peoples' sentiment particularly the sentiments of Sikh community are attached to the Golden Temple. We have raised this demand in this House many times but no attention has been paid so far. I hope Paswanji will surely accept this demand and run an Express train by the name of Amritsar Golden Temple Express.

SHRI S P JAISWAL (Varansani) : The Minister is eager to say something. But he will express his views when he replies the debate.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please sit down. The Minister is aware of it.

SHRI BASANT SINGH KHALSA : Madam, I would like to make a point about the progress of the country and particularly of Punjab. The Railways have two Coach factories—one is at Kapurthala and other is at Patiala. I would like that these factories should be diversified so as to create greater employment potential for the local people. More railway Wagons should be built there. This will benefit Punjab and the country as a whole.

Our State is predominantly an agricultural state but it always faces Power Shortages because the Thermal Power Plant do not get adequate Coal Supply. Yesterday, hon'ble Prime Minister and the Coal Minister assured us of adequate coal supply but the fact is that these thermal Power Plants face frequent closure. I would like to seek an assurance from the hon'ble Railway Minister that there will be no shortage of wagons for loading coal. He must take care of the supply of coal.

There is lack of adequate security in the Railways because of which the people are worried very much. I would not like to give an example but these things pinch the people of Punjab. The Leader of Opposition Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee has also said that in the 1984 riots in the country the unformed people were involved. We joined defence forces for defending our country. It has been discussed here in this House, how where and what happened during these riots. But it is the obligation of the railways to provide security to the Armed forces travelling by the trains. Smt. Rajinder Kaur Bulara has been a member of this House. Her relative Lt. Satyendra Singh Gill who was returning to his duties after availing leave on 1st Nov. 1984 was killed in the running train on the way and he was cremated by the forces in Mathura. He was the only son of his parents but the Government of this Country has not paid any compensation to the members of his family till now. Similar incidents also took place in 1994-95. One Shri Minhas, SP, Paramilitary services belonging to Jalandhar was travelling alongwith his family members. They were attacked in the running train. That is why I say that he must ensure safety of railway passengers.

In my area i.e. Sarhird, Mandi Govindgarh, Khanna, Muranda and Dhuri are the towns where large amount of the iron is produced. I have my headquarters at Khanna. Thereafter comes Murnda and then Kurali and Dhuri. All these towns fall in my constituency. They are situated on both sides of Railway line. People come to Chandigarh from there. We had been demanding for a long time, construction of an overbridge. I would request the hon'ble Minister to provide an overbridge there.

15.33 hrs.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair)

There is no train between Bhatinda and Dhuri. Nor any train stops there. There is also no train between

Dhuri and Barnala station from 500 hours to 2000 hours. Having regard to the religious sentiments of the people of my constituency I would request that a train should be run from Dhuri to Haridwar. A new train is required for Dhuri. This is my last request. With these words I thank the Minister and also the hon'ble Deputy Speaker who included my name in the list. I am grateful to him.

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : The list of Speaker is very long. That is why I had requested earlier that if you allow each Member to take half an hour, how will others get time... (Interruptions) I will therefore suggest you should give ten or fifteen minutes to each Member.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : In this context, I would like to say that time has been allotted according to the strength of each Party. If one Member takes note of it you take less time, the other Members of your Party will also get a chance to speak.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Sir, what I am saying is that the members who speak first take their own time and when other members speak you put a limit.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I always try to see that the hon'ble member speaks within the time allotted to him. I ring bell. I make request to the hon'ble Members to finish their speech within the allotted time.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : If you want to restrict, you should put restriction from the first Member. All the hon'ble Members are equal here. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The Chair will try to see that the hon'ble members to finish their speech within the time limit.

[English]

I will be more strict then... (Interruptions)

SHRI SATYA PAL JAIN : Sir, it should be applicable to all, whether it is this side or that side, otherwise we would not be able to speak.

[English]

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN (Quilon) : Respected Deputy-Speaker Sir, on behalf of the RSP, I support the Railway Budget for 1996-97 which the hon. Minister of Railways has presented before the House. I also extend my heartiest congratulations to the Railway Ministry especially the Railway Minister, Paswanji for presenting the people's Budget in the midst of a crisis. According to me, this is the common man's Budget based on the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker Sir, we are aware that the second session of the Eleventh Lok Sabha started with an uproar, noise, anger and protests because of the price rise of petroleum products. But after the Railway Budget was presented before this House and

subsequently, the General Budget was presented before the House, the House is fully flooded with relief and also happiness because there was no hike in the rates as we had expected, when compared to the increase of charges of diesel and other petroleum products. Hence, I once again congratulate the Railway Minister for having presented a Budget which does not include much levy and enhancement of rates over the poor people. The basic policy of the United Front Government is reflected in the Budget because the five per cent increase in the railway fare in the affecting the poorer sections and the middle class of the society. There is no excess charge in ordinary trains. It is also seen that the season ticket holders are exempted from the rate hike and ten per cent has been included for the freight traffic in which essential commodities and for articles are exempted from the hike in the rate. In such a case, this is a real Budget, this is a possible Budget in the present political situation and this Budget should be appreciated beyond all barriers.

I am coming to the portions of the Budget. My first point is the Indian Railway itself. The Indian Railways should make its reforms in order to keep pace with the infra-structural needs of the country. In the year 1994-95, revenue earning freight traffic was 365 million tonnes and in the year 1995-96, it has been enhanced to 390 million tonnes which means an increase of 25 million tonnes between 1994-95 and 1995-96. In the year 1996-97 also, we are expecting an increase of 20 million tonnes.

Regarding passenger traffic, in 1995-96, 123 million passengers commuted and in 1996-97, we are expecting a four per cent increase in the case of passengers. So the main question to be discussed in the House is whether the Indian Railways is able to meet the requirements and needs of the society of India and whether we are having such an infrastructure. That has to be considered first and foremost.

My suggestion which I would like to highlight before this House is, first and topmost priority should be given to capacity augmentation. It should be given because of two reasons. Firstly, the share of the Indian Railways in the total traffic would amount to the saving of fuel and also lowering the price hike. That will be the resulting effect to the growth rate of the traffic in the case of Railways.

I would also highlight some of the statistical data. It has been noticed that the share of the Railways in the total traffic during 1951-91 and also during the last four years has been coming down. That is the share of the Indian Railways, the rail traffic, when compared to the total traffic, has been coming down for the last so many years.

It is limited because of capacity constraint. My submission before this House is that utmost priority should be given to capacity augmentation. The Indian Railways in the Eighth Five Year Plan proposes to

have an increase of five per cent growth in freight traffic which has come down to 0.7 per cent. That is the statistical data. This is due to the priority that has been given to the aspect of gauge conversion. If this present situation continues and if this is the trend which is to be followed, according to experts on the subject who very specifically say that the Indian Railways share of freight traffic would come down to 31 per cent by the year 2001 AD. So, considering all these aspects, my submission before this House, when the Railway Budget is being discussed, is that freight and passenger traffic should be given utmost importance and while giving importance to this aspect, a growth rate of five per cent per year has to be kept in view. Then we could maintain 40 per cent of the total traffic which we are availing now.

Now, I would like to say something regarding the Railway Budget vis-a-vis the State of Kerala about which many of my learned friends have already made certain points. With due respect I would like to submit that for the last four decades the State of Kerala has been neglected and discriminated against by various Governments at the Centre except for two or three years.

I am very happy to say that the Ministry of Railways, in our meeting with him, openly declared that he was very fond of Kerala and he was very eager to hear the problems that he was very fond of Kerala. During the last year, that is, 1995-96 the total budgetary allocation for the State of Kerala was Rs.47 crore. This year it has been increased to Rs.127 crore. I do admit that there has been an increase in the allocation but I would also like to submit that this amount is not sufficient to meet the enormous requirements of the State of Kerala. The passenger traffic in Kerala is too much. The population of the State is also too much. So, considering all these aspects this allocation has to be increased.

Sir, on going through the proposals for starting various new trains, I find that there is a proposal to start 15 new trains during this year. But none of these trains are touching even the borders of Kerala. After the presentation of the Budget we had a meeting with the hon. Railway Minister. We have made certain proposals before the Minister and he also has accepted those proposals informally and assured that two new fast trains would be started for the State of Kerala. We hope that those assurances would be translated into reality and he would declare that it would be fulfilled.

Sir, I would like to mention that when the Budget is being prepared and various things are being allocated, it has to be kept in view that all the States are given their due. I am very proud to say that the Indian Railways play a key role in national integration. The preference that has been accorded to the north-eastern region has been accepted by the whole House. The problems of the neglected areas of India should be appreciated and adequately compensated.

Sir, regarding the frequencies of various trains, I would like to submit that there has been a proposal for the enhancement of frequencies for ten trains. But none of these trains for which this enhancement has been proposed belongs to the State of Kerala. There has been no proposal for any new line in our State. I would like to point out that Rs.316 crore had been allocated to the Southern Railway but still there is no proposal for a new line in Kerala.

Sir, regarding gauge conversion I would like to submit that the only metre gauge line - from Quilon to Shingotta - which is now existing in Kerala has to be converted into broad gauge. That aspect has also been ensured by the hon. Railway Minister. Then I would like to say something about doubling of the tracks. The main problem of the State has been infrastructural facilities. We are demanding new trains but there is no capacity to hold all these things. The doubling of tracks in the Mangalore - Shoranur section and the Trivandrum - Quilon section is necessary. But a very meagre amount has been allocated for this purpose. We want an enhancement of the amount for doubling of these tracks.

Sir, I would also like to say something about the coaches and rakes that are already in Kerala. Old, useless and outdated coaches and rakes are given to our State. As a result of that frequent accidents are taking place. So, this aspect of providing new coaches and modernisation of the entire system has to be looked into.

Many new projects have also been announced by the Railway Minister but there is no new project for the State of Kerala. There is not even a single railway project in the State of Kerala. So, I would like to request the hon. Railway Minister to kindly look into this matter also. Earlier, our Chief Minister, Shri E.K. Nayanar had met the hon. Minister of Railways and openly declared that the State Government would provide all the necessary inputs for having a Railway Coach Factory at Palaghat or in any part of our State in Kerala.

Now I would like to comment on the safety aspect of the Railway. I would cite an example before this House of Peruman rail tragedy. An accident took place in Quilon near Parinadu in the year 1988 in which ten bogies of the Island Express fell into river Ashtaudi. In that accident, 185 people died, an inquiry was conducted by the Railway Safety Commissioner, who was actually the chief accused in it, and a report was submitted. Ten bogies of a train fell into the river, 165 persons died, and more than 200 persons were seriously injured whereas after conducting the inquiry the reason for the accident was claimed to be a tornad. That is an insult to the people of Kerala and to the people who had died in the accident. I hope that the 185 souls are now in the air and they are seeing it. Not a single shred of paper had fallen, there was no frown, there was no wind, and there was no disturbance of any sort. It is a densely populated area where tiled houses were there and

thatched houses were there and no damage was caused to any of them. But the report said that the tragedy occurred due to a tornado. It occurred because of a defect in the railway track, but the report was negative about it.

Subsequently an Expert Committee was set up with six members to inquire into the matter. The Expert Committee had also filed a report and that report very specifically stated that reasons for the accident were multifarious, and they cannot be properly identified, and so, no specific reasons could be stated. The matter is still pending. No action was taken against anybody in the Peruman rail tragedy case. No action was taken to find out as to what was the real cause of the accident. The local people very clearly say that this is due to a defect in the rails. Eight years have already elapsed and the eighth anniversary of the tragedy had also been held on the 8th of this month.

My submission is, proper safety measures should be taken. If there is any lapse on the part of the railway authorities, or on the part of the engineering authorities, stringent action should be taken because they are playing with the lives of the common people, they are playing with the lives of the ordinary people who travel in trains. That is a suggestion which I submit before this House.

I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister of Railways some other problems of my constituency. I come from a constituency where doubling of lines has already been taken up. Places have been acquired for doubling rail lines. A number of roads which fall in the way of the railway line have been permanently closed, and the manned-railway gates were permanently closed. There are various points where foot-overbridges are essential. I can cite a number of examples, but I shall give a list of them in writing and request that they be considered.

15.40 hrs.

(Prof. Rita Verma *in the Chair*)

Another main point which I would like to refer to is the passenger amenities to which no attention is being paid. When a new project for expansion is taken up amenities of the local people and passengers amenities should also be taken into consideration which is not being done now. This is a serious issue and it has to be considered very seriously.

I submit before the hon. Railway Minister that there is a loco-shed in Quilon which is of no use. That needs to be converted into a wagon repair and maintenance depot. These are the submissions which I would like to make before the hon. Minister.

I, on behalf of my Party and myself, once again congratulate the Railway Budget which has not proposed any hike in passenger fares. The 10 per cent hike in freight rates, when compared to the hike in diesel and

petrol prices, is reasonable. Considering the prevailing circumstances, the freight hike is reasonable. It does not affect the poor people and middle class people and so, I support his Budget. While congratulating the hon. Minister of Railways, I once again would like to submit before him through this House that the assurances given to the Members of Parliament in the Conference be fulfilled. We are happy that all the Members of Parliament had been invited to conference. We met the Chairman, Railway Board and the other authorities. We placed our grievances before them which have been heard and examined by the hon. Minister of Railways. He had made certain assurances regarding doubling of lines, and new trains.

We hope that dreams of the people of Kerala and the assurances made before us would be fulfilled by the hon. Minister of Railways. As we know, the editorials in the Malayalam Press have gone to the extent of saying that this is treatment meted out to Kerala is due to the incapability of Members of Parliament from Kerala. I, therefore, urge that this matter has to be looked into urgently. I hope that the assurances will be fulfilled. I, once again, congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways and support this Railway Budget.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA (Guwahati) :  
Madam Chairman, I thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to take part in the General Discussion on the Railway Budget. I also make a fervent appeal that I being a new Member and this being my first Budget speech, therefore I request the Chair to give me some amount of time because for the last 50 years nearly, the share of speeches delivered by the hon. Members from Assam is quite limited.

At the very outset, I affirm my congratulations to the hon. Minister of Railways because he has presented a pro-people, a pro-poor and a pro-backward areas Railway Budget and the Budget is definitely having its new phase. It is not a stereotyped Budget and it is a departure from the past. Therefore, I congratulate, on my own and on behalf of my party the hon. Minister of Railways and for that of course, the hon. Prime Minister. This congratulation is not without reasons. This is for the first time probably in the parliamentary history that the North-Eastern Region has been given some importance by the hon. Prime Minister and also by the hon. Minister of Railways. It is considered to be a great achievement by the people of the North-Eastern Region.

I would also like to mention in connection with this Budget that the department of Railways is no less than a very big industry. In industry there is an input and desired output. Whenever the input is desired to that extent the output also should be desired. What we feel is that the desired output is yet to make a mark. Why is it so? I shall try to corroborate with the following few statements.

The Railway is the common man's vehicle and it must find its route of mobility, but that mobility has not taken place to the extent of the people's desire. Therefore, I emphasise that the hon. Minister of Railways should take this point into consideration while preparing the future Railway Budgets to improve the performance of the Railways. Now, there are 16 lakh employees in the Railways. It is not a small achievement. It is a very big achievement. It has carried 330 million tonnes of freight traffic. Even then, the Railways are yet to cover many fronts. The hon. Minister of Railways is very dynamic and he has presented a pragmatic Budget, to begin with, and I believe that under his stewardship, these fronts will be covered. What are these fronts? The Railways are yet to be made competitive. Road transport even today is carrying each bigger freight traffic than the Railways.

Therefore, I desire that the Railways must be made competitive if they have to survive as a very big industry. The industry of quality.

One very important point that should also be looked into is that the railways carry nearly 4838 million passengers a year but only one person out of 100 passengers move in a train per day. So, this has yet to go a long way in making the Railways a common man's vehicle. We must also bear in mind that two-wheeled vehicles can carry three or four or sometimes even ten passengers, the four-wheeled vehicles can carry only seven or eight or even twenty passengers. But this is a multi-wheeled vehicle and it must be made more attractive to the people and must be made more compatible with the progress. Wheel is the symbol of progress.

Now, approximately, only 160 kilometres can be added in length annually as far as railway-lines are concerned. It is because from 1853 onwards, up to 1988 viz. in 47 years, the Britishers built 44 000 kilometres, in the next nearly 50 years, the railways added 10,000 kilometres more and from 1947 for nearly 50 years, the Railways could add only 8 000 kilometres. This not a very big achievement. We desire that the rate of progress or the rate of adding this kilometrage per annum should be increased. It should not be 160 kilometres per year but it should be above 300 kilometres to 400 kilometres a year. Otherwise, we shall not be able to catch the other progressive nations of the world. To make it a common man's vehicle, we emphasise on increasing the level of these railway-lines. Unfortunately time is the casualty at the hands of the Railway workers. This point has been taken note of by many of my Parliamentary member friends. Therefore, I also request that time must never be a casualty and negligences and non-performance of duty by the Railway should be taken care of.

Now let me come to the point regarding neglect of North-Eastern Region and more particularly to Assam. This has been reflected in the speeches of many of my

friends coming from different parts of the country. My feeling is that it is the Railway. Shri Paswan, who, for the first time, has given emphasis that the North-Eastern Region also be included in the Railway map of India. Normally, the Railways terminate at the beginning of the North-Eastern zone.

16.00 hrs.

In 1966, one broad gauge line was open from Raninagar to Bongaigaon and it took more than 20 years to reach Guwahati which is 160 kilometres away from Bongaigaon. If the rate of progress of having Railway lines towards the North-Eastern States by rail heads. Therefore, my request to the hon. Minister of Railways is that the pace of progress should be enhanced for the North-Eastern region so that it can be covered in the Railway Map of the country.

I am very sorry that bureaucrat and technocrat say that the Railway line in the North-Eastern region is non-viable. This word non-viable should be removed from the Railway Budget. It must never be called non-viable when we are considered to be the viable people, worthy and honoured citizens of this country. We should not be shown pity, we should be shown respect because all types of commodities can come from Assam to the rest of the country. If commodities from Assam can find route to the rest of the country then the rail also must find its routes to the North-Eastern region. There cannot be non-viability. It must be made viable and the jugglery of this word, incorporated in the various languages of the bureaucrat, should be removed. Otherwise, the North-Eastern people will feel that they are not only discriminated against but they are being neglected also and that great disparities exist between the North-Eastern people and the rest of the country. These disparities should be removed as far as practicable so that we feel at home.

MR CHAIRMAN : Pleased be brief.

DR. PRABIN CHANDRA SARMA : The hon. Minister of Railways is very much fond for us but I am very sorry to say that not a single inch of new rail line has been included in the Railway Budget for Assam this year. It has been emphasised that only the old proposals would be materialised during this year. I request the hon. Minister of Railways that the new proposals be also brought in and the original proposals that have been mooted should be given a shape so that this way, the conversion, mostly the gauge conversion, takes place and is completed during this financial year.

While taking into consideration and extension of railway lines to the North-Eastern States, I request the hon. Minister of Railways that due emphasis be given for modernisation of Guwahati Railway Station because all rail lines in the North-Eastern region shall have to cross through Guwahati. Guwahati is not a junction. If the rail line is to go from Guwahati to Shillong and if Guwahati is to be made a junction then all facilities are

to be provided there. So the Railway station and the Railway Headquarters should be accommodated in such a manner that Guwahati can bear the brunt of all the lines to be taken to North-Eastern States.

While taking the railway routes to the North-Eastern States, I request the hon. Minister that the bridge of Bogibeel be constructed at the earliest to reduce the distance of not less than 300 kilometers. The Rangia Railway division, which the hon. Minister had promised to take up, be also constructed this year, with its jurisdiction from Shree Rampur, the western most part of Assam. The gauge conversion from Rangia to Jonai be also incorporated in the Budget. The only route of three kilometres from Kamakhya Railway Station to Pandu Store Depot costing only Rs.3 crore be also include in the year's Budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can discuss these things with the hon. Minister of Railways after you finish your speech.

MR. PROBEN CHANDRA SARMA : There is no railway project to give some incentives to the people of Assam.

I request the hon. Railway Minister of consider meeting up of a coach building factory or such other business organisations from which the local people can find some job. This matter should be also be kindly considered.

The frequency of the Rajdhani Express from Delhi to Guwahati should be increased from three days a week to six days a week and the new railway line touching the major towns of Nagaoun, Jorhat, Sibeagar and Dibrugarh should be considered in the coming plan. Silghat to Suparmukh M.G. line be reopened.

The Railways have to introduce more fast local trains. The facilities in the trains should be improved. This is not only a clamour for most of the Members but also this is also a clamour for all of us. The Railways should be made accident-free. The staff facilities should be improved.

I, once again, pay my compliments to the hon. Railway Minister of giving Assam at least some semblance of honour. It is for this reason I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister and also Chairman for giving some more time to express my viewpoints.

With these words, I conclude my speech, and support this railways budget.

[Translation]

SHRI KARIA MUNDA (Khunti) : Madam, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. We can speak on the merits and demerits and for and against this Budget. But I will not like to go into these details and want to come straight to main point.

Bihar is a backward region and the area from which I come is the most backward area and this area has

been totally neglected in the Railway Budget. No new Rail line has been given. No fast train has been provided and no track has been doubled. You will be surprised to know that 90 percent of the revenue received from Bihar is contributed by this area. In spite of this, no attention has been paid to this area and it has been neglected for the last 50 years.

Shri Ram Vilas ji has a great concern for Dalit society and we had hoped that he will make some pondering about this area. But our hopes have been belied... (Interruptions) 40 percent of the total minerals available in India are produced in my region, we have no expectations from the state Government because there has been no Government at all. But the Government of India also neglected this region. I agree that tremendous central investment has been made there. Bokaro, HEC, TATA company and major coalaries are located there. Therefore they don't feel the need of allocating more funds to this region. This has been the attitude of these who have been running the Government in Delhi. The organisation set up there employ not only the people of Bihar but they provide employment to the people of the country and also to foreign nationals. The Bihari people work as labourers, as agriculture workers. No concern has been felt for the area which gives so much of revenue and employment to the country. Much can be said in this regard but I draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister to certain points.

The hon'ble minister had invited us for talks in which we pointed out that earlier two trains, one between Delhi and Chandigarh and other between Tatanagar and Amritsar used to operate but one train has been withdrawn and only one train operates now which has the speed of a bullock cart.

This train takes 30-40 hours to arrive Delhi from Ranchi. There is no question of its running on time. It is a common feature that it gets late by 4 to 6 hours. That is why we had demanded that a direct fast train from Ranchi where many central undertakings such as CCL, BCCL are located, to Delhi and I would request him to consider this demand sympathetically.

Madam, my second submission is that there have been talks during last 20-22 years for doubling and widening of Lohdarga-Ranchi section for meter gauge. But no concrete action has been taken so far. I would request the hon'ble Railway Minister to double the track between Ranchi and Lohdarga and it should be connected with Tori, Chandova. This will reduce the travel by 70 kms in respect of all the trains passing through this section.

Madam, there is yet another railway line namely Ranchi-Girdih line via Hazaribagh which has been surveyed many times. An estimate of Rs 353 crore for this was prepared in 1990-91. But we do not know where the Railway department has kept this file during these years. We can connect three district headquarters namely Ranchi, Girdih, Hazaribagh. The people of

Chota Nagpur will be greatly inconvenienced by this line for going to the Patna bench of Bihar Highcourt. I will request him to take initiative for the construction of Ranchi to Giridih via Hazaribagh Line of which survey had been conducted and estimated outlay sanctioned but file had been misplaced.

Madam, the Ranchi -Rourkola and Madras - Bokaro train is in a dilapidated condition. Even the 1st class compartments do not have windows. The toilets are full of filth and you won't get water beyond Ranchi. This the condition of 1st class Coach. There is an other train between Ranchi and Bokaro and Ranchi and Madras. I would therefore request the Minister to improve the condition of this train and also attach one bogie from Ranchi for Mumbai which can be attached to other train at Rourkela. This will facilitate direct travel to Mumbai.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : To which train?

SHRI KARIA MUNDA : To Bokaro-Madras train.

Chaipasa is the district head quarters of old Singh bhoom district but Chaipasa has no direct rail link to Tatanagar. The local people are required to visit Tatanagar day and night and therefore a local train should be introduced upto Tata Nagar to provide facilities to daily commuters. Tatas run a Mines train and the commuters can board it only off and on. If Tatanagar, Jamshedpur and Chaipasa are connected by a local train it will be a great relief to the people.

Madam, the Barwari - Chirmiri and Porwa track was surveyed and earthwork had been completed even during British time. At some place, the work of laying rails has been started but the British Government stopped the work because of Independence movement. If this linked track is constructed it will connect Korba and Tori Chandwa which is a Bauxite belt. This area is inhabited by 90 percent tribals and this project can provide employment to them. I would request the hon'ble Minister to construct a Railway track from Barwadih to Chirmiri.

A workshop was set up at Sini during British period in the name of apprenticeship and production which is though still functioning, is almost dead for want of funds and laxity of management. The workshop does welding job of bridges built over rivers and manufactures many other items. This workshop is on the verge of closure. This is the only workshop in Chota Nagpur where apprenticeship training is imparted and welding job is done. So I request that funds should be provided for this workshop and for its expansion so that job opportunities are provided to the local populace. The condition of various Railway Stations of Bihar is most pitiable while there has been talks of providing model stations for the last many years. The stations of Bihar are not usable. The bathrooms are stinking. I would request that management for cleaning should be made.

The Railway retiring rooms are always found booked. Sometimes they are found occupied by Railway

officers and sometimes by others putting the Rail passengers to great difficulties. They are meant for the passengers and they should get the benefit of these facilities. There are many other preints on which other hon'ble members have already spoken and I would not like to repeat them. We have been provided very small railway line in Chota Nagpur on which work is in progress. But we are not satisfied with this. Bihar feeds the entire country, provides employment and amenities but we remain deprived of all this...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : You must congratulate him for this.

SHRI KARIA MUNDA : This is the tragedgy that the track is 10m in length Nobody will given thanks for this. He should be concerned about it. There is feasibility of constructing the track. We are not forcing him. If it is included in Government's list and if Government has the will and the Minister has the political will, then this work can be completed.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : As I had said yesteday, I would like to know the views of the hon'ble members about the renovations and proper maintenance of the Railway Stations which are in bad shape because we cannot improve the situation by appointing any number of departmental Committees. I would seek Members' suggestions as to what should I do in the matter. I have already said that I am prepared to constitute a Committee under the Chairmanship of the hon'ble member. I am prepared to make experiments in the areas where zonal offices or TRM of the Railway Board do not work properly. But I definitely want there must proper maintenance and cleanliness. This is most important. About his second point regarding bad conditions of trains running in tribal areas, I have visited not South Bihar but other tribal belts of the country and I admit that their maintenance is very poor. Most condemned trains are operated in tribal areas. I have given clear instructions to the Railway Board that I will myself conduct a surprise check in the trains being run in tribal areas. We have both good and bad bogies. They should be distributed in equal proportions. It has to be ensured that a particular area is not allotted the entire continent of dilapidated bogies. I myself will monitor this work. This complaint is genuine.

SHRI KARIA MUNDA : Sometime back he undertook 'Padyatra' of Chota Nagpur and at that time the people of Koladhira village met him and he had assured the villagers that he would try to open a Railway Station at their village. A survey has been conducted but his Ministry has not issued orders for opening the station and that is why it is not being constructed.

Singhboom is predominantly a vegetable growing area and the vegetables get perished because of non availability of buses and trucks and the vegetable growers do not get as much profit as they should get. If a railway line is provided there it will greatly facilitate these people. A local train should be run between

Tatanagar and Chhalbasa to facilitate smooth movement of passengers. This is a petty work and does not involve big outlay. He had given them assurance in this regard. It will be a favour to us if sanction is communicated by the Railway Ministry in this regard.

I hope he will consider sympathetically 8-9 demands I have made and solve our problems.

[English]

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Mavelikara) : Thank you Madam. I rise to support the Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister, of course, with certain ifs and buts. In his speech, he has said that within a short span of time, he could not contact all the Members of Parliament to ascertain their views. Therefore, he could not include in the budget proposals many of the important proposals which otherwise should have been included. But he has said that he would consider those proposals lines and schemes at the time of Supplementary Demands. I take it as a commitment because it is a commitment given on the floor or the House. Therefore, even though we have certain grievances, we cannot but support his Budget because we believe that he will fulfil the commitments made to this House.

In his speech, the Railway Minister has narrated the development of the Railways from the year 1863 till date. He has also mentioned the vast development that has taken place over the years. I would like to quote from his speech. He had said :

"In the last fifteen years, it has increased its output very fast and has made special contribution in the country's economic progress. In 1950-51, the Railways used to transport 1284 million passengers which, in 1995-96, has increased to 4309 million - that means a four-fold increase"

Similarly, in the case of transportation of revenue earning freight traffic, the figure has increased from 73 million tonne in 1950-51 to 390 million tonnes in 1995-96. It is a five-fold or five hundred per cent. Therefore, to say that over the last 50 years not much has been done or not much progress is there is to turn a deaf ear to the realities and factual figures.

Madam, the hon. Minister has presented a very satisfactory picture of the performance of the Railways in the last year. I would like to quote from his own speech. He said :

"In 1995-96, there was record increase in freight leading and 390 million tonnes of revenue earning freight traffic was loaded. Increase of 25 million tonnes in one year's loading is better than any increase in the previous years."

That is about the freight traffic. Again, with regard to financial performance, he says and I quote :

"The financial performance of the Indian

Railways in 1995-96 was unprecedented and set new standards. The records established in the growth of goods and passenger traffic had a favourable impact on the financial well-being of the Indian Railways. Railways not only provided Rs. 1,361 crore as dividend to the General Revenues but have also increased their excess from Rs. 2,318 crores as per Revised Estimates, to an actual 'excess' of Rs.2,577 crore."

Therefore, the United Front Government should not fight shy of acknowledging this commendable performance of the Railways in the last year of the previous Government. Why do I mention it? At least some of the speakers tried to present a picture as if nothing has been done. I admit that a lot more have to be done. Much more has to be done. That is not for denying the facts. That is not for not accepting what has been achieved. So, let us acknowledge and accept the achievement.

Madam, I congratulate the Minister of Railways for his approach specially to the backward and undeveloped areas. He has interestingly narrated the Conundrum of hen and egg. Of course, I have a lot of respect for the technocrate and experts and I am not criticising them. However, always these technocrate and experts take a technical view that a railway line in a backward area, for that matter in any area, has to be viable. What is meant by viability? Viability has to be understood in a different way. I fully endorse the hon. Minister's view that first Railways have to go to these far-flung, remote and backward areas where the poor and the weaker sections, the tribals all live. Once the Railways go there, there will be development and only after that that the industry will go there. (Interruptions)

Yes, that is in our manifesto. All of us agree. Only after the Railways go there that the industry will come and development will be there and only after that development that the Railways will get more traffic and more earnings. Therefore, it is not necessary to find a solution to the conundrum whether the hen comes first or the egg comes first. The solution is there. We should take the Railways to these undeveloped and backward areas and that is the responsibility of the Railways as well as the Government to find funds, allocate them for this purpose.

If the Railways cannot find the funds from internal resources, it is for the Government to supplement them by budgetary allocations. (Interruptions)

Please do not interrupt me. I am supporting you and you are interrupting me. (Interruptions)

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : You should speak about mobilisation of resources.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : He is raising a question as to how to mobilise resources. That is exactly what I want to say here. But having accepted this good philosophy,

the budget allocations are far from satisfactory because of the shortage of funds. I find that in the year 1995-96 the annual plan outlay was Rs. 7,500 crore and for the year 1996-97 the outlay is Rs. 8,130 crore. There is an increase of eight per cent...*(Interruptions)*.

Today the inflation is 4.5 per cent. It is less than five per cent. But after the presentation of the Budget, the Ministry of Finance itself has admitted that the inflation will go up to seven per cent within six months because of the Budget proposal and also the unusual pre-Budget hike in the price of petroleum products. It is expected that the Budget proposal and the pre-Budget hike in the prices of petroleum products will together contribute to an inflation at least seven per cent.

Of course, I am happy that the hon. Minister has not touched the common man and the poorer sections, but I am unhappy that he has not helped the Karalities. I will come to that. But in spite of that because of the 10 per cent freight increase on industrial raw materials - I know that the consumer items, items which are consumed by common man have been exempted the cost of production will increase, exports will become less competitive and this will have an impact on the economy. That will also lead to inflation. So, coupled with this, I would say that this eight per cent increase in the Budget allocation will be nullified by at least eight per cent rise in inflation that is going to be there. I am not criticising; I am only placing the facts. In effect, there is no increase in the outlay in absolute terms.

SHRI ANIL BASU : This is his first speech.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Yes, it is my maiden speech in this Lok Sabha.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You are a senior Member, Prof. Kurien.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Madam, that is what I said.

SHRI ANIL BASU : Earlier he was in the periphery of Government position. Now, he is not there.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Therefore, what I am presenting is that for the development of backward areas or undeveloped areas, the funds allocated are not adequate and the Railways should try for more funds from internal resources or the Railways should not hesitate to give some of the lines to private agencies because peoples want railway facilities whether the many is spent by the Government or the private agencies. So, it is better to have a railway so that people may benefit from it. Therefore, my suggestion is that if you are not above to have more funds from internal resources, then please try other avenues like privatisation.

BOLT scheme is still in the initial stage and you are expecting to earn Rs.500 crore from that. Please try to augment that or simply go in for privatisation. This Government has also adopted liberalisation and, therefore, go in for privatisation so that people are given

this facility. If you can find out resources and do it yourself, then I will be very happy. What I am saying is that because of dogmatic approach or because of some theoretical we should not deny this facility to the people of this country.

Now, I am coming to the question of safety. I cannot but say something about that. Yes, there is a clamour for introducing more trains. There is also a lot of demand for introducing fast trains, and also for increasing the speed of the trains. But we should be very careful about this. It should not be at the risk of safety. Sometimes, I feel that the safety aspect is ignored, and this should not happen, further, you have mentioned about the decline in the number of accidents. In 1995-96, according to you, 390 accidents took place, whereas in 1985-86, 717 accidents took place. I would like to know about the total number of accidents that took place in the last five years. Is there a continuous decline, then I can appreciate that and I can understand that some serious action has been taken or some serious consideration is there. If it is not so, this decline means nothing. Thirdly, every accident is not the same. What is the number of casualties, that is not mentioned by you. I would like to know about the number of casualties, every year, due to accidents because sometimes, major accidents take place.

My friend from Kerala mentioned about one accident. That accident - Pariman Accident — took place in 1988 near Quilon. My God! in the report, they say that the whole train comprising ten bogies fell into the lake because of the tornado. It is a shame on that railway officer who wrote such a report when not even a single leaf, by the side of the lake, had moved. Nothing of that kind had happened. Now, the credibility of all reports has to be doubted. Well, that is the position. Further, a large number of reports are there on accidents, and there are recommendations on those reports. What action has been taken? Many of the accidents occurred due to human failure. Are you taking any action against the persons responsible for those accidents? Actually, no proper action has been taken. Therefore, I want the Ministry to pay more attention to this.

Now, because of lack of time, I will say only a few things about Kerala. Madam, you should be sympathetic towards our State. So far as the railway services are concerned, it is the most backward State. For one million population in India, we have more than 60 kilometres of railway line, but in respect of Kerala, it is only one-third of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Kurien, you have spoken for more than fifteen minutes. Please conclude now.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : The State of Keala has been neglected because there is no provision for a new line or a new train. Of course, the members of Parliament were called in a mutiny and were assured that two new trains would be introduced. I thank the hon. Minister of Railways for that and I hope he will fulfil that commitment. There is also no increase in the frequency

of the trains. I would like the hon. Minister of Railways to consider it further.

Now, I will come to the questions of doubling. I want to make a special request to the hon. Minister of Railways. Kerala is the most beautiful State like Kashmir. Madam, you should visit Kerala and see it for yourself. The point is, doubling of the railway line is very important from North to South because Kerala has a lengthy coast line.

You accepted doubling in principle. What we want is conventional doubling. At least in some areas — I do not want to use any harsh word — the doubling is a misnomer because two parallel line 100 Km apart are considered as double line.

You have committed to doubling from North to South shoranur to Mangalore. That should be completed in time.

You have committed to doubling of the line from Quilon to Trivandrum. That should be completed in time.

The line from Ernakulam to Kayamkulam via Kottayam is 45 year old. The traffic density is so high that no additional train can run on it. Therefore, that line should be doubled. Along with that, I suggest the doubling of Alleppey line also. This should be given top priority. That is the second suggestion I would like to make.

[Translation]

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL (Varanasi) : May I know the procedure followed in the allocation of time for speaking in the House?

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Member is not yielding. Please sit down.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN : Then coming to my constituency, there is not even a single kilometre of electrified line in my State in Kerala. I want the hon. Minister to consider this.

There is Kayamkulam junction in my constituency. It is not computerised. I want computerisation of that junction.

There are certain new lines to be laid like the Kottayam - Sabarimalai line. Shri Ramesh Chennithala has recommended it.

I request that Thekajhy - Pattanamtitta line, the Adoor-Kayamkulam line and the Angamani-Punalur line should be taken up.

I want you to consider my request and allot more funds so that the work can be started this year only.

I support the Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL : Madam, I would like to draw your attention to the Ruling of the hon'ble deputy speaker

regarding allotment of time to each hon'ble member here. The hon'ble Railway Minister has given very little time for discussion on the Railway Budget and the hon'ble Members will not be able to highlight the problems of their respective constituencies within this time. In the circumstances, I would like you to fix time limit and the hon'ble members must finish their speech within the given time limit.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is a very good suggestion. I would appeal to all the hon'ble members to be brief in their speech. They must observe the time limit of 10 minutes and put their points within this time. However the discussion will continue the whole night and all the Members would get equal opportunity to speak.

\*SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : Madam Chairperson, I will speak in Bengali. I am supporting the Railway Budget presented here. I would be speaking about my experiences and what I observed in a few words while supporting the Budget.

Firstly, this is not first ever Railway Budget. It has been 50 years that the country got independence and many budgets were presented, discussions held, various talks delivered. If we count all these things, the Railways would have reached all the corners of the country by now. People would have got all the facilities. But discussions are held, proposals are made, amendments are made but the situation does not change - this is the fact. What I would like to say is that to whatever the Government have the honesty will power, if the bureaucrats do not have that same honesty and the will to implement and also if the workers are not inspired, this honesty of the Government will not work. This my experience, what I have seen for long. Here things are being talked about on various points.

I think is the most neglected person is the hawker on the trains. All over the country, wherever there is railways, many educated and uneducated young men and women are working as hawkers. In this profession, they are earning by self-employment. At many places there have been incidents of atrocities and humiliation against the hawkers. Not only I but the Hawkers' Union who have an All India Organisations, have been repeatedly asking that they should be given licences at low rates so that they can go on with their profession. And the vendors sell the food of the Railways contractors which else also sold at their stalls - the general people of the country of whom 70% are below the poverty line, they cannot afford the foods at the rate of Rs 11-19 or 25 whereas passengers can get food from the hawkers at Rs. 3 or 4. For this have been repeatedly asking for giving licence to the hawkers. The Government should given attention to this matter.

Secondly I would like to say to the Hon'ble Railway Minister (Interruptions)

\* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali

The second point which I want to talk about - I had questioned the former Railway Minister also what is the rate of accidents per year in the last three years in the country, the number of people injured and how many died? He provided with the data. It was announced that a sum of Rs.1 lakh or about Rs.1 lakh or about Rs.40,000 or so will be given as compensation. When I asked, how many people got the money, he said none got it because they did not claim. So, how will the people claim for it? This the duty of the Railway Ministry. Railway Ministry should enquire and contact the claimants of the dead people. The Government of this independent country have a duty to the people. The whole country got the information that these people were compensated. I want that the Government should ensure that those claims which are pending be settled and their dependent be given jobs. The Government should take full responsibility and adopt measures about which I have told several times and I would like to say it again.

The name and address of the passengers will be mentioned if they travel in reserved coaches but in case of ordinary ticket holders it is not possible to indicate their names. If there is an accident and someone dies, how will it be proved that he was that person? If he has travelled without reservation. So, there should be some kind of reservation for every passenger. I am not saying that the extra fares would be imposed for such kind of ticket. It should be free of charge. We have to safeguard the interest of every person travel by train in the event of only accident, death or injury adequate compensation would be paid by the Government. There have been accidents and at frequent intervals accidents are going on. Another thing I would like to say - we have a great organisation which has a short supply of wagons. Coal India is not able to supply coal to power plants for the wants of wagons. Steel plants, cement plants are not getting coal. Even vegetables which are essential are not accot be transported from one place to another. We have to depend solely on road transports and the trucks or other vehicles. But, we do not have trains. We do not have adequate number of wagons on the one hand the people are suffering due to power crisis and the power plants are not getting coal for wants of wagons they are being deprived of cement, the workmen are not getting salaries, plants are being closed. Now the Government is changed and a new United Front Government is in power who have a Common Minimum Programme. They should ensure that the wagon factories whether these belong to private sector or public sector, get the orders for wagons. The Minister should guarantee this. The Chitteranjan Locomotive is located in my area which produces engines of 5000 horse-power, they are ready to produce engines of 6000 horse-power. They have positive steps in that direction. I have seen that they produced 135 engines at a time. There were many dharnas and strikes and later it was fixed for 150. When we can produce engines in our own country, what is the necessity to

bring engines from foreign countries? We should rather increase the number of existing factories. The engines - whether these are diesel or coal or electric - should be made by us only. The coaches should be made in our country itself, whatever is possible should be produced in the country. But we are resorting to import countries and our factories are declared sick, the workers are being retrenched in the name of absenteeism or for some other reason they are losing their jobs. Thousands of workers lose their jobs which is not justified. The Government should, therefore, pay attention to it.

Further I would like to say...please give me some more time. I do not speak very frequently...

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please keep in mind the time-limit...

SHRI HARADHAN RAY : I should be given some more time, please...Yes, Bihar and Bengal are neighbouring states, so I expect some consideration. I will come to Dhanbad. What I would like to say before you is about the Railway property which someone said ae sold out. I know there are many unemployed youths in one of my areas, Sitarampur. They are demanding that the Railway properties abandoned be given to them on hire basis for making huts, so that they can earn something. They built some huts which were demolished by our D.R.M. I have nothing talk much of the D.R.M., Asansol. The Hon'ble Minister should listen to my complaints about the D.R.M.

[Translation]

SHRI HARADHAN ROY (Asansol) : The present D.R.M. of Asansol considers himself bigger than the minister and the Railway Board. I would like to tell you the way of his functioning. (Interruptions)

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : What is his name?

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : I will not name him. You are unnecessarily provoking me. His job is to beat, to loot and to send the people to jails with the help of CRPF four times a year. He snatches money and other belongings of passengers. This is his job.

His second job is to select Railway contractors. An enquiry should be conducted how and why the some person gets maximum contracts. Thirdly, I have written him three letters but he has not cared to reply to even one letter. This shows how collous, how powerful and how unjust he is. He called me liar, he called all of us liar. Four-five years ago, I had asked him to reply to my suggestions point-wise but he had not replied even one point. I have asked about Majumdar, about Goswami but no reply was given. One Shri Sarkar died of cancer. No arrangements were made for him. I have already given to the Minister in writing all my three complaints.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You can meet the hon'ble Minister and explain to him your complaints in detail.

SHRI HARADHAN RAY : Please give me some more time. Give me at least two minutes more. The said

person has connections with traders. The Railway Administration should ensure payment of requisite compensation to the passengers whose luggage is lost, who are looted, whose belongings have been stolen and should see how much amount of compensation is actually paid to such passengers. Asansol office is not the only Railway office. There are other Railway offices also. A strict watch must be kept in regard to payment of compensation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI HARADHAN ROY : On 25th instant, we have called the meeting of MPs from West Bengal and submitted our demands in writing. I hope the hon'ble Minister will consider those demands. I am a Member of Parliament and have to come to Delhi. But there is no train from Delhi to Raniganj and I have to go to Madhupur or Dhanbad to catch a train. At Raniganj, besides one of our Ministers from west Bengal and three MLAs, they have to go to Calcutta for visiting Raniganj. A stoppage has been provided at Madhopur for Rajdhani Express which goes via Patna. But no stoppage has been given at Asansol. A stoppage must be provided at Asansol. We have been demanding this for a long time but no attention was paid, a stoppage for Kalka Express and Poorva Express should be provided at Raniganj. I had given a suggestion for operating a Shatabdi train—that suggestion should be considered. The suggestions given by me earlier should also be considered. He does not take care of our suggestions. The DRM does not consider us human beings.

Earlier I used to be invited in informal meetings of the Railways. But that practice has been stopped. I request I should be called in such meetings. The informal meetings should be convened four times in a year and a progress report about the jobs completed or not completed should be placed before this committee. The DRM is a servant and not the master. He should function with this attitude.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore) : Madam, when we discuss Railway Budget, we confine our discussions to the kilometrage length of railway links and construction of new rail tracks. We have a vast nation about which we have deliberations here

In today's scenario, emphasis is laid only on four points. First, we talk of globalisation, there of economic liberalisation. Different schools of thought have different view about the mode of achieving economic upliftment of the country. Third is environment and fourth, which is discussed here very often, is of providing maximum facilities to the poorest of the poor. When we talk of these four-five point, we have to see that they are fully connected with the railway network. We can compare the railway network with blood vessels which are spread all over our body, which supply energy to all parts of the body and if one small vessel gets blocked, the entire body is affected. Same is the position of Railway

projects. While discussing Railway Budget we will have to consider it in its entire city. Talking of the number of lines laid and how the Budget estimates have been manipulated, will not help.

The hike in prices of diesel and petrol has a bearing on the environment because it not only makes to surface transport dearer but also affects our environment. If Railways are strengthened we can augment transportation by 2 to 4 times of the transportation done by surface transport. This is beneficial from environment point of view and also from cost angle and petrol and diesel angles.

The more the Railway lines the more the development. We have discussed how to expand industrialisation and how to provide employment to the poor of the poorest. We also talk of globalisation, economic liberalisation and economic progress and development. But this will be possible only when we are able to produce maximum by reducing the production cost to the minimum. The Railways have a very important role in achieving this goal. Therefore, it will depend on the effectiveness of the Railway network. But I don't think that this Railway Budget fulfils these aspirations, these requirements.

17.00 hrs.

The hon'ble Railway Minister had little time to comprehend the Railway Projects. It should be discussed in the Subjects committee. We talk of inflation. Only 8 percent increase has been made in the annual plan. This not going to help. If we throw a glance on the Railway Budget we see that expenditure has been reduced under every head and if I start giving figures, you will have to ring the bell 2-3 times.

Madam, this year, lower provision has been included for gauge conversion and doubling of tracks. As he has himself said, we have not been able to expand the Railway network by 1/3 or even 1/10 during the last fifty years of what the Britishers done during the period of 50 years. The things have not changed this year. He has provided a sum of Rs 220 crore with which one will not be able to provide more than 160 km track. Infact, the Railway Budget does to reflect the announcements made by him. He must look into this seriously

Madam, I must agree that he has given importance to the Railway workers and this is good because we are expecting the report of the fifth pay commission for the implementation of which he will head Rs 1000 crore. I am not opposing this. I welcome it. Maybe 5 to 10 percent Railway Employees might not be doing their duties properly but they are working efficiently. They have the capability to achieve the targets. But he will have to think in terms of providing incentives to them. If we go back to 1995-96 there had been no Railway Minister because the incumbent remained ill or removed unceremoniously. Then the Railway Portfolio was with our previous Prime Minister who could not take

decisions, who thought not taking decision also amounts to decision taking. This was his greatest decision.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE (Ramtek) : A lot of work was done last year.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : Madam, I am coming to that. You listen to me. The work was not done because of him. You please listen to me. Everybody has his own estimation.

17.03 hrs.

(Mr. Deputy Speaker *in the Chair*)

Our Minister of State wanted to implement the schemes. But he had his own limitations. However the Minister was not efficient, efficient I mean he never took decisions. How seriously his announcements were taken. I will explain by quoting one example.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, once he visited my constituency, Indore, and made three announcements, which were not very important. One was about introducing direct train from Indore, which is an industrial town to Mumbai. There was only one train namely Avantika Express. The traders demanded extension of it from Bandra to Mumbai Central. It was said that the demand would be accepted in two months that too on the condition that the train will not go to Mumbai Central it will be halted at Bandra on return journey from Dadar. This was announced by the Railway Minister himself and the same has not been implemented so far and they say we are doing this and we are doing that.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Railway Minister had also announced that a sum of Rs 30 lakh will be made available for a foot bridge at Indore. This sum was sanctioned. But nobody knows where the money was gone. He had also talked of a Railway Master Plan for Indore. That is also seen nowhere. These small announcements were made by the Minister of State.

Sir, I would like to put a different point. The Railways have earned a profit of Rs 2318 crore after the installation of his Government. Our Railways have never gone into loss. I welcome the provision included for the Railway employees. They are doing good job. This is my experience. An E M U was introduced between Matunga Workshop and Indore. The employees worked hard and showed me every bogies. They promised to run it like a metro Railway. The condition of Indore-Bhopal Industry express is very bad. Now I would, therefore, like to deal with the maintenance aspect. I don't mean to say that Railway workers are not doing good job. He has already given a certificate to them. It is a different thing, how right or wrong it is. Our trains stops at various places to pick up the engine driver. This shows how popular our employees are. But I am sorry to say that our Railways are not engaging the attention of our Finance Minister. The Railways have contributed a dividend of Rs 1587 crore to the general revenue. But the Railways were provided the Budgetary

support of only Rs.1259 crore. In fact Railways have got nothing. It will be good if I don't talk of planning Commission. I don't know how the people sitting there think. The Budgetary support has come down to 19 percent from 75 percent under the successive Planning commissions. They never think that Railways are the backbone of economic growth of the country. He has said that it is not viable. But everything is not done on the consideration of viability. We have to see how to connect one part of the country with other and how to achieve progress. But I don't know how the people sitting in air-conditions rooms of planning commission think about it. The Railways have sought an outlay of Rs. 4500 crore. But only Rs.2700 crore was sanctioned. Proper attention is not paid even to such a vital department a paltry sum of Rs.1 crore has been provided for Udhampur line against the requirement of Rs.777 crore or Rs.870 crore. The Prime Minister made the announcement two days after the presentation of Railway Budget. This is a conglomeration of 13 parties. Naturally, their attitude will be different. I therefore, will not go into it. But I may surprised to know that on the one hand, the Planning Commission said that there are no funds for this line and on the other, a sudden announcement was made. Then where from this amount of Rs.200 crore will be mobilised? It was a sudden decision although it is good for Kashmir.

Sir, he has said that the more the movement of goods the more will be the income. But if we look at the percentage, it is also going down. It was 89 per cent in 1950 which has declined to 35 per cent now. Why this is so? The condition of coaches is not good. The hon'ble minister should pay greater attention to this aspect. He has given a big certificate to our Perambur and Kapurthala Coach factories which have perhaps produced 500 or 900 coaches...

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Not to Kapurthala.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : This is good. Their installed production capacity is of 1000 or 1100 Coaches. But actual production has been much less. The causes have to be looked into. We must increase the production by meeting their requirements. This will benefit the entire Railway. Same is the case with Chitrangan electric locomotive where 140 to 150 engines were being produced earlier. Now they will produce only 135 engines. The 5000 H.P. electric Loco can haul maximum number of coaches with high speed. The speedy movement will provide space for other trains and we will succeed in expanding our transport system which will in turn, increase our revenue. The condition of goods trains is so bad that people do not want to book these bogies for their goods. He has perhaps and seen their condition. I once travelled a little distance by sitting in guard's room. It was horrible. How can we ignore the development and progress of our country? consignees do not get covered coaches and they hesitate in booking such bogies. The Guard room was so dilapidated that he cautioned me not to put my feet

down on the floor because it could cave in. Same was the condition of the break van. It had no power meter. He was pulling it by sheer estimation. If he wants that railway revenue should increase, which must increase, than he will have to take care of all these things.

He has paid attention to the problems of North-Eastern Region. It is good. But he has not paid adequate attention to goods trains. We need operation of profitable good trains in mineral bearing area. Leave apart Madhya Pradesh, he has left the decision about Delhi-Rajasa line to the proposed cell. This is a very suitable track for Beladila mine. A Chief Mining Advisory council is functioning at Dhanbad which has a mines safety cell under it. About 532 coal mines are under the supervision of Chief Advisor. He looks after the safety of these mines. The hon. Minister comes from North Bihar. He should not confine himself to that area only because of his election from there. He must have a wider approach.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I do not confine myself to North Bihar only. I go to South Bihar also. I had entered the mines alone when I was labour Minister ...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. RITA VERMA (Dhanbad) : Mr. Minister, you travel by goods trains.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : It is good that he travels those places, but he should travel with his eyes and ears open, with his clean heart. I say that at least 532 coal mines are located there and they function under the supervision of the Chief Mining Advisory Council. More than 60 percent trains both goods and passenger pass through these mines which include some of the most important trains. He may be aware that fire has been raging there and some mines have developed cracks. But there is nobody to see whether the railway track is safe, whether there is any possibility of accidents because the post of the Chief Mines Advisor has been lying vacant for the last 5-6 years and other 16 posts are lying unfilled, but no attention has gone to this aspect. I am given to understand that the Railway Board proposes to abolish this Council. There has been an accident on the Grant Chord Line which has been operating since 1958 and more accidents can take place in future. The difficulty with us is that we do not attach much importance to the Experts Report. Perhaps we have developed this type of attitude. We generally do not take note of whatever scientists say. That is the reason we have to look to the World Bank. The World Bank has conducted a Survey and found the entire area unsafe. So, we have to pay greater attention to this area from safety point of view because important trains like Rajdhani Express pass through these mines.

I have said in the very beginning that the blood vessels are as important for our body as the Railways for the country. If we think of a healthy body we have to take care of all parts of the body and have to concentrate particularly on our heart. Otherwise, we cannot keep our body healthy. I come from a State is the

heart of the country. It is known as Madhya Pradesh. One has to travel rail or by surface transport crushing our State while going to any parts of the country. I have used the word 'Crushing' because nobody has so far thought about any part of this State. It is our misfortune. Just now Girija ji was complaining that Rajasthan remained backward because it has not given any Railway Minister. But our tragedy is that we did not get anything inspite of giving Railway Ministers. The first Railway Minister come from our state. When Shri Madhav Rao Scindia assumed the charge of railway Ministry he tried to do something for us. But our difficulty is that we have Ratlam district on the West, Rajgarh on the North and the district of our Chief Minister on the East. If he considers connecting these districts, he will have to change thrice the Railway tracks.

We have many prominent towns like Gwalior, Raipur, Satna, Reava, Indore and Ujjain and they are not inter linked properly. There is only one train between Jabalpur and Calcutta and same is the situation of our City. There is one train between Indore and Howrah. I will request the hon'ble Minister to give some attention to this line ...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : I am paying my attention towards her. She has raised a serious matter that fire is raging in Dhanbad mines. This is also telecast over TV many times. I have asked my officers to enquire into the matter. I am trying to find out the area which had become unsafe over which trains operate. This can create some serious situation on any day. She raised a serious matter and I immediately ordered an-enquiry. I am finding out what has happened.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : I thank him for listening to me. Otherwise also, we have great expectations from him. We had expectations from him when he used to sit on Opposition benches because he used to raise the matters in a very aggressive manner. So, we have expectations from him from the beginning. We are not criticising him today because he has got too little time to prepare the Budget. Indore is a town where many people from Bihar live. They have been demanding that the Indore-Howrah trains which operates only thrice a week, should be operated four days a week and run via Patna. It will benefit them greatly. Presently, it runs via Nagpur and is in a very bad condition. There is no catering arrangement, nor any arrangement for drinking water.

There is yet another train which runs between Indore and Bilaspur. On the one hand, there is Palace on Wheel and on the other the Indore Bilaspur train is not even 'Huts on wheel'. Its condition is very pitiable. He has created a division in Jabalpur. It is good. But the demand of Bilaspur division is outstanding for a long time. Bilaspur division gives the Railways considerable revenue. Besides, it has heavy traffic load cement, steel and coal. There is no other such big state which has only one Railway Division. Mumbai has two Divisions.

My demand is that Divisions should be created according to demand and Indore should be considered for this purpose. When I read the Railway Budget I was disappointed. We have been assured of gauge conversions but the Budget does not find any mention of gauge conversion of Khanda - Mhow - Ratlam track for which survey of one side has been completed and other side's survey is proposed. Indore is a big industrial town. But no attention has gone to it. The work of gauge conversion towards Ajmer is in progress. I hope the rest of the work will also be taken up. The Minakshi Express which use to go upto Hyderabad is now terminating at Pune because of gauge conversion. Similarly, when gauge conversion takes places towards Ajmer then there will be no link for meter gauge from Jaipur. Therefore, I demand that the Jaipur Kota train should be extended upto Indore, so that Indore does not get disconnected.

There was a proposal to link Indore with Pune. The proposal had been accepted by Kalmadiji. The link between Indore and Maharashtra is necessary from industrial point of view. While concluding my speech, I would say that his Budget does not make any mention of the facilities to be given to Indore. The engine of Indore-Nijamuddin train is changed twice. It is first changed at Ujjain because this track has not electrified from Ujjain it goes to Nagada from which it changes its direction. The engine is changed there again. Therefore there is urgent need for electrification of Indore Ujjain tack. Then the maintenance of trains is very important.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please conclude.

SHRI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : If a little attention is paid towards the maintenance of trains, their capacity can be augmented. I will give an example. The A.C. of Pune-Jaipur train went out of order and I was told that a small part is required to be changed and that part is available in Jaipur and the A.C. will start working only then. This is the position of maintenance.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please sit down now. You have taken too much time.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : If he wants to improve things, if he wants to augment freight, if he wants to increase revenue then he will have to pay greater attention to goods trains. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : Sir, I have got a suggestion to make. The number of speakers in the waiting list from all parties is heavy. In the meeting of the BAC the other day, we decided that if necessary we will continue the debate, may be, even beyond 12 O'clock. But the trend till now is that each Member is speaking for half-and-hour. I shall request you to decide that if each speaks only for five to ten minutes, or a maximum of ten minutes, we will be able to

accommodate everybody. That should be the way we should proceed...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Here after, let agree that each Member would speak for a maximum of ten minutes only. I shall request members to please conclude between five to ten minutes.

[Translation]

PROF. OMPAL SINGH 'Nidar' (Jalesar) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the previous speakers spoke for half an hour each and now they say you should reduce the time limit. They should not have given the suggestion for reducing the time. It is they who have set up this practice...*(Interruptions)* It appears that only a few people have monopolised the intellect...*(Interruptions)*.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN : I hope you will not classify us as A class and B class Members. Every Member has the right to get equal time to speak.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I would like to make a suggestion. Please listen. I shall ring the bell after 8 minutes and second bell after 9th minute and third bell at 10th minute and you will have to sit down.

*(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN (Cooch Behar) : Sir, we may represent a small party but we are here. You should allow us also.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please listen to me.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Why are you doing like this with us?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : It is upto you. If you agree I will adopt it.

*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will abide by the decision of the House. Please tell me what should I do.

*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : This will be applicable to all, whatever decision is taken will apply to all.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE (Ramtek) : Sir, there are many Members who want to speak. I therefore, submit you should give ten minutes to each hon'ble Member...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR (Begu Sarai) : Sir, I will suggest that you should tell the Member at the beginning of the Speech that he will get so much time because you cannot give ten minutes to all the Members. Therefore each member should be told for how much time he has to speak. If you don't do this it will be a difficult preposition. You cannot give equal time to all the members. Sir, I have also ten year

experience of Legislation although I have come here for the first time... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK (Balangir) : Sir, if you want to restrict the time limit then it should be after completion of my Speech.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Shri Pattanayak, you will have maximum ten minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Sir, I shall be grateful if you give me fifteen minutes.

Sir, yesterday all the members of Parliament of Orissa staged a dharna in front of Parliament House and the hon'ble Minister had invited us for talks during lunch time. I thank the hon'ble minister for this.

There have been a demand for setting up a Railway Zonal office in Orissa which has been opened but sufficient funds have not been allocated for the ongoing projects of Orissa.

Sir, the Bolangir-Phulbani Section covers many backward districts like Bolangir, Phulbani, Kalahandi, Khurda, Nayagarh etc. and if this Bolangir-Phulbani railway track is completed it will provide great relief to these backward districts. Our former Prime Minister Shri Narashima Rao had visited these areas. Phulbani has not even an inch of railway track. The ongoing Bolangir-Khurda railway project is estimated to cost Rs 350 crore and against this amount a sum of only Rs. One crore has been provided. However, the hon'ble Minister agreed to provide Rs. 500 crore after we staged a dharna for which I am grateful to him. But if a provision of Rs 5 crore is made annually the project is not going to be completed even in 100 years.

Sir I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister for taking care of backward areas and he has taken the best steps but it will be better if he is able to make more provision for backward areas. The Sambalpur Talcher railway line, Laljhingar-Junagar railway line, Richabambi-Kasi line, Jangpura-Bansbani Line Projects are pending and they are not likely to be completed in 40-50 years. I would therefore request that more funds should be allocated for these projects. The Valtiar-Raipur double line which passes through my constituency has not been completed so far. The Jharsukela-Titlagarh train, Madras-Bokaro Express, Hirakud Express, Neelanchal Express and all the Passenger trains pass through this track but it has not been doubled. I have been demanding this since my previous term.

The Sambalpur division covers maximum railway lines in Bolangir area but no facility is available on this double line. The small stations have not been renovated. The passenger train is packed with forest wood and no space is left for sitting. There is no drinking water facility

The railway like advises us to complaint to Press because they are helpless and if we complain to the Press they say it is the internal matter of the Railways/ They should exercise proper check. No passenger dares to board this train.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : Who loads the wood? Whether it is public or forest officers?

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : It is public. The entire forest is cleared and environment spoiled. There is no room for the passengers to sit. It is now for him to see how he is going to check all this.

There is Howrah-Titlagarh train which was introduced by our Orissa Minister Shri Bhakra Charan Das. He started it upto Sambalpur. All the trains of the area terminate at Sambalpur. A new train from Delhi was introduced last year and it also terminates at Sambalpur. This train has been started in the name of Orissa but it stops only at Jharsuka, Biranagar and Delpark and then terminates at Sambalpur. If this train is extended upto Koraput it can cover Bolangir, Kalahandi, Raigarh and Koraput districts. The infrastructural preparations at Koraput has been completed and if new infrastructure is required it will need 2-3 crores. If this amount is provided it would be desirable to extend this train. The Howrah-Sambleswari-Titlagarh train should also be extended. The Rajdhani Express for Bhubneshwar runs once a week. Yesterday he told us that there was shortage of coaches. This problem can be solved by entrusting the coach production job to private enterprises. One of my friends was complaining that Bokaro-Madras Express which passes through Bihar and Orissa has no A.C. compartment. I have been watching this train since my school days and it is true that it has no windows, no door for bathroom, not to speak of A.C. Coach. The people say that big persons get A.C. fitted for their comfort, are we not worth an A.C.? An A.C. compartment must be attached to this train.

An A.C. coach is provided in Howrah-Sambleswari Express which goes upto Titlagarh but the A.C. attached to it is detached at Sambalpur. It should go beyond Sambalpur. A Recruitment Board has been constituted in Sambalpur Division. But no appointments have been made so far from Bholangir and other places. There is politics in matter of holding interview for jobs. When the aspirants return after giving interview they ask us about the result. They complaint that none has qualified in the interview and there is nobody to listen to us. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMENDRA KUMAR : Jobs should be provided for every Constituency and should have reservation for us.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : There should be reservation or quota for each constituency. (Interruptions) If a suitable candidate is available in the Division where vacancies are available then the local people should be given preference. (Interruptions)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : The Divisional Railway belong to the entire nation and it will not be proper to give job on the basis of Division. But I will see that they are not inconvenienced in any way. Recently we made recruitments in the RPF. It was earlier to be done at Patna but I ordered it should be done both at Patna and Ranchi... *(Interruptions)* If a recruitment takes places in Calcutta and Patna and Guwahati than the incumbent will be required to work in every State whether it is Manipur, Meghalaya or Imphal, Agartala or Sikkim. Suppose we recruit 100 to 500 personnel how would once be able to function in Delhi if he has not even seen the State Headquarters. I have issued similar orders for Rajasthan also. We are making recruitments in the remote areas of every state and it will be done till Consultative committees are formed. If all my friends from Orissa desire to have recruitment centres at places other than Bhubneshwar, I will have no objection in this. The local people will take examinations and those who qualify will recruited. But it will not be possible for the Railways to provide reservations at divisional level we are making efforts to provide opportunity to more people particularly in tribal areas to be able to recruit more tribal people. I don't accept the contention that that candidates are not available, qualified candidates are to available. Infact, they don't get opportunities and the Railway is providing this opportunity and I myself am very active in this regard. We are going to recruit nearly 10,000 RPF personnal and we propose to conduct recruitment in every zone and we will see that maximum number of tribal, scheduled castes or poor people take part in it. I assure him.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : I thank him. He has taken a very good step... *(Interruptions)*.

SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi) : He has given assurance about people of Orissa and Bhubneshwar but I would like the local people should get job every where

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : If he wants I can provide a recruitment centre at Lohardaga besides Ranchi... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : Western parts of Sambalpur have been made the venues for interviews besides Bhubneshwar. It is a good step that he has taken... *(Interruptions)*

The Sambalpur Railway Division was made functional in 1984 but no person from our area has got employment there so far this should be taken care of and instructions be sent to the concerned authority. The Passenger train operating between Titlagarh, Sambalpur Jharasguda and Ranchi has been withdrawn and we had been demanding running of J.M.U Express upto Ranchi. A new train should be introduced between Sambalpur and Mumbai via Titlagarh - Raipur because Raipur is business community based. This will benefit the area. The trains running in the name of Orissa...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr Pattanayak you can give in writing to Ram Vilas ji rest of your suggestions.

SHRI SARAT PATTANAYAK : I am not giving suggestions. I am speaking for my constituency. There are big national level leaders for giving suggestions. I am a simple member and will speak only.

I have some demands for backward classes. Earlier, the production of Railway Sleepers was monopolised by one Industrial group and some people were getting employment under it. Now we are allocating thousands of crores of rupees for Railway projects and I would request that some new sleeper building factory should be provided in our area which is a no industry area to provide employment to the local people in this backward area. This factory can be run either by the Railway department or by giving advertisements for private management... *(Interruptions)*. If necessary the norms in respect of backward areas should be relaxed. There should be some flexibility in the tenders to attract more entrepreneurs.

He has given something for Orissa but much remains to be desired and the rest of the M.Ps will highlight other things. I support the Budget and congratulate the Minister for coming much forward. For doing something for backward section of the Society.

There is yet another point. There is demand from all sides but he doesn't have enough funds to meet these demands. I would therefore, suggest that he should request all the Members of Parliament to demand more funds from the Finance Minister so that some work is done in every constituency. I would also request other hon'ble Members to demand more funds from the Finance Minister or from other departments to enable the Railways to undertake some constructive work.

SHRI DATTA MAGHE : I do not know when my time will come, as per the list with you.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am calling the names according to the list supplied to me by the parties. I will call your name when your turn comes.

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : I don't know where does my name stand in the list of names nor do I know at what o'clock I have to speak.

*[English]*

SHRI QAMARUL ISLAM (Gulbarga) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan on 16.7.96 is the first United Front Government's Budget. This Government had assumed charge on 1.6.96. I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for presenting this pro-common man Budget in this very period of time. I know it was a very difficult task.

The hon. Minister has toured different part of the country to understand the problems. He tried his level

best to do justice. He did justice and he said:

"I assure the hon. Members that these efforts would continue and those important projects which could not be taken up due to technical difficulties and want of time. I would definitely consider them in the Supplementary Demands for Grants in the next Session."

Sir, I welcome the decision taken for formation of nine zones and the decision taken for introduction of 15 new trains. I also welcome the increase in the frequencies of 10 trains. These are all steps which is welcome. He has also taken up new lines to see that the economical development of this area takes place and the remotest area be connected with the Railways.

Sir, I come from a district known as Gulbarga. Gulbarga was the part and parcel of the Nizam's States and it has joined India in the year 1956 at the time of reorganisation of States. The people of Bidar-Gulbarga-Jevargi-Shahpur-Shorapur-Hospet region have not seen the train. This area has to be connected with the Indian Railways.

During Nizam's regime a survey was done and I am confident and can say that the survey was also done two years back for a new railway line from Bidar to Gulbarga. I had submitted a proposal and I was expecting this proposal will also be included in his Budget Speech.

I know Shri Paswanji very well and Shri Paswanji knows this area very well because the people of this area love Shri Paswanji very much. There are fan of Shri Paswanji's. He had visited Bidar and Gulbarga. I had also participated when he made his speeches at Gulbarga, Bidar, Devargi and Shahpur.

This line takes its importance from the fact that a train comes from Bangalore to Delhi via Gulbarga down and Manmad. Sir, if this line from Gulbarga to Bidar, which is only 100 Kilometres, is taken up then 375 kilometres will be reduced from Bangalore to Delhi.

Secondly, there is no second defence line which can connect the North of India to the South of India. The main important thing is the security of this country. For the security of this country, I think this is the only line which connects the whole of North of India with the South of India, if this 100 kilometres link is taken up. It is the long pending desire of the people of that remote area of Hyderabad-Karnataka, which I represent here.

Sir, the other point which I wanted to emphasise in this House is that I have submitted a proposal that this line should also be continued upto Hospet-Bidar-Gulbarga via Jevargi-Shahpur-Shorapur. Sir, as you know the Upper Krishna Dam Project is coming up there and the target year that has been fixed for the completion of this project is 2000 A.D. Karnataka will lose its share of water, if it is not completed by that time. The Karnataka Government has taken up this as a challenge and more than three thousand crores of

rupees are going to be spent on this. In the last one year, more than one thousand crores of rupees have already been spent on this project.

There will be a problem of transportation, with regard to the agricultural produce which will come up after the completion of the Krishna Dam Project, from that area to different parts of the country. Will the road transport be able to bear the burden of that? A project of thousands and crores of rupees is coming up but there is no railway line in that area. That is why, I demand in his House that a railway line be given to this area.

Anyhow, the hon. Minister has accepted in his speech that due to some technical difficulties or due to some other reasons, he might have forgotten about this, though a new line has been taken upon Karnataka in the other part. I appreciate that. The hon. Minister has taken up railway projects in the North-Eastern part of the country, we very well appreciate that too. But at the same time, this remote area of Gulbarga, the old Nizam's State of district Gulbarga, Raichur and Bidar, be connected with this new line from the defence point of view and from the point of view of saving six to eight hours of journey by reducing 375 kilometres.

From that point of view and with a view to connect this backward area to the Indian Railways, this line is very much important. So, I submit, in this House, that this line should be taken up immediately.

The other point which I wanted to highlight here is that when the Rajdhani Express was started, it was the policy of the Government that the capital of India would be connected with all the State Capitals. The Bangalore Rajdhani Express which is coming to Delhi, fortunately, starts from the capital of Karnataka, Bangalore and it is touching Hyderabad, which is the capital of Andhra Pradesh. It is just running via Wadi. That means one Rajdhani Express is covering the two States. Whereas the complete Gulbarga region is being neglected. What we want is that there should be a Rajdhani Express starting from Hyderabad to Delhi because the then Government had adopted a principle that the Rajdhani Express would start from the State capital and it would go to Delhi. So, what we want is that the Rajdhani Express, which is running presently from Bangalore via Wadi and Hyderabad, should run only from Bangalore, Gulbarga town and Manmad so that the principle will also be adopted and also the people in the region can travel in this Rajdhani Express.

Sir, our third demand is a very small demand. There should be a shuttle train between Gulbarga and Raichur. The Udhyan Express is starting from Gulbarga at 0640 hours. That is the only train available for all the officials to go to Bangalore and also for the people travelling from Gulbarga to Shahabad, Shahabad to Wadi, Wadi to Yadgir, and Yadgir to Raichur. So, all these up and down passengers are travelling and the up and down record is that more than 5,000 passengers are travelling

between Gulbarga and Raichur. Our small demand is that there should be a shuttle train during the peak hours, that is, in the morning hours and in the evening hours, which will be helpful for the Government officials who are working in Gulbarga, Yadgir and Shahabad. There are travelling with the season tickets.

I would like to make one to two more demands.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please conclude.

SHRI QAMARUL ISLAM : Sir, I am speaking for the first time. I, being the General Secretary of the Janata Dal Parliamentary Party, have submitted the list of speakers from the Party. I am sorry to say that I am the second Member speaking from my Party here. So, I want justice from you, Sir. This is the first time I am speaking. I am a born fighter. I will fight for the justice. You are the custodian of this House. I am sure that you will definitely do justice to us.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : We are all fighters.

SHRI QAMARUL ISLAM : Sir, I know that you will definitely give more time to the Member who attracts you. So, we must catch your face. In this House we are speaking for the first time. We were speaking in our Assemblies for the last 18 years. Please give me some more time.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You can take up one more point.

SHRI QAMARUL ISLAM : Sir, the computerised reservation system is there in Gulbarga which is connected with the Bombay terminal and also with the Madras terminal. Our small demand is that the computer terminal should also be connected with the Hyderabad terminal so that we can get this facility in Gulbarga for all these routes.

Another demand is that the Hossain Sugar trains which is running between Hyderabad and Bombay is having a quota for Tandur and for the other places in Andhra Pradesh but there is not quota in that train even for Gulbarga. I can give the details. I have got the statistics.

What I simply demand in this is that a coach should be added from Wadi for the Hussain Sagar. There will not be any effect on the speed because we know the capacity of the Indian trains. So it can carry also an additional coach. Also, there will be a platform available at the V.T. and there will not be any hindrance. So it is my small demand that from Hussain Sagar, there will be an additional coach to carry the passengers of Gulbarga zone, the passengers who are travelling from Gulbarga to Mumbai and from Gulbarga to Hyderabad.

At the end, I only want to congratulate the hon. Minister who has presented this pro-common man Railway Budget within a very short span of time. He has also accepted this. I am very much hopeful that the

hon. Minister will consider this new line in the Supplementary Budget.

With these few words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Before Shri Pradhan Speaks, I would like to share with the House point that has been brought to my notice. The point is that woman Members should have a share of 33% among the speakers here, but I cannot defy the list that is with me. All the parties should take note of it.

(Interruptions)

KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA (Mayurbhani) : It is in the manifestoes of all the parties, but so far only three women has spoken.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I have conveyed your sentiments.

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambag) : The list with you is like the tail of Hamumana.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I can not change the list.

SHRI ANIL BASU : Please tell us the order of the names.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I can neither change the order nor the list.

Shri Amar Roy Pradhan

[English]

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Sir, through you, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways as he has presented the Budget, particularly, without any hike in fares and freights and for that we are happy. So I congratulate him.

I stand to support this Budget on behalf of my party. I know there is a constraint of finance. Even then, the Minister of Railways tried his level best to prepare a pro-people Budget.

I am glad to see that various projects have been taken up in this Budget for the North-Eastern region, which is a backward one and also for Northern Bihar. North Bihar is also a backward area. The railway facility is very much less compared to other areas. But I am sorry to say that North Bengal and Sikkim are quite neglected in this Railway Budget. If you go through this area, you will find that of the two crore population, about more than 50 per cent of the people are from the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Backward classes. Even then, nothing has been done in this Budget. I am sorry for that.

Sir, if you go through the Budget, you will find that there is no provision for new railway lines. There is no provision for the double lines. There is only one double line from Malda to New Dalpaiguri. It is not a double line. It is only a patched double line—only 60 per cent is a double line and the rest, 40 per cent has not yet

been completed. This patched double line is something new in the Railway map. I do not know why it has been done so.

It is in 1980, when Prof. Madhu Dandavate was the Minister of Railways that it was settled that only double line could carry more passenger trains and goods trains to the North-Eastern region. Ultimately, in 1981, the proposal was taken up. But after that, at that time, it was announced that it would be completed by 1992. The whole phase from Malda to New Jalpaiguri is the first phase. The second phase is from New Jalpaiguri to Bongaigaon. Now it is 1996. This is a tragedy.

Regarding conversion of railway lines, there is no proposal, particularly for this area. Regarding the new survey, on the 25th of last month, in the Rail Bhavan, the hon. Minister of Railways was there and at that time the hon. Members of Parliament from West Bengal urged upon him to take up these two railway lines, i.e. from Coochbehar to Dhubri, Assam and Mainaguri to New Coochbehar via Chankarabantha.

**18.00 hrs.**

But I am sorry to say that there is no mention about these two railway lines

You did not give the sanctioned money for the Eklakhi-Balurghat railway line, which is also in West Bengal. In this year's Budget, you have allotted only Rs. three crore. Last year it was Rs. five crore and some time back the Budgetary provision was Rs. 50 lakh. According to the estimated cost of the project, it would be Rs. 90 crores. Of course, the escalation price would be there. Ultimately, the cost will go up. But if you sanction the money in this manner, then I can say that it will not be completed within this century. Will the hon. Minister assure me that the project will be completed in the 21st Century?

I am very happy when I see that the hon. Minister is very fond of the North-Eastern Region. He has made some concrete proposals and projects for the North-Eastern Region. But, at the same time, I would like to know as to why the hon. Minister is keeping a distance towards the Sikkim State. It is also a very beautiful State.

Sir, you will be shocked to know that in the British day there was a railway line towards Sikkim upto Teesta Bazar via Kalimpong. It was washed away in 1950. But we were not able to construct any new railway line since 1950. When you are making the Seven Sisters, more beautiful than why do you not like to take any steps to make Sikkim also beautiful in the railway map? As far as Gangtok is concerned, there should be some railway line...*(Interruptions)*

As far as new trains are concerned, no new trains have been started in North Bengal. The two trains have gone beyond Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev's area. In this way, the mid-way passengers will suffer the most

Previously the Kamrup Express and North-East Express used to move from Howrah to Guwahati and Delhi to Guwahati respectively. Now, both the trains will move upto Tinsukia.

Sir, there is an English poem. 'Water water every where, but not a drop to drink!' As far as the passengers of Sikkim are concerned, their position is the same. The trains are there in North Bengal. You will find so many goods trains and passenger trains but not a single train to board. What is the position of this train if you like to board? I think, it is not better than poultry boxes.

Sir, on the 25th of June, hundreds of passengers with genuine tickets were forced to travel on the roof-top of the boggies of Awadh-Assam Express. Ultimately, nine passengers fell down and got killed. This is the position. From the pockets of the persons who died, they found tickets from Delhi to Coochbehar. However, the hon. Minister did not provide any new train from New Coochbehar to Howrah.

Regarding punctuality of trains, I do not want to say anything.

Persons from other areas may say that the trains are running thirty minutes late or forty minutes late or one hour late, but it is on the record of the Railways that the trains in the North-Eastern are run late by 26 hours or 37 hours. It is a question of running late only by a day...*(Interruptions)*. Yes, Rajdhani Express also is running in that manner. So, this is the condition of trains in that area. If there is no double line and if there is no electrification, it is impossible to run the trains on time and because of that, the people of that area are suffering a lot. Even the Congress Government did not given much importance to that area.

Regarding the stoppages, I have been asking and the people of that area have been asking that let there be some stoppages of the long-distance trains, particularly of the Rajdhani Express. The former Railway Minister, Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief Ji had announced that these trains from New Delhi to Guwahati are meant mainly for the people of the North-Eastern region, North Bengal and North Bihar, but what is happening today? This train is meant for the Kanpur people, for the Allahabad people, for the Mughalsarai people, for the Patna people, for the Barauni people, but not for the North-Eastern people or for the North people. Why? Are the two crore people of that area not paying money to the Railways?

What to talk of the other trains, you will be astonished to see the running time of the Teesta-Torsa Express. It leaves at 1530 hours and reaches next day at 0830 hours, taking a total of seventeen hours. The average speed of this train comes to just 40.6 kilometres per hour. And it is an express train! The Railways are charging express train fare from the passengers for this train. The same is the case with the prestigious Darjeeling Mail. This train is running right from the British day - of course, the route is different now. A number of

foreign tourists travel by this train. But you will be astonished to learn that this train leaves the starting point, that is, Sealdah at 1915 hours and reaches New Jalpaiguri at 0830 hours. So, the time taken is 13 hours and 15 minutes; the average speed is 41.2 kilometres per hour. And what is the condition of the coaches of this train? On rainy days, one will have to put an umbrella over his head even inside the train! This is the condition of the coaches. Nobody can travel by that train. These trains are maintained by the Eastern Railway. But these coaches will first be used in Kalka Mail, then in other trains, and when they become rotten, they will be used in the Darjeeling Mail or in the Teesta-Torsa Express or in other trains. So, you can imagine the condition of those coaches. Nobody cares for the North-Eastern Region. The N.E. Railway is so such neglected.

18.09 hrs.

(Shri P.M. Sayeed in the Chair)

With regard to the Serighat Express, the new train that has been introduced, we have asked for one stoppage at new Coochbehar, as in the case of Rajdhani Express, but the Railway Department says, it is not possible. Here is a book 'The Trains at a Glance'. It is the Railway time Table-of course, it was prepared during the time of Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief. On page 62 of this book, you will find a mention of this Howrah-Sealdah-New Jalpaiguri-Darjeeling-Guwahati Serighat Express. I will have howrah at 2200 hours and reach Guwahati next day at 1600 hours. This is certainly a superfast train and the speed of this train is fifty kilometres per hour. At least it is better, compared to other trains.

Through it is named as 'Superfast' it was not like the other Superfast trains in the other Railway zones. They are not allowing five-minute stoppage at New Coochbehar. This is the bureaucracy that is ruling the Railway Department. But here you will find that the train reaches Malda station at 4.50 p.m. and leaves at 5.50 p.m. One hour's stoppage has been given at one station. Why is it so? Whose interests is it serving? Can the authorities explain this position? A similar position is there about other trains. They do not care about them.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Sir, I can tell frankly that if the trains are not maintained properly it will be difficult. This is a particular zone without covering which you cannot move to the North-Eastern region. Where are my friends Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev and other who said that the North-Eastern people will be happy and there is so much for them. It will ultimately create a bottleneck if you do not have it this way. I do not like to sit in *Dharna* here or outside this building. (Interruptions) No sir, I am not yielding.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He is raising a point of order.

[Translation]

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have a point of order. The Railways have two hon. Ministers. The Railway Budget is being discussed here but neither of the two is present in the House. Whom are we addressing and what is the use of our Making speeches in their absence?

MR. CHAIRMAN : He was sitting just before. I shall call him.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister sitting here is taking notes. The Minister of Railways was always sitting here. He has just now left. You have seen him.

[Translation]

DR. S.P. JAISWAL : Sir, during discussing on flood control I had pointed out the concerned Minister was not present, but it is joint responsibility. The hon. Minister did not accept it. He said at the end of his speech that he would not be able to do anything because it concerned other Minister. I would request you to call the Minister of Railways.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no point of order. Shri Amar Roy Pradhan may continue.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Sir, you cannot avoid this portion of North Bengal and Sikkim. If you want to develop the North Eastern Region by avoiding this it will give no effect. It was the warning. It is not my view. It is said in the *Times of India* and I want to quote it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You must conclude now.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Sir, you please give me three more minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already taken 15 minutes.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Sir please give two minutes more.

It is said in the *Times of India* and I quote.

"The projects proposed in the Railway Budget for the North-East suffer from various drawbacks according to experts. First, they say, is the failure to include the section from New Jalpaiguri to New Bongaigaon on the Northeast Frontier Railway (NFR) for doubling of tracks. The experts say this omission may lead to serious traffic congestion in the coming years."

So, non will be happy including the North Eastern people. Without helping North Bengal and Sikkim areas you cannot move to other places. What will happen otherwise? I do not like to sit in *Dharna* inside this

House. I do not want to sit in *Dharna* outside the Parliament House. The people will come to sit in *Dharna* on the railway track. If the track gets blocked what will happen? The Minister of Railways will have to have some other type of Railway - the air railway - or jumping railway and they will start and Kishanganj and throw the people at Bongaigaon. That will be the position.

You may go to Calcutta by avoiding Bihar. You may go to Madras by avoiding Madhya Pradesh and States. But you cannot go to the North Eastern region by avoiding North Bengal and particularly Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar districts. This being the situation, I request the hon. Minister to give a special consideration to this area. I hope that the hon. Minister will give a special consideration at least to these areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude. I am calling the next speaker.

SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN : Yes sir. Lastly I request the hon. Minister to introduce a new Shatabadi Express train from Howrah or from Sealdah to New Coochbehar for the benefit of the people of this area ... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NARAYAN ATHAWALAY (Mumbai North Central) : Mr. Chairman Sir, the hon. Railway Minister in his budget speech has repeatedly said, "the hon. Members will be pleased to know" and I was waiting for the moment of happens during his entire speech.

Sir, being a resident of Mumbai, I shared the happiness of lakhs of sub-urban railway commuters of Mumbai on his announcement that there would be no increase in the existing fares of monthly and quarterly season tickets but it is a tip of the ice-berg. There is nothing in the budget of Maharashtra which could please us.

When his speech - train tended to get late beyond Assam, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar, the hon. Members got restless and were calling the names of their respective states. My colleagues from Maharashtra were also calling 'Maharashtra, Maharashtra'. The hon. Minister of Railways should have consoled them that the names of all states would follow. At last the hon. Minister touched upon Maharashtra and named Karjat - Khopoli - Chanda - Amrawati - Latur - Roha - Manmad - Nasik - Nanded - Pusad - Wardha - Diva - Basai - Panvel and Mumbai stations.

He called the names of several other villages of Maharashtra but did not do anything.

About Maharashtra, the Railway Budget is full of expressions like work has been completed, work is in progress, is likely to be completed next year, has been taken up, survey has been accorded priority. Maharashtra is proud of its glorian history and, therefore, the hon. Minister retold the past history but conceded the present. In Maharashtra, the trains are running and

will continue to run. But, it is unfortunate that the hon. Railway Minister bypassed many demands of this State.

Sir, the hon. Minister has said that electrification of Karjat - Kopali line has been completed, the work of gauge conversion of Gondia - Chanda fort is in progress, gauge conversion of Mudkhed - Adilabad will be completed next year, gauge conversion of Latur - Miraj line has been taken up, the work of laying new railway track along Amravati - Narkhed - Latur road is going on, the work of Panvel - Karjat new rack will be taken up soon and the gauge conversion of Diwa - Basai and Dewa-Panvel is in progress. These are all old projects and no new line has been included in this budget.

In Mumbai, the Railways can mobilise resources by sexing their surplus hand and invest the same on railway projects or Maharashtra. The hon. Railway Minister has not given a thought to this proposition. It is true that he did not get time for it. He could not given much for want of sufficient time. If appears that he included new 'time-table' in his budget to conceal his viability to provide new railway lines.

This budget has not taken care of the difficulties faced by lakhs of daily sub-urban commuters of Mumbai. The centre has always been callous to Maharashtra. The new United Front Government also appears to the adopting the same attitude.

This budget has provided Rs.3 lakh for Pune Railway Station and sports ground which is not even one percent of the estimated cost. The estimated cost of construction of new platform and new station building the Ghat Capoor East is Rs.1.4 crore against which only a sum of Rs.10 lakh has been included in the budget. The estimated expenditure on the improvement Doviwali traffic facilities is Rs.50.50 lakh but only a sum of Rs.10 lakh has been provided. For 25 K.V.S. traction conversion of 1500 volt D.C. in Bombay Division, a sum of Rs. 63 lakh has been provided this year against the estimated outlay of Rs.547.57 crore. This budget is an indication of how miser, the Central Government is towards Maharashtra which gives it so much of revenue.

Sir in the hon. Railway Minister, while speaking about the N.U.P.T. Mumbai Urban Transport Project-II, said that 50 percent share of the cost of this project has been allocated to Mumbai, but this has been done only after the approval of the World Bank. The Railway Ministry never wanted to share the cost, but the World bank made is mandatory. The Ministry has not yet accepted the World Bank proposal of creating a Mumbai Sub-urban Railway zone by amalgamation of Mumbai West and Central sub-urban Railway. The hon. Minister has by-passed the long standing demand for creating an Autonomous Suburban Railway Division.

The Maharashtra Government had recommended to the Railway Ministry inclusion of three new railway lines in this budget. They are 145 kilometre long Pandharpur - Lonand track, 115 kilometre Kalhapur -

Ratnagriri track and 320 Km. Sholapur - Beed - Chalisgaon track.

I agree that the backward areas should be developed but at the same time, the developed areas should not be allowed to become backward. If further development of developed areas stagnates, the development of backward areas will become more difficult. Maharashtra has also backward areas backward people.

The survey work on Vrara - Umared - Chimur track has been completed, but no budget provision has been made for this route. Similarly, surveys for Jalna - Khapgaon, Dhule Narkhana have also been completed.

There was also need for inclusion in the budget Nagpur - Nagbhid, Yavatmat - Murtazapur - Avalpur and Nagpur - Savner - Chindwada tracks for gauge conversion.

It is not possible for me to name all the lines. I would repeat that the provisions included in the Railway Budget Maharashtra is just a tip of the iceberg.

[English]

SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH (Inner Manipur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, this is the first time that I am going to speak in this House, and I am going to do so in my own language. That is, Manipuri. I hope, Mr. Chairman, that you will kindly permit me to do so, as Manipuri has already been included in the Eighth Schedules of the India constitution. This will be the first speech in Manipuri in the history of the Indian Parliament.

\*SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH :-

Mr. Speaker Sir, at the outset, I would like to express my appreciation for the opportunity and time given to me for participating in the Railway Budget (1996-97) General Discussion being held today. I would also like to point out that during the short period of 40 days that the United Front Government has been in power, the Railway Budget (1996-97) presented by the hon'ble Railway Minister is indeed very encouraging especially for its marked departure from the earlier Railway Budgets presented so far as it has laid special emphasis on development of Railways in the backward areas and in particular the far flung remote North Eastern state.

Mr. Speaker Sir, after the laying of the 1st Railway line in 1853 between Bombay and Thane which was 143 years ago and also 49 years after independence, the total railway line laid so far is 62,660 kilometres route with about 7000 Railway stations employing approximately 1.6 million employees. But it is a matter of concern that 143 years after 1st rail line was laid, there are no railway lines, railway station or the consequent employment opportunities in Manipur State till today. In fact, none of the state capitals in the north-eastern region except for Assam is connected by Railway line. The case of Manipur State is particularly

\* Translation of the Speech originally delivered in Manipuri.

to be noted as it is the only State out of the other North-eastern states yet to be touched by a railway line:

Mr. Speaker Sir, it is thus clear that 49 years after independence, in all the Railway Budgets presented so far, year after year where crores of Rupees have been sanctioned for development of Railway, not a single Rupee has so far been sanctioned for development of Railway in Manipur.

Mr. Speaker Sir, though all the Members may be well aware, I would like to highlight the importance of developing communications and railway lines towards the development of a society, state and the country. As such the border State of Manipur at present is one of the most backward and underdeveloped states in the country and one of the major causes can be attributed to the Railway line not reaching imphal city, the capital of Manipur so far.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Members that it has been reported in some sections of the Press and certain opinions expressed by analysts, Railway officials and some retired Railway Board Chairmen about the financial unviability of laying new railway lines and even conducting of surveys in the North Eastern region and states after the presentation of the Railway Budget (1996-97). In this context, I would like to point out here that the proposed laying of railways line from DIPHU (Assam) to KARONG (Manipur) and further to imphal should not be viewed purely from the short term economic viability and profitability point of view. It should be seen in the larger national perspective like national integration and the resultant exchange of cultural and religious ideas between the far flung North Eastern states and the rest of the country.

Mr. Speaker Sir, while touching upon the economic viability question, I would like to point out that at present huge expenditure in terms of crores of Rupees is being incurred by the Central Government in the maintenance of law and order in the North Eastern states. Furthermore, the Plan and Non-Plan expenditure of the Government of Manipur is mostly on maintenance of law and order, on transport costs, of foodgrains, building materials, essential commodities, etc. by road from the nearest railway head which is about 220 Kms. from imphal city. Such unnecessary expenditure can be avoided and used for developmental purposes only if a railway line is laid upto imphal city, the capital of Manipur. Keeping the above in view, it would be pertinent to point out that the long term benefits in terms of economic viability for out weigh the short term alleged economic unviability of laying a railway line to Imphal (Manipur).

Mr. Speaker Sir, another important aspect that has to be kept in mind is the rising sense of alienation and detachment being felt by the people of Manipur, particularly, the youth resulting in their taking up anti-national activities like insurgency and militancy. This is also a direct result of the poor communication facilities

and rail links with the rest of the country resulting in under development of the area. In order to remove the sense of alienation and encourage the people particularly in the youth of the North Eastern region to join the national mainstream, the laying of railway line has become absolutely essential leaving aside the financial considerations, economic viability, profitability etc.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I would also like to highlight here that of all the states in this vast country, Manipur is the only state which does not have a proper railway line for the benefit of the people even after 50 years of independence. It is therefore the ardent request of the people of Manipur that out of the Rs 1200 crores earmarked for the development of railway network in the North-Eastern states, priority may be given to the laying of railway line from DIPHU (Assam) to KARONG (Manipur) and further upto Imphal city, the capital of Manipur.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I would also like to take this opportunity to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Minister for Railways that the facility of Computerisation of Reservation of Passenger tickets may be provided at IMPHAL city also as it is being done at other state capitals of the North East. The people of Manipur at present have to travel more than 400 Kms for their railway bookings at Guwahati.

Mr. Speaker Sir, in conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude on behalf of the people of Manipur to the United Front Government and the Hon'ble Railway Minister in particular for having presented a far sighted, well balanced Railway Budget with special emphasis on the backward areas in general and the North East in particular. I hope that with the dynamic and enterprising Railway Minister in charge of the Ministry, the aspirations of the people of Manipur of having a railway line upto Imphal will be realised in the shortest possible time.

**18.34 hrs.**

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, I call Shri Churchill Almas to speak. You have got five minutes. You will have to finish your speech within five minutes.

SHRI CHURCHILL ALEMAO (Mormugao) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, at the outset, please allow me to congratulate our hon. Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan for having presented a balanced Railway Budget with special emphasis on the development of hitherto neglected areas.

A Budget, after all, is a tricky exercise. You cannot satisfy everybody at all times. Yet, Sir, our hon. Minister has made an honest attempt to do justice to all the divisions of the Indian Railway. Though he had very few options, yet he used them judiciously and effectively.

I have listened to the Budget speech of Shri Paswanji with rapt attention. I am happy to note that he has announced some new trains in the South-Central Railway zone which also covers the State of Goa. He

has announced about a new passenger train - Secunderabad-Guntur-Vasco de Gama Express via Dronachalam. This train no doubt would be of great help to the passengers from Goa. Earlier they had to go to Hubli and from there they had to catch a connecting train to Secunderabad. In this process, they had to waste a couple of valuable hours. This problem will now be solved. However, the commencement of this train depends upon the completion of gauge conversion work between Vasco and Londa.

The hon. Minister in his Performance Budget has stated on page 45 that the broad gauge work has been completed upto Castle Rock Station in Karnataka. Castle Rock-Vasco gauge conversion work is targeted for completion of 31st December, 1997. This means that the work on this route will continue for one and a half years more and the Goan passengers will have to suffer the trouble of travelling all the way either to Belgaum or Hubli to board the desired train. The gauge conversion work is going at a snail's pace. And with every train the gauge conversion work is going at a snail's pace. And with every passing day, passengers are subjected to more and more hardships.

I, therefore, request the hon. Minister to see that the work on the broad gauge is completed soon so that the newly announced Secunderabad-Vasco Express can safely enter the State of Goa.

Sir, let me draw your attention to another announcement made by the Minister of Railways. He has said that the running of the Nizamuddin-Castle Rock-Goa Express will be extended this year upto Vasco-de-Gama. This is indeed a misnomer and not a new announcement at all. The Vasco-Nizamuddin Express which is also called the Goa Express was started at our initiative. I was then the Chief Minister of Goa and hon. Member Shri George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways then in the Janata Dal Government. This Express is stated to run between Vasco and vice-versa. It was only because of the broad gauge work that this train now comes only upto Castle Rock. With due humility and respect, I would like to remind the hon. Minister that he is not extending the run upto Vasco but actually he is restoring the older route which was cut off because of gauge conversion work.

I also take this opportunity to thank the hon. Minister of Railways for making a provision of Rs 0.05 crore in the Railway Budget to develop various facilities at Vasco-De-Gama Station. These include maintaining of A/C coaches of passenger trains, standard facilities like pit lines, covered shed, repairs and testing facilities etc. I also urge upon the hon. Minister to upgrade the railway stations at Mormugao and Curchorem which are indeed in a pitiable state.

There is a mention in the Budget of a railway over-bridge in lieu of level crossing No 21 Mormugao. Let me remind you that the corner stone of this bridge was laid by the then Minister of Railways Shri George Fernandes during the Janata Dal Government when I

was the Chief Minister. However, subsequent Governments did not pay much attention to this over-bridge and that corner stone was lying there as a perpetual monument of neglect. Now the work has started but not with the desired speed. It is taking unduly longer time causing a traffic hazard. The anticipated loss from this bridges is of Rs.5.50 crore and in the current Budget we see an outlay of only Rs. 8.3 crore. This leaves a balance of Rs.5.28 crore to be provided for. At this rate, I wonder when this over-bridge will be ready for traffic.

Sir, the hon. Railway Minister in his Budget speech has spoken about starting new lines to promote spiritual tourism as well as nature tourism. In this regard, I would like to recall a demand made by me earlier. I had requested the Ministry to start a direct train from Vasco to Nagapatnam in Tamil Nadu to facilitate the pilgrim from Goa, Karnataka and other States to visit the holy church of Our Lady of Vailankan and also the temples. This train would also directly connect the West Coast to the East Coast of India.

Besides there are several centres of pilgrimage in southern India which the passengers travelling in this train can visit. At present thousands of Goan pilgrims visit Vailakin. But they are put to great hardships since they do not have a direct transport facility. Therefore, I urge upon the hon. Minister to give a serious thought to this proposal.

You may also be aware that the State of Goa is today one of the most favourite tourist spots in the country. It is called the paradise of the west coast. However, the Railways have not done much to help the tourist inflow. We need an express trains on the lines of Rajdhani Express from Delhi to Goa for the benefit of Tourists. The Nizamuddin-Goa Express takes about three days to complete the journey. We need a much faster train. The problem will be eased out with the induction of Konkan Railway, no doubt, but still the hon. Minister is requested to think over this matter.

The Indian Railway today provides direct employment to 1.6 million employees. But I wonder how many of these employees belong to my tiny State, Goa. We are told that the Railways have Recruitment Boards at 19 centres. Goa does not figure among them. I have already urged upon the hon. Railway Minister to open a recruitment centre in Goa to help the local youth. I take this opportunity to repeat this demand.

Sir, regarding the Konkan Railway Corporation the hon. Minister in his speech has said that he is expecting special help from the Finance Ministry and the Planning Commission. I understand the KRC is facing an acute shortage of resource in the last stage of its completion. But at the same time kindly permit me to point out the shortcomings of the KRC. The Konkan Railway passes through the State of Goa and you may be aware that the KRC Work in Goa is not up to the desired standard.

They have not adhered to the recommendations of the Oza Commission regarding construction of tunnels and bridges. Recently there was a problem at village Cortalim where the mud embankment connecting the railway bridge developed cracks and sunk into the Khajan land. This was nothing but sheer negligence on the part of KRC engineers and supervisors who did not give a thought to the geotropic nature of the Goan lands. Now the KRC has planned to abandon the embankment and decided to construct a new one. This would mean more delay in the commissioning of Konkan Railway. Can the hon. Minister tell us how does he expect to complete the work by the end of October when the monsoon will be at its peak in this region?

Despite all these suggestions and reservations I would like to compliment the hon. Railway Minister for presenting a fine-tuned Railway Budget. He had not harmed the common man. True, he has administered some bitter clauses here and there. But, he should remember that an overdose of too many sugar coated pills is also harmful for the health.

With these few words I support the Railway Budget presented by Paswanji.

[Translation]

KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : (Mayurbhanj) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. Every year, we are asked to sit late by two hours for speaking on Railway budget. Although efforts are being made to bring us in the main stream, yet we are still far from the mainstream, and I would through you, like to bring this fact to the notice of the hon. Minister.

Sir, there has been a demand from my area when Shri Scindia was the Minister. (Interruptions) I never interrupted when an women members were speaking from your side, then why are you not allowing me to speak. (Interruptions)

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : Sir, three Members from the congress have spoken consecutively. (Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : Mr. Karia Munda and Smt Sumitra Mahajan have spoken from your side Shri Joshi, you are a senior Members. It is not fair on your part to say such things. The Chair has been fair to all. Please resume your seat.

KUMARI SUSHILA TIRIYA : We always listen to you patiently, but you disturb us when we speak. It is because I belong to tribal area? This is not fair... (Interruptions) I would like to put forth a few demands of my area. I would like to point out that if a disciplined Member makes his/her demand in a disciplined manner his/her demand is not accepted and if one makes it in an unbecoming manner, he gets more. Sir, we have been demanding a metre-gauge line since Shri Scindia was

the railway Minister. There have been strikes, agitations in university, you agitations, political agitations but no body listened to us :

Kisase Kahoon Apani, Koi is Kabil Nahin.  
Wahan Patther Pigalta Hai, Par Dil Nahin.

My demand will definitely be met but it will need a humane heart. When Shri Paswan's assumed charge of the Railways he had been Minister for four months earlier also and could not do much we had great expectation from him because he is a 'dalit' and I also represent 'dalit'... (Interruptions) He had said that he would try to provide rail links to backward areas, tribal inhabited areas. But it appears that we are born for struggle, we tried our best last year but in vain. We will have to fight to come to the mainstream. Every party speaks of SC and ST but none has made serious efforts to bring us in the mainstream.

Last year's budget included a provision of Rs 7 crore for gauge conversion of Rukan - Bandipur railway line which was later slashed to Rs 5 crore it was further reduced to Rs 3 crore, but this provision also remained unutilized. Now the Railway Minister has raised it to Rs 50 lakh. It is just like giving lollypop to the child. Yesterday we sat on hunger strike and the hon. Minister assured us to augment the amount for gauge conversion. I accept the assurance because he belongs to Dalit. I hope he would agree to our demand and bring us in the mainstream.

Secondly, we talk of unity, integrity. I do not want to contest it. They can give Rs 2000 crore for constructing tunnel in Jammu and Kashmir but not Rs 57 crore to us. We have got only Rs 3 50 crore after struggling for 10-15 years. By what time he would provide the estimated amount? I hope and expect from the hon. Railway Minister that he will listen to us and give us something during his tenure. I would request him to provide more funds for this line. This track should be taken with Badam Pahad Railway station and further to Jamshedpur. There will be required some small tunnels. They should be constructed.

Then there is the question of employment of SCs and STs. It was said that jobs should be provided to the people of each constituency. But I would say that special recruitment drive to clear backlog of SCs and STs was initiated in the Railways in the past but so far not selection has been made. In 1990-91 and 1991-92, special recruitment for SC/ST was made in Bhubaneswar and Ranchi, but many of those selected have not been given appointment so far. They were informed in writing that they had been selected but their appointment would be made later. What is the meaning of special recruitment? Why Railway Budgets makes mention of SC/ST recruitment and clearing of their backlog? Shall we go on talking like this or do somethings concrete in this regard? We have been saying this since independence.

I would request the hon. Minister to realise our agony and think something for us because, for the first time, a 'Dalit' has become the Railway Minister of the country, and for the first time, a person belonging to SC/ST got representation in this House. We have, therefore, some expectations from him.

He has given much to Orissa. I am thankful for it. A Zonal Office has been given for Bhubneswar. We always remain involved in our local problems. How can then we think of resolving National problems? We confine ourselves to the demands of running large trains and other developmental works for Bhubneswar, and Cuttak. We have not come out of these considerations and can not think on national line. However, he will tell us the reasons for not providing the railway line. I will tell him what advantage this line will have. The district from which I came has several mines, iron ore is available there in abundance. There is a metre gauge line - Guramseni - Badam Pahar, which is adjacent to Jamshedpur. Many labourers work there and attract iron ore but wagons are not available for loading. One or two wagons are given in a year. The labourer is retrenched after one year because there is no work. Injustice is done to them. They are indirectly deprived of their livelihood. No industry can be set up there for want of a railway line, whatever subsidy we may provide to the entrepreneurs. The North Orissa University has been sanctioned for this district and one thousand acre of land has also been acquired but it is not coming up in the absence of railway line. If this small request for the railway line is accepted, the industries can grow there, the North Orissa University can become functional and the tribals can supply various species of forest fruits, forest based goods articles. Calcutta and Jamshedpur are very near from there. They can do some business by suppling these things by train. It is a small demand worth Rs 57 crore. I would not like to dwell upon national problems.

The railway line in my area was provided by our ex-Ruler in 1905 when there was no other line in Orissa. That line should be developed so that tribal children may be able to go outside for their studies, the industrialist may come there to set up industries, it will also help in checking growing unemployment in this area. Generally tribals do not do business, they have now started doing petty business.

But, if once this train is introduced they will get involved in business activity and try to come into the mainstream.

I will speak on one or two points. We have many tourist spots. My district is the most backward district of Orissa but at the same time, it is most cultured and most dignified. When we talk of sovereignty, unity and secularism, it is our State where the ruler and the ruled eat together and Hindus and Musliims live together. We are backward only in matter of Railway facility. I would request again and again that more funds should be included in this Budget for the said Railway line.

Some recruitment have taken place for SCs, STs. They were given appointments but they have not been absorbed in the service. They had got appointment letters two years back but they are still sitting at their homes. I have with me here two appointment letters which were given in 1990. These letters belong to tribal youth. This is all an eye wash. It is beyond our comprehension.

I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister for announcing special Railway facility in this Budget for the North-East. It was necessary. If he happens to visit our area, he will find that it is just like the North East. It is a part of North East and there are many projects which were inaugurated but work did not start. We must do something for our area also. Some schemes must be implemented in each SC-ST dominated area. Development does not always mean development of Mumbai, Calcutta or Delhi. I am not against their development but my submission is that we are going into 21st Century. The Schemes already sanctioned for backward areas, SC-ST dominated areas should be taken up to ensure progress of the people so that we may feel that we have done some justice.

More provision should be included for the safety and security of lady passengers and other railway commuters because there is insufficient security in Ladies Compartment. He will have to increase security measures particularly for ladies' compartment. There should be some system to announce the approaching Station. We have to go to Calcutta, Kharagpur, Baleshwar and Jamshedpur to book our tickets for Guwahati. I would therefore request that a ticket reservation office should be set up at Rajanpur and Baripoda. Similar arrangements

#### 19.00 hrs.

should be made available at Barikota and Rajanpur for reservation of tickets for Madras. We have in our district a narrow gauge line at many places like in Palgor, Darikudaeti. We have also many roads, national highways, Panchayat roads but the Railway level crossings there are unmanned. These level crossings should be manned to avoid accidents.

I congratulate the Minister for increasing the Accidental Family Compensation for Rs. 2 lakhs to Rs. 5 lakh out for minor injuries, he has provided only Rs. 500. The prices of medicines have increased considerably and this paltry amount should be increased. If he takes care of the welfare of SC-ST and backward classes, the people would feel that the Government is really interested in doing something for them. I would request him to work for the welfare of these classes.

[English]

SHRIMATI SARADA TADIPARTHI (Tenali) Sir, I welcome the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. The Railway Budget

is in favour of poorer sections and is very much in accordance with the Common Minimum Programme of the United Front Government headed by the hon. Prime Minister, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda.

However, I submit to this House that if 'no-increase in railway fare for 200 kilometres' is extended up to 400 kilometres, it will help the middle class and a lot of poor people.

I would like to point out that computerised reservation has created a lot of problems for ladies who do not get lower berths in spite of requests. It could, therefore, be fed into the computers in such a way that ladies are allotted lower berths only. I have got no gender bias. So, I appeal that men above 55 years should also be provided lower berth.

Another point is that action should be taken to ensure that drinking water is available at all the railway stations throughout 24 hours. During hot summer, taps at railway platforms remain dry. Poor people cannot afford 'Bisleri' water bottles. At least, this basic amenity should be given top priority.

I am a new Member. I have got elected from Tenali parliamentary constituency of Andhra Pradesh. Tenali is an important railway junction on Madras-Howrah main line with a minimum of 240 trains passing through that station daily. But there are not even minimum facilities at the railway station to cater to the needs of the people of my constituency. The most important issues which need the immediate attention of the hon. Minister are the Nagarjuna Express bound for Hyderabad starts from Guntur. But my request is that Tenali be made the starting point of the Nagarjuna Express which will contribute to the long-awaited need of the people for a fast express train to the capital of the State without much financial involvement.

Then, I would like to say that no superfast train bound for New Delhi halts at Tenali though it is an important junction.

Facilities like providing a halt for two minutes for New Delhi-Madras G.T. Express, Delhi-Travencore Kerala Express and New Delhi-Mangalore Mangala Express is very much required for the convenience of the distant-bound passengers.

Sir, Tenali railway station was constructed long back and so there is urgent need for development of infrastructural facilities at the railway station. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to kindly sanction the necessary budget for the infrastructural facilities.

I would like to say one more point. Stopping of Satavahana Express at Mahboobabad station in Dornakal-Warangal section of the South Central Railway may be considered. Sir, through you, I would request the hon. Minister to kindly consider all the issues mentioned here in the larger interest of the people and initiate action in that direction immediately to fulfil the

promises made by the United Front Government, for the good of the people.

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL (Beed) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Minister in his Railway Budget for 1996-97 has shown total negligence to our area. The area which I request has no railway line. If one has to see a train he will have to see it in the books or he will have to go to some other areas. We have not been given any Railway line during the last 45 years nor has any industry been set up there. In the entire Maharashtra, my constituency is known for Sugarcane labourers. They number about 3 to 350 lakh. They work in sugar mills in West Maharashtra, Goa and Karnataka. The workers take with them their families and carry their belongings in the bullock carts. The provision of a Railway track in this area will not only provide travel facility to us but will provide employment to the youth. The future of coming generation is linked with this Railway facility. In the interim Budget presented in Feb. 1996 by the previous Minister Shri Kalmadi he had said that the work of new Railway line was being taken up even before the Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli (Vajinath) Railway Line work for the benefit of backward Maharashtra region. A provision of Rs. 1 crore had been included for the 240 Km Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli (Vajinath) Railway Line but no provision has been included for the railway track for which survey had been completed in March, 1996 while inauguration of this line was done by Shri Kalmadi. It was perhaps the inauguration of the coming Lok Sabha Express. The inauguration was done at a place where, if we want to construct a Railway Station, we will have to demolish the town in the middle. We are expecting that the new Government will be fair to us and make provision for this Railway Station but it is unfortunate that this year, a provision of Rs. 1 lakh only has been made against the Provision of Rs. 1 crore made last time. Rs. one lakh have been provided for the project involving an outlay of Rs. 352 crores. And at this speed, I think, it will take 35 thousand years to bring the Railway line in my area. I would request him to withdraw this provision of Rupees One lakh. Otherwise also Maharashtra has been detailed in this budget. However, I would like to submit most humbly that if the Government did not reconsider the question of construction of Ahmednagar-Beed-Parli (Vajinath) Railway Line, the local people will have no other option but to launch agitation. The hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is not present here, still I would say

MR CHAIRMAN : The Minister of State is present

SHRIMATI RAJANI PATIL : Paswan ji visited my area twice. That is why I want to remind him of his assurance and hope that he will consider inclusion of a Railway Line for my constituency and that he will give a new direction the railway network.

Secondly, I would like to make a point about canteen contract. In my opinion, it this contract is given to women

the passengers will get hygienic food. 33 percent jobs should be reserved for women. There are two bogies reserved for women in local trains and their number should be increased to three to provide better facility and safety to women. The Hon'ble Member Sushila ji has also made this point. I will request the hon'ble Minister to do justice to my Constituency and include more provision in the Budget for the development of my area. With these words I conclude.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI (Ghosi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Government of our country has accepted the global economy and decided to speed up economic liberalisation. The transport sector, the telecom sector, power sector and the coal sector have a vital role in this race. The hon'ble Railway Minister has presented the Railway Budget keeping in view the importance of these sectors and I support this Budget. My hon'ble friends should know that we had developed 54,000 km. Rail Lines during British Rule but only 8000 km. Rail Line was developed during the last 50 years of our independence. (Interruptions) The problem cannot be solved on Party Lines. We should ponder how we can achieve further development. The Congress, the BJP will not be able to resolve the problem. This is a National Problem and all the hon'ble Members should deliberate on it. We have been able to provide only 8000 Km. railway line. The Britishers built railway network in India to carry by trains raw material to Lancashire and Manchester and to send finished goods to those areas of India where they have sufficient market. This was the approach of English imperialism. From the day this Government came into power, it has kept before it the prime aim of developing backward areas and to give preferential treatment to the most backward areas, to strengthen the economy of the entire country to make the country powerful and prosperous. Our Planning Commission and our Railway Ministry should proceed further with these aim in mind. But today the railway system is on the verge of collapse. It has 16 lakh employees. The traffic has increased three-fold after Independence and the freight has gone up by five times, but the strengthen of employee has not increased correspondingly. I would like to submit that no country can forgo ahead without adequate infrastructure. This is the supreme sovereign body of India. Most qualified and able Members representing 12 lakh people each have come to this August House. We will have to take up the matters pertaining to national progress and build consensus on them. Otherwise, we will not be able to make our country as strong as we want to make it.

Many Members have spoken and put up their demands which involve large expenditure and the present Budget can meet only 5 percent of this requirement. I have seen in this House that whenever the Railway Budget is presented, for example, the last years Budget of 10th Lok Sabha, it was discussed for 3 days, 3 nights, and earlier also, when the Janata Party Government was in power, our hon'ble Members

put forth their demands in the same way and discussed them. I have the privilege to be in this August House and in the other House for the last many years and every Member wants development of his constituency. The transport sector, particularly the Railways has a major role in the development. Discussions take place in this House and my very learned friends speak and give facts and figures. They demand funds and if we compile the figures of funds demanded under this Budget, it will not be possible to provide those funds. Has this Budget the capacity of meeting every demand? I shall say no.

Sir, the biggest problem that the railways are facing is the mobilisation of resources. They should be mobilised in a large quantum. We must also fix priority areas and high priority areas. Today, India is passing through industrial phase. There are 5-6 crore educated unemployed persons registered with the Employment Exchanges. In fact, there are 15-20 crore able-bodied, healthy persons unemployed in the country. They want jobs. We must formulate our policies to provide them jobs to make use of this manpower for strengthening our Nation. We must have some sort of planning in this regard. The country is passing through an industrial revolution. Sir, Telecom Transport, infrastructure, Power are necessary for industrial revolution. Therefore, the cement producing areas, the coal bearing areas, the infrastructure required for Power Production, the manganese ore bearing mines should be covered by railway network to ensure easy movement of raw material to Industrial houses. This will ensure industrialisation and provision of jobs to crores to unemployed persons. Does the Railway Budget represent this concept? Does our approach conforms to this Planning? The policy of appeasement - whether it is the Congress Government or the United Front Government-will not resolve the problem. The Congress has been in Power. These people, when in the opposition, used to talk tall. Today their faces are changed. The people who did not allow the House to function, have assumed power today. Therefore, they should implement their policies with sincerity and responsibility.

AN HON'BLE MEMBER Please give me a little time.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI I am in favour of giving him time but I would like to ask my CPM friends  
..(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN You please address the Chair. Otherwise, they will go on provoking you.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI I will not say anything which may provoke my colleagues. What I want to plead is that the Planning and the budget should be framed in such a manner that the priorities thereof must benefit larger part of the population of the country. Our aim is to make the country strong and the Planning should aim at this end. What is the railway system in Japan,

Germany, Russia and England? We have inherited the railway infrastructure from Britishers and we can take our country forward by strengthening that infrastructure.

Sir, the Surface Transport is catering to greater load than the Railway Transport. The strengthened and systematised railway network will provide cheaper transport to the people. The same thing applies to freight also if 90 percent of the freight is lifted by railways it will cost less and this will, in turn, make available cheaper goods to the people.

Now, Sir, have a look at coal problem. We are lifting coal by surface Transport and as a result, it has become dearer. The bricks and other things have become costlier. Therefore, I want that goods should be transported by the railway network and the additional number of Railway track should be provided as per requirement. This will strengthen our Coal structure. But this budget is devoid of this proposition. I am not criticising the budget. What I am saying is that he should endeavour to give priority to this core sector.

The Airways is another mode of transport. The fare for Varanasi is Rs.2500. Still people stand in queues. The state of reservation in the Railways is very bad. Their is waiting list for 3-4 days for going to Calcutta, Varanasi and Mumbai. I receive 50 to 200 people daily who request me on to telephone or write on my letter pad for getting railway reservation because, if they stay in Delhi, they have to spend Rs 50 each daily on board and lodging. If they want to go to their native places, they do not get reservation. In other words, the trains fall short of passenger traffic. Trains from New Delhi, Old Delhi and Nizamuddin Stations go to various places and if we have to go to Nizamuddin or Old Delhi Station, it takes us 3 hours to reach the Station because of heavy traffic on the road. Sometimes we miss our train because of this. The traffic has increased two to four folds as also the number of railway passengers.

Railways are the cheapest mode of transport today and travel by bus, taxi or plane is most costly. The air fare for Varanasi is Rs.2500 while the train fare is Rs 100 or Rs 200 and if, for non-availability of reservation, we have to stay back in Delhi then, additional amount of Rs.500 per day is required for staying and food in the cheapest hotel. The people coming from outside, encounter great difficulties. There is no parity in railway and bus fares. Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi had on assuming the office of Prime Minister, entrusted the Transport Ministry to Shri Bansi Lal and had created separate ministries for Transport, Civil Aviation, Surface Transport and Railways. We will not be able to strengthen our Transport system unless there is proper coordination, proper adjustments among different organs of transport sector.

We are following the policy of globalisation and liberalisation and associating world economy with our economy. If we want to accord preference to high priority

areas, we will have to make the transport sector, the telecom sector and infrastructure more strong.

The Railways have a prominent role in strengthening the economy. The Railways is a very large Department. This is the department which links one part of the country with another. The strength of the economy depends on this network. We aim to achieve a target of 7 percent GDP. Many hon'ble Members have demanded electrification of more lines because the freight movement is linked with it.

[English]

More the electrification, more will be the freight movement.

[Translation]

What is the position of Power Sector today? We had fixed a production target of 38,000 Megawatt power during the Eighth Five Year Plan and a target of 6 percent growth rate. While the 8th Plan is coming to a close, we have been able to achieve the target of only 16000 Megawatt. How are we going to develop our agriculture and ensure all round development? Will we continue to depend on heavy rains?

During the last 5-6 years, the Railways have done commendable work and provided livelihood to the people. If we lag behind in developing the Power Sector, the 90 crore odd population of the country will face bread problem and we will not be able to solve other problems. So, we must have a scientific approach, whether it is Power Sector, Transport Sector or irrigation sector.

Shri Ram Vilas is not present here. He should have been present here. He should prepare time bound concrete schemes for the development of the country. Sir, I would like to make a point about Poorvanchal from where I come. It is the most backward area of India having the highest density of population compared to that of many countries of the World. The Britishers and their Government exploited these backward and downtrodden people and, therefore, they migrated to Guyana, Mauritius, Singapore, Burma and other countries in search of employment. But today, there is no such migration. Hon' Members from Mumbai are raising demand for Mumbai and those from Calcutta for Calcutta.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HUSSAIN : This is wrong

MR. CHAIRMAN : Kalp-nath ji, you have taken 20 minutes. Please conclude now

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : I do not want to hurt the sentiments of anybody. I am talking of unemployment.

[English]

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR (Barrakpore) : Do you know the composition of working class in Calcutta?

[Translation]

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : Yes, I know. It is going on everywhere. We have been talking of providing jobs to local people.

SHRI TARIT BARAN TOPDAR : It is not so in Calcutta. It has 60 per cent non-Bangali population.

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : It has been India's capital before 1911 and we have very old relations with Calcutta. I do not want to hurt the sentiments of any of my friends. The unemployment problem is taking a new dimension and there is need to resolve it. 5-6 crore educated persons are registered with Employment Exchanges. Our railway network is expanding but the strength of employees is not increasing and the resource crunch is said to be the reason. The Railways also have this problem.

Sir, I would like to request that metre gauge lines of Eastern Uttar Pradesh should be converted into broad gauge. They should be electrified to provide cheap mode of transport to all. It will also generate jobs for local people. The Delhi-Gorakhpur train is badly overcrowded. Passengers travel on train roofs. The hon. Members can go and see for themselves at the New Delhi Railway Station. Reservations are not available for even 5 days because this train goes via Allahabad, Varanasi and Mhow. The air travel is costly. We cannot travel by buses because of long distance. Train is the only means, but everybody knows how much difficulty passengers face.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, thousands of agriculture labourers from Eastern Uttar Pradesh and Bihar go to Haryana and Punjab. They also go to Guwahati, Hyderabad and Chandigarh for work and therefore, I want that some trains should be introduced at least for these poor people.

Hon'ble Satpal Maharaj ji is present here and he is aware of the problems of Uttar Pradesh. No Government has worked for the development of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. The development has come to a stand still there. I would request the Government to work for the development of these States instead of talking tall.

With these words, I support the Railway Budget and request Ram Vilas ji to accord preferential treatment to our backward region.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) : How can you say that there has been no development of Uttar Pradesh when it has given the maximum number of Prime Ministers?

SHRI KALPNATH RAI : The Prime Ministers have no relation with development. Has Bihar developed because of the Chief Ministership of Mr. Laloo Prasad Yadav? The development does not take place because of Chief Ministers. Development takes place if one has the determination to do the job. Hindi speaking areas have not been developed during the last 50 years. All

the metre gauge tracks of this area should be converted into broad gauge and such other schemes should be introduced as would ensure development of these regions

SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR (Calicut) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I know about the constraint of time. I would not take much time because there are other hon. Members who would like to speak

I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister Shri Paswanji for bringing this Budget, which have a perspective. Probably we are now having a Budget which can be termed truly as national. I do not say that everything could be achieved in one or two years.

I will only make one or two points because of the time constraint.

When the Britishers left India, what was the population of India and now what is the population of India? It has gone by three or three and a half times? If I am wrong, anybody can correct me. I do not want to dole with statistics. How many metres have we laid down after the Britishers left India? It is one-fifth. The population growth may be three or three and a half times. The growth of the Railway may be one-fifth of what it was during the time of the Britishers. So, it is a long history and within the given parameters, I feel that the hon. Paswanji did a tremendous work not only with a national perspective but with a vision wedded with integration.

I do not want to talk about the Far East because those hon. Members talked about it. There is a reference to Kashmir. I am a Member coming from Kerala, which is the southern tip of India. Kerala and Kashmir have a cultural bondage. Our Thiruvananthapuram is called 'Anantapuri'. We have Anantnag in Kashmir. Adi Sankara went to Kashmir by walk and we want to go to Kashmir by train. Nobody has talked about Kashmir as much as this Budget has talked about Kashmir.

I heard during the talk when we were discussing about the Kashmir election, that the per capita expenditure we have spent on Kashmir is Rs. 2,000 or Rs. 2,300. It may be Rs. 90 in Haryana. Whatever it might be, we had the biggest expenditure on Kashmir. Why was Kashmir neglected? I was looked at the map of Kashmir. What does it mean? The money had not gone to the people of Kashmir. It was swindled. By whom? That is another question. I do not want to debate on that.

Now in this Budget there is a reference about Kashmir. Some hon. Members have said that there is a thrust on Bihar in this Budget. What is wrong with it?

Bihar is a rich State but it is also the poorest State. Within the given constraints, my own impression is that Shri Ram Vilas Paswan has presented a Budget with a vision. As I told you, I do not want to go into the other details because of shortage of time.

I will mention one of two things about Kerala. I do not want this House to think that Kerala is a liability on India. We are not a liability. Do you know how much dollars we earn for India? Our NRIs probably might be earning more foreign exchange than what Mumbai or Maharashtra or any other State may earn. How much have we earned? In terms of spices, how much dollars are we giving to the coffers and what are we getting? We are a consumer State. We are neglected.

On passenger traffic I would like to say one thing. I do not know as I do not have the figures. The officials might be having the figures. Probably, you are having the best collections from Kerala. With all this that we are giving to you from here, we are neglected. It is true that this time the Budget allocations are, maybe, three or three-and-a-half times more than what they were before.

I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for calling all the Members of Parliament of Kerala and discussing the various problems. Previously the hon. Members have expressed their problems.

I do not want to reiterate the whole thing about doubling of the line from Mangalore to Shoranur and from Quilon to Trivandrum about the new train, the superfast train and all that. I want to say something which the hon. Speaker knows. I come from Calicut which is my constituency. From Calicut to south of Trivandrum on the National Highway, probably there is only one level crossing. On the National Highway, from Calicut to Kasaragod up to Manjeshwaram, do you know how many level crossings are there? There are 10 level crossings. To this, there must be a policy that on the National Highways, wherever there is a level crossing, there must be an over-bridge. Otherwise what is the time spent in travelling?

My area is a neglected area. It is backward area. So I am making that one point here and also I am coming from a district which is backward and it has more tribes. Many have never seen trains so far. I would like to make a proposal before the hon. Minister that they must try to connect Bangalore and Kerala through the shortest route. At least, they can cut off 300 kilometres. In Karnataka, the railway comes up to Nanjankot. From Nanjankot to Vadakara, which is near Calicut, the distance is only 150 kilometres. Wayanad is a tribal district which is bordering Karnataka and from Nanjankot, the railway line could be brought via Wayanad and it could be connected to Badagara. What will be the reduction in distance? It will be more than 300 to 330 kilometres, as far as I know.

A survey must be conducted. I know that there are more than 10 surveys already conducted which are on way and to see that whatever surveys are conducted and those surveys to be translated into reality, how much time it takes that we all know about it. But there must be an attempt. So I make an earnest request that Shri Ram Vilas Paswan will at least order a laudable

survey to bring Bangalore which is a fast developing city to Calicut and Bangalore closer at least by 300 kilometres.

On the other issues, he has connected tourism and railways. There is a pilgrimage train. It is a good thing because people must visit all these places. They must know what India is. India could be united only when we understand its diversity. On the one side, when we look at it, we will see the diversity and it frightens us and on the other side, when we look at it, the diversity unifies us. Then, they must go and see the place where Jainism was born, where Buddhism was born, where Islam has its pilgrim centre and where other religious centres are there. All these places are so sacred to this country. It is not a monolithic country. It is not a country where there is uniculture from Kanyakumari to Kashmir and from Gujarat to Bengal, the people just adhere to not monoculture. It is a country with variety, it is a country with different culture, language and everything. I do not want to go into the details.

So I make this submission as far as the Budget is concerned. It does have a national perspective.

It has given a thrust to the backward areas. They have taken care of it. This is one of the best Budgets probably I have come across. I am coming for the first time to the House.

Sir, I have been very respectfully listening to the speeches of the elder Members of this House. Hon. Shri. Ram Naik has made one point and I will just make a comment on that and conclude. He talked of Mumbai. He said there is crime in Mumbai. Why is there crime in Mumbai? Is it because of lack of transportation? That was the point he was trying to make. So, why are transportation, communication, etc. not inter-linked? He talked of the crime in Kashmir. Do you think that military can stop crime in Kashmir? Do you think that with military we can unite this country? We have to have the infrastructure for that. Communication and transport are very important for this purpose.

That is why I said that this Budget is a Budget of vision. It is a national Budget in the real sense of the term because Shri Paswan has made an attempt to see India as a whole for the first time.

**SHRI FABAN SINGH GHATOWAR (Dibrugarh):** Mr. Chairman, Sir, I stand here to support the Railway Budget presented by the dynamic Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan.

Sir, I come from a region where if you want to go from Delhi you have to fly over a foreign country and if you want to come to Delhi then you have to fly over a foreign country. The people who come through rail or road have to cross a very narrow bottleneck to come to the national mainstream of India.

Sir, this time, the hon. Minister of Railways has tried to give some priority, some importance to the burning problems of the North-Eastern Region.

On 13th of the last month, he invited us for a discussion about the burning problems of the North-Eastern Region. We, the M.Ps. belonging to all the political parties, went there and highlighted our problems and grievances to him. I must congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for amply describing the problems of the North-Eastern Region.

Sir, I want to quote him.

"In this context, our thought specially goes towards the North-East region where some people even now seem detached from the country's mainstream. To some extent, their anger and dissatisfaction regarding railways is justified. In this region, all the State capitals excepting Assam are not even connected by rail—where is the question of Rajdhani Express going to them?"

This is the actual problem of the North-Eastern region and the Minister of Railways is trying to give some importance to the North-Eastern Region.

Sir, I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for providing a new train from Guwahati to Tinsukia. He has increased the frequency of the Howrah-Guwahati Saraighat Express. He has also extended Howrah-Guwahati Kamrup Express upto Tinsukia and Delhi-Dimapur-Brahmaputra Express upto Tinsukia.

Sir, I come from the Dibrugarh Constituency. Dibrugarh railway station is the tenth oldest railway station in the country. In the colonial days, they have established the railway line in my area just to exploit oil, coal, timber and the tea industry. After fifty years of Independence, the broad gauge line has not reached one of the oldest railway stations of our region, that is Dibrugarh.

This time the hon. Minister of Railways has promised that the gauge conversion from Dimapur to Dibrugarh and Tinsukia to Lekapani will be completed in this financial year. He has also included the new gauge conversion from Larding to Silchar.

I congratulate the Railway Minister for this.

I just want to remind the hon. Members that we have some special problems in the North-Eastern region. During the British days, for exploitation of our resources, from 1853 to 1900, they built about 40,000 kilometres of railway line in our country to rob us of our valuable wealth and to exploit our country. And after Independence, what is the scenario? From 1947 to 1995, we have built only 8,000 kilometres. The support given by the Planning Commission to the Railway Board is restricted to Rs 200 crore per year, with which you cannot build more than 200 kilometres of railway line. I think the Planning Commission also has to change their attitude towards the Railway Board because railways are playing an important role in the national integration of our country. If the North-Eastern region is not well-connected with the national mainstream, the people of that region feel suffocated. You will find that there is an inflow of people to the North-Eastern region but not

outflow. The young generation sometimes think of going out of the country, which is very bad and which is condemnable, but they have gone to that extent because of the insurgency problem becoming a perennial problem of our region. People are taking arms and are finding pride in fighting with the national Government. This august House has to think in that perspective as to what is the problem of the North-East region. We have to try to develop communications, transportation and other facilities in those areas. Without developing these facilities, industrial development in that area will not take place, and if industrial developing is not there, the unemployment problem will not be solved. The Railways always use to say that these lines are not remunerative. If there is no industrial development, then these lines will never be remunerative. This time the Railways Minister is trying to have some new lines in that region and for that, I congratulate him.

Now I come to some of the standing problems of my region, and I shall try to highlight those problems for the kind attention of the Railway Minister.

The loop-line from Simalguri to Moranhat will be completed by next year. If we connect Moranhat and Dibrugarh, that will shorten the distance by 120 kilometres. If you go to Dibrugarh via Muriani, the distance is 140 kilometres but if you connect these two stations, the distance will be just 35 kilometres. So, that will reduce not only the distance by 100 kilometres but also the expenditure and the travel cost.

Then, Sir, there is another point which I would like to make and that is with regard to the fourth bridge on the river Brahmaputra in Bongibil. This time the Railway Minister has provided Rs. two crore in the Budget for detailed investigation and final location of the site. This is a long standing demand of the people of that region. The previous Government also had not given adequate importance to that. I also belonged to that Government but this problem has not yet been solved. In Assam, every time we demand a bridge, we have to come out on the road. I still remember that when we demanded the Seraighat bridge, I was studying in school and we went down on the road not for one or two days but for months together, demanding a bridge over the river Brahmaputra. Sir, you will be surprised to know that the construction of one bridge had started in Jogigopa - the Narnarayan Setu - but even after thirteen years, this bridge has not been completed. This is in a very sensitive tribal and backward area but, for one reason or the other, the Railways have not completed that bridge even after thirteen years.

We are celebrating the 150th year of the Dibrugarh town in my constituency. So, I request the hon. Railway Minister for upgradation of the Dibrugarh railway station by providing modern amenities there.

Sir, there is another line - Fhokiragram to Dhubri - which should be converted from metre gauge to broad gauge because Dhubri is the western-most important

town of our State and that is situated in the backward and minority-dominated area. There is one railway service from Dhubri to Guwahati. This service is not regular and is not going on time. The condition of the railway service is very bad and that service of Dhubri-Guwahati requires immediate attention. Special importance is very much needed.

I request for the restoration of Haiborgaon-Morigaon line. It was there earlier. But for some unknown reason the Railways have stopped that Haiborgaon-Morigaon railway service. I demand restoration of that line.

I am very glad that the former Minister of Railways has declared about a new railway division at Rangia which was a very long-standing demand of the people of that region. But till today the territorial jurisdiction of Rangia division is not declared and that is creating lot of misgivings in the minds of the people. So, I request the hon. Minister of Railways to immediately declare the territorial jurisdiction of Rangia division.

A few years back because of the agitation by the tribals in Assam we have given the Bodoland Autonomous Council. Kokrajhar is the headquarters of the Bodoland Autonomous Council. Kokrajhar station is a very old station. People from all over the Bodoland, covering an area of 400 kilometres, come to that station. Immediate attention should be given for modernisation of that Kokrajhar station. A provision should be made to stop the long distance trains which go through Kokrajhar so that the tribal people of that area can easily come to the national mainstream and visit our national capital and other areas.

Sir, twelve years back there was a promise and an announcement was made in the newspapers that there would be an over-bridge at Bongaigaon. But construction of that over-bridge has not yet started. I request the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways in this regard.

With the development of railways and with the increasing of the frequencies of trains, Guwahati station is becoming very busy. Guwahati station is in the very heart of Guwahati city. If we do not shift that station from the heart of the city to the outskirts of the city it will create traffic congestion and that will create lot of problems to the people. That was also represented before the Minister of Railways and I am hopeful that definitely the hon. Minister will try to look into this problem.

The railway stations and platforms in the North East and specially in Assam were constructed 80 or 90 or 100 years ago. They were constructed mainly to carry coal and tea. Those stations are becoming very old. There are no facilities in those stations and the condition of the platforms there is very bad. There are few other problems. Most of the stations have no platforms. I am sure that with the gauge conversion work the Minister of Railways will give importance to this problem.

There are some peculiar problems in the North Eastern region. As you know the trains in the North Eastern region run through difficult terrains and thick forests and hilly areas. There are many cases of crime like dacoity, robbery and theft of the belongings of the passengers in this area. The crime in the railways is causing a lot of fear and anguish to the travelling passengers and also tarnishing the image of the railway. I personally request the hon. Minister to take appropriate action so that the passengers in the North Eastern region can travel safely and comfortably. This will instill a sense of security and safety and confidence among the travelling passengers as well as the railway employees.

Sir, there is another peculiar problem. In earlier days, when we were in college, people used to say that if one wants to buy any foreign goods one has to travel to New Jalpaiguri. As you know the N.F. Railway runs through the State which has an international boundary. The problem of smuggling of goods, narcotics as well as consumer goods is quite rampant in the whole region.

#### 20.00 hrs.

Surprisingly, these goods find an easy market on the running trains. If you happen to travel in the train, you will find an open market of these smuggled goods in the railway trains. I do not know what the Railway Protection Force is doing, what the Railway officers are doing. An open market of smuggled goods is coming up in the trains. This adversely affects the security and atmosphere in the trains, causing great inconvenience to the passengers travelling in these areas.

Even when I was in the Ministry earlier, I discussed with the Secretary of that particular Ministry about the North-Eastern region. To my utter surprise, I found that the Secretary of that particular Department had not visited the North-Eastern region for the last 10 years. There are many Departments where the senior officials, the Secretary and the Director-General have never seen the actual position in North-Eastern region. They are not in a position to appreciate their difficulties because they have never cared to visit it though it is one of the richest regions. My district is the third richest district in the country but I have never found any official who has made any visit there. Even in the last several years, the officials of the Petroleum Ministry have not made any visit to the North-Eastern region while the maximum amount of crude oil is coming from that region. I do not know how we are going to address all these problems. These things are the contributing factors for the great discontentment among the people of North-Eastern region.

When you travel in the North-Eastern region, you will find, as my senior colleague Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev has already mentioned that 60 per cent of the boggies are old. The boggies which are outdated for use in other parts of the country are sent to North-

Eastern region. I would request all the hon. Members to have the pleasure of travelling in the North-Eastern region. Then, they will find that there is no facility of toilets, no facility of drinking water and 60 per cent of the boggies which are running in the North-Eastern region are old.

Sir, I want to mention another important point  
...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA (Ferozabad) : Sir, you please draw a schedule. Some hon. Members are speaking for half an hour and others for ten minutes. You please prepare a time schedule. (Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : You finalise how long we should sit.

(Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : The House will continue and all of you will speak. It is difficult to control from here.

(Interruptions)

[English]

MR CHAIRMAN : Many senior Members speak. It is difficult to control from here.

(Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : He has started at 7.48 p.m. and you are accusing me.

(Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : Do not pass aspersions on the Chair. I am conducting the House giving everybody a fair chance.

(Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : After all, I am also a Member like you. If you cooperate, only then I can conduct the House. You are senior Members.

(Interruptions)

SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA (Kanpur) : Sir, we are not casting any aspersions on the Chair. My request is that according to the strength of the parties, speakers should be allowed proportionately. That has been the practice of the House in the past. Though we are 160 Members and they are 44 Members, equal numbers of speakers have got the chance. That is only a submission.

MR CHAIRMAN : Please be rest assured. Everybody will get his due. There is enough time.

(Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN : It is not that you are not getting time. I have maintained the time in every case. It is not fair to say so. I will not be a party to that. Do not involve me.

(Interruptions)

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh) : All the parties have exhausted the time allotted to them.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All the parties have exhausted the time allotted to them. Now, we are on bonus time. Everybody will be getting a chance to speak. All of us will sit here and whoever wants to speak on the Railway Budget and the Demands for Grants will get a chance.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar) : It was decided in the Business Advisory Committee, by all the parties, that whatever might be the time, we shall allow all the Members who are willing to speak. That was one decision which was taken in that Committee. When the Deputy-Speaker was in the Chair, he said that one should not take more than ten minutes time. Many of the Members, from your side as well as from our side, have spoken for more than ten minutes. So, let us be tolerant. The dinner is ready; we will have our dinner and come back. Let everybody speak on this.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR : Sir, I will conclude within three minutes time...*(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now let us not waste the time of the House. Let him conclude. Everybody will get a chance to speak.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR : Sir, the North-Eastern region is a land-locked area with a perennial flood problem and the road condition is also very bad. Everybody in this House knows about it. The North-Eastern region is entirely dependent on the Railways for the supply of foodgrains and other essential commodities like salt, sugar, cement, edible oil, house building materials, fertilisers etc. More than 40 lakh tonnes of goods are carried by the Railways for the benefit of the North-Eastern region people. Sometimes, there are difficulties because every year, the railway line is disrupted by floods, which occur four to six times in a year and as a result the flow of goods is also disrupted creating a lot of misery to the people of the North-Eastern region. My request to the hon. Minister of Railways is that he should give special priority for allotment of railway wagons for the North-Eastern region so that these essential commodities would reach those difficult areas in time.

I want to make just one more point. In the North-Eastern region during the British period a lot of land was acquired. So a lot of railway land is available but the illegal encroachment of the railway land is going on in a very rampant way. Sometimes, I feel that the railway officials are also involved in giving away this valuable land to the encroachers. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister of Railways to pay sharp attention so that these encroachments can be stopped.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR : Sir, the hon. Minister of Railways has given an annual outlay of Rs. 8 130 crore and that is eight per cent more than the last year's outlay. He has talked about many ambitious new programmes and new lines. But without the

budgetary support these things will not be implemented. If these things are announced and not completed in time, that will create more discontentment among the people. So, I request the Prime Minister to give necessary advice to the hon. Minister of Finance so that proper budgetary support is given to the Railways.

With these few words, once again, I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for acknowledging the difficulty and trying to meet some of the pressing needs of the North-Eastern region. Sir, once again, I also thank you for giving me the permission to express my views.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have to inform the hon. Members that they have to assemble in room No. 70 at 8.15 hrs. for dinner and the pressmen will also go to room No. 70. The dinner for the staff has been arranged in room No. 73. I request all of you to go there at your convenience.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, Dwarka Nath Das ji will speak. Please wait for a minute, we have to take some legislative business before you speak.

20.09 hrs.

#### CONSTITUTION (EIGHTIETH AMENDMENT) BILL\*

(Amendment of articles 81, 82 and 170)

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is—

That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Constitution of India.

*The motion was adopted.*

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

20.10 hrs.

#### REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL\*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF LEGAL AFFAIRS, LEGISLATIVE DEPARTMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill

\* Published in the Gazette of India, Extraordinary, Part-II, Section 2, dated 25.7.96.