

**ESTIMATES COMMITTEE  
(1968-69)**

**SIXTY-SEVENTH REPORT**

(FOURTH LOK SABHA)

**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**

**[Action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-ninth Report of the Estimates Committee (Fourth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Railways—Commercial and other cognate matters—Travel Concessions allowed to Railway Employees.]**



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*February, 1969/Phalguna, 1890 (Saka)*

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C O R R I G E N D A

To

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Sixty-Seventh Report of  
Estimates Committee (Fourth  
Lok Sabha)

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- Page 3. -

- (i) line 11, for 'subsequently'  
read 'subsequent'.
  - (ii) line 26, for 'lise'  
read 'list'.
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## ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

(1968-69)

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3. Shri R. S. Arumugam
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# STUDY GROUP 'F' OF THE ESTIMATES COMMITTEE (1968-69)

## CONVENER

Shri S. Kandappan

## MEMBERS

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7. Shri K. Lakkappa
8. Shri Yamuna Prasad Mandal
9. Shri F. H. Mohsin
10. Shri Gajraj Singh Rao
11. Shrimati Jayaben Shah
12. Shri Shantilal Shah
13. Shri K. Subravelu
14. Shri Tula Ram

## INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman of the Estimates Committee, having been authorised by the Committee to submit the Report on their behalf, present this Sixty-Seventh Report on action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 29th Report of the Estimates Committee (Fourth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Railways—Commercial and other cognate matters—Travel Concessions allowed to Railway Employees.

2. The 29th Report of the Estimates Committee (Fourth Lok Sabha) was presented to the Lok Sabha on the 1st March, 1968. Government furnished replies indicating action taken on all the recommendations contained in the Report on the 10th July, 1968.

The Study Group 'F' of the Estimates Committee (1968-69) considered the replies received from the Ministry on the 9th August, 1968. At their sitting held on the 22nd November, 1968, the Study Group approved the draft Report which was subsequently adopted by the Committee on the 20th December, 1968.

3. The Report has been divided into the following Chapters:—

I. Report.

II. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government.

III. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply.

IV. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee.

4. An analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the 29th Report of the Estimates Committee (Fourth Lok Sabha) is given in the Appendix to this Report. It would be observed therefrom that out of eight recommendations made in the said Report, three recommendations, i.e. 37.5 per cent have been accepted by Government. The Committee do not desire to pursue



two recommendations, i.e. 25 per cent in view of Government's reply. The replies of Government to the remaining three recommendations, i.e. 37.5 per cent have not been accepted by the Committee.

P. VENKATASUBBAIAH,  
*Chairman,*  
*Estimates Committee.*

NEW DELHI;  
January 6, 1969.  

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Pausa 17, 1890 (Saka).

## CHAPTER I

### REPORT

The Estimates Committee are glad to observe that the points brought out in their Twenty-Ninth Report (Fourth Lok Sabha) on the Ministry of Railways—Commercial and other Cognate Matters—Travel Concessions allowed to Railway Employees, have been replied to by Government in time and generally to their satisfaction.

2. The Committee have not found it possible to accept the replies of Government to the recommendations at serial Nos. 5, 7 and 8 wherein the Committee had suggested reductions in the quantum of travel concessions being allowed to serving Class I and Class II Railway Officers and to retired Railway Officers of Classes I, II and III for a period of three years in the first instance. The Committee have accordingly reiterated these recommendations which are included in Chapter IV of this Report.

## CHAPTER II

### RECOMMENDATIONS THAT HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

#### **Recommendation (Serial No. 1) Para Nos. 10 & 17**

*The Committee feel that it should have been possible for the Ministry to ascertain the financial implication of the grant of travel concessions to their employees if only the Railways had maintained adequate statistics relating to the actual utilisation of passes and P.T.Os.*

*The Committee are, to say the least, surprised at the reply of the Ministry that it is not possible, under the existing procedure, to collect reliable statistics about the extent of actual utilisation of Passes and P.T.Os. by the Railway employees, and are unable to understand why no statistics worth their name are being maintained by the Railway Administration in this regard. The Committee feel that if there is a will to do so, there are devices and methods to collect accurate statistics without any additional financial burden as it is only a matter of appropriate administrative procedures and arrangements. The Committee desire that such statistics should be maintained with immediate effect and Parliament should be informed every year about the financial implication of the travel concessions allowed to Railway employees, and it should also be indicated in the Annual Reports of the Railways.*

#### REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The Ministry of Railways would like to submit the following in amplification of what was explained in the written Memorandum furnished to the Committee earlier and the oral evidence given at the meeting with the Committee.

The main difficulty in assessing the financial effect of the travel concessions is that privilege passes taken by employees might have been for some members of the family not all of whom might have travelled and also the pass could have been taken for a distant destination even though it might actually have been utilised for shorter journeys. In other words, merely evaluating the cost of journeys for the number of persons and for the destination indicated in the pass could result in an overassessment of the financial effect. In an

endeavour to collect the necessary information, out of deference to the wishes of the Estimates Committee, instructions have recently been issued to railways to furnish quarterly statements to the Railway Board regarding the number of passes issued, cost thereof etc. obtaining the requisite information from the various pass issuing units who, in turn, have, to obtain the details from each employee after completion of the journey.

The information collected for the year 1968-69 which will be available only in the later half of the calendar year 1969 would be made available to Parliament and the same procedure repeated in subsequently years. The question of giving this information in the Annual Reports of the Railways would also be considered thereafter.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), O.M. No. 68-B(C) EC/IV/29 dated the 10th July, 1968.]

#### **Recommendation (Serial No. 2) Para Nos. 11 & 17**

The Committee are unable in the absence of any statistics, to agree with the Ministry of Railways that there is no direct financial burden on the Railways owing to the grant of travel concessions to the railway staff. Also the contention of the Ministry of Railways that the general occupancy ratio on railway trains provides a cushion within which the facility of free travel concession could be available hardly appears convincing in view of the existing pressure on accommodation particularly in the higher classes, and the continued over-crowding in trains. The very fact that seats and berths have got to be reserved in advance in some cases as much as 30 days in advance, and there is always a long waiting list, go to show that there is considerable pressure on the accommodation available in trains. The position surely becomes difficult when on the top of this pressure a large number of railway staff undertake journeys by utilising their P.T.Os. and free passes.

In the absence of any statistics maintained by the Railways which could enable a calculation of the exact value of the free passes and P.T.Os. availed of by Railway employees, the Committee have in para 11 of their Report made a rough calculation on the basis of the information available in published documents of a statistical nature (viz. total number of Railway employees, average size of a family in the country, average load per Railway passenger etc.). According to this calculation, the total cost of travel concessions allowed to Railway employees works out to an optimum figure of Rs. 17.39 crores per year. The Committee feel that unless disproved by the

*Railways' own accurate statistics, this figure may be considered as the incidence of maximum loss to the Railway Revenues as a result of the travel concessions allowed to the Railway staff.*

#### REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

While readily conceding that, in the absence of adequate data, it is difficult to make even a reasonably accurate assessment of the total cost of travel concessions allowed to railway employees, the Ministry of Railways respectfully submit that the factors mentioned in their Memorandum in reply to Recommendation No. 1 should be given due weight in any such assessment. It is anticipated that the collection of data for 1968-69, as referred to in Memorandum on Recommendation No. 1, would enable the Ministry of Railways to make a more realistic assessment of the total cost.

As regards the effect of the travel concessions on overcrowding, the Ministry of Railways would venture to submit that 4 crores of passengers travelling on passes as assessed even by the Committee in para 11 of their Report is less than 4 per cent of the total number of non-suburban passengers carried on Indian Railways. This, of course, is a purely statistical analysis and the position in respect of individual trains, sections and in particular periods of the year may vary within wide limits.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), O.M. No. 68-B(C)-EC/IV/29 dated the 10th July, 1968.]

#### Recommendation (Serial No. 3) Para No. 17

*Statistics have not been advanced by the Ministry in support of the plea that the Railway employees do not often utilise all the sets of passes or P.T.Os. admissible to them in each year. If it is true that they use the travel concessions sparingly, the Committee feel that this itself is a ground for curtailment of the present high rate of concessions as already suggested by the Second Pay Commission in their Report.*

#### REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The observations of the Committee are noted. The Ministry of Railways would, however, like to clarify that the actual utilisation of the concessions varies from employee to employee and even for the same employee from year to year, depending upon many factors and personal circumstances. If an employee is posted far from his

home town/state and if his social obligations like illness/death of near relations or marriage of sons/daughters occur in any year, the utilisation of travel concessions is more in such a year. The remarks of the Ministry of Railways on the general question of curtailment of travel concessions are given in their Memorandum against Recommendation No. 5 of the Committee.

*[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), O.M. No. 68-B(C)-EC/IV/29 dated the 10th July, 1968.]*

## CHAPTER III

### RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

#### **Recommendation (Serial No 4) Para No. 17**

*The Committee are of the view that the contention that because the Railway employees are serving the Railways they should have special travel concessions for journeys on Railways cannot be fully sustained as the employees of other commercial departments of the Government can claim similar concessions for themselves and members of their families. Moreover, the conditions of service, scales of pay, medical and housing facilities of the Railway employees are now no longer at variance with those enjoyed by the employees of other Ministries and Departments of the Central Government. There is therefore no justification whatsoever for the existing high scales of free travel passes and privilege ticket orders. While the Committee accept that some facilities and concessions may be allowed to the employees of the Railway organisation in the shape of free travel concession and privilege ticket orders, they are unable to agree that the present high scale of concessions should be continued or perpetuated in our economy.*

#### REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The observations of the Committee are noted, but the Ministry of Railways would venture to observe that the comparison of the Railways should be with other transport undertakings in the country and abroad and not with other departments of Government, even commercial. The travel concessions have been enjoyed by railway employees in India over decades and in nature they are similar to concessions enjoyed by railwaymen elsewhere in the world.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), O.M. No. 68-B(C)-EC/IV/29 dated the 10th July, 1968.]

#### **Recommendation (Serial No. 6) Para No. 14**

*The Committee have not enquired into the average amount of leave taken by the Railway staff. But there is little doubt that the number of passes and P.T.Os. concessional ticket can act as an*

*inducement to the employees to avail themselves of the maximum amount of leave permissible to them and spread out the use of passes throughout the year to the detriment of efficiency and leading to overcrowding on Railway trains.*

#### REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

The observations of the Committee are noted. The Ministry of Railways would only like to clarify that the grant of leave is determined by administrative requirements with due consideration given to the personal and other needs of the employee concerned. There should, therefore, be no question of the grant of leave being ever to the detriment of efficiency.

The admissible leave can be taken by the employee at his convenience and in such spells as he may find appropriate, though the sanction thereto is with due reference to the exigencies of administration.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 68-B(C)-EC/IV/29  
dated the 10th July, 1968.]



## CHAPTER IV

### RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE

#### Recommendation (Serial Nos. 5 and 8) para No. 17

##### Serial No. 5

*The Committee note that the Second Pay Commission (1957—59) had, after due consideration of facts urged by the Railway administration and its employees, recommended curtailment of the travel concessions allowed to Railway employees to two sets of P.T.Os. and one set of free passes per year. The Railway Board have since then not considered it opportune to accept the recommendations of the Pay Commission. It is also not clear as to at what level the matter was decided by Government. In the circumstances, the Committee regret to say that the explanations given by the Ministry of Railways for the non-implementation of the recommendations of the Pay Commission are not convincing. . . . .*

*Considering the low utilisation of the sets of free passes and P.T.O. concessions by the Railway staff (as claimed by the Ministry of Railways), the great demand from the travelling public for seats and berths on almost all the main railway routes, the possible adverse effect on the earnings of the Railways from passenger traffic and the present unsatisfactory position of the Railway finances, the Committee feel that there is strong case for the curtailment of the existing liberal scales of travel concessions available to Railway employees. The Committee would, therefore, suggest that suitable reductions should be made by the Railways in the number of free passes and P.T.Os. at present allowed to serving Gazetted Officers (Class I and Class II) so as to bring them at par with those being allowed to Class III and Class IV employees.*

## Serial No. 8

The Committee suggest that as a temporary measure the reduced numbers of free passes and privilege ticket orders may be introduced for a period of three years in the first instance with maintenance of accurate statistics of their utilisation. At the end of two years, a review of the results, especially the financial effects of the reduction on the earnings of the Railways may be made and a report furnished to the Committee.

## REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

## Serial No. 5

The observations of the Committee are noted.

As regards the recommendation of the Second Pay Commission the position may be briefly summarised as follows:

The Pay Commission's recommendation that in all cases the concession should be reduced to one set of privilege passes and 2 sets of privilege ticket orders was considered by the Board in May 1962. Taking into account the views expressed by the Federations of the organized labour in the matter and also the effect that such a step would have on industrial peace and the morale of the staff, it was decided by the Board that the *status quo* should be maintained. In response to a query from the then Minister for Railways, an assessment was made of the financial implications by the Finance who came to the conclusion that the financial implications would be about 8 crores for passes and about 70 lakhs for P.T.Os. and this was at best a notional assessment and did not represent either what it cost the Railways or what the Railways would get as additional revenue if the concessions were stopped and the matter was discussed with the then Minister for Railways on that occasion and again in August, 1963.

As regards the main recommendation of the Committee regarding curtailment of travel concession, the Ministry of Railways would further crave the indulgence of the Committee and submit for their consideration the following important aspects of the matter: Firstly, there are only about 7300 serving gazetted officers out of a total 18.5 lakhs of railwaymen. Secondly, so far as Privilege Ticket Orders are concerned the number of sets allowed to subordinate staff and to gazetted officers is the same viz., 6 sets. Thirdly, the reduction

in the total number of passes that would be effected if the suggestion to put Class I and II Officers on a par with the subordinate staff is implemented, would not be appreciable on the basis of a reduction from the present level of 6 sets to 1 set for those with less than 5 years of service and 3 thereafter. The number of passes that could be reduced in a year would be about 25000. The value of this, on the lines of the calculation made by the Committee in para 11 of their Report, but even allowing higher fares as for 1st Class would be about Rs. 60 lakhs.

From what has been explained above, it would be seen that neither as a measure of relieving overcrowding (25000 passes against 36 lakhs passes or about two lakhs passengers in I Class against a total of about 60 lakhs 1st Class passengers) nor as one for strengthening the position of railway finances (approx. value Rs. 60 lakhs against Rs. 230 crores passenger earnings) the change would have any material effect. On the contrary, at a time when the general conditions of living are difficult and when various demands for improvement in service conditions with considerable validity have been made, it would be inopportune to curtail a privilege which is cherished though not always fully enjoyed. When no real or major advantage could be expected from such a course, it would perhaps be administratively unwise to curtail the available concessions to a class of employees on whom the burden of running the administration falls.

*Serial No. 8.*

The observations of the Committee are noted. As explained in the Memoranda on the other recommendations of the Committee, steps have been taken to maintain statistics of utilisation of travel concessions. In the light of the submission made in the Memorandum on Recommendation No. 5 the Ministry of Railways would venture to submit that a reduction in the number of free passes etc., to gazetted Officers, even as a temporary measure, would perhaps not be necessary or justified. The Ministry of Railways earnestly hope that, for the reasons explained in the Memoranda on the other items particularly the importance of maintaining enthusiasm, eagerness and initiative of this class of staff which is likely to be disproportionately affected by the curtailment of what, in the overall scheme of things, is a relatively unimportant concession, the Committee would, on reconsideration, agree to the continuance of the concession.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 68-B(C)-EC/IV/29 dated the 10th July, 1968.]

COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE (ON SERIAL NOS. 5 AND 8)

The Committee feel that the question of continuance of the existing scales of travel concessions allowed to various categories of Railway employees cannot be viewed merely from the point of view of the quantum of the financial value of the concessions enjoyed by a particular category. Apart from the desirability of removing disparities between Railwaymen and Railwaymen on the one hand and between Railway employees and other Central Government employees on the other, the unsatisfactory financial position of the Railways and the pressing need for relieving over-crowding on trains to whatever extent possible are some of the important factors which warrant a downward revision of the travel concessions allowed to Railway employees which were declared as "conspicuously extravagant and in large part indefensible" by the Second Pay Commission even as far back as ten years.

The curtailment of concessions suggested by the Committee is only symbolic and is not likely to cause any hardship to Class I and Class II Officers inasmuch as the privileges of passes are, in the words of the Ministry of Railways, only "cherished though not always fully enjoyed!".

The Committee would, therefore, reiterate their recommendation that the number of passes being allowed to Class I and Class II serving officers may be brought at par with those being allowed to Class III and Class IV employees, as a first step.

**Recommendation (Serial No. 7) Para No. 17**

As regards the travel concessions given to the retired Railway employees, the Committee suggest that suitable reductions should be made in the number of free passes being allowed to Class I, Class II and Class III retired officers, with a view to effect economy and bring about uniformity.

REPLY OF GOVERNMENT

A post-retirement concession has in a sense a great sanctity and any curtailment thereof should be thought of only for the most compelling reasons. Apart from the fact that, in the nature of things, the social obligations of a retired officer can be deemed to justify a

more generous scale of post-retirement passes, the numbers involved are dimensionally so insignificant that any curtailment cannot be expected to effect materially any special economy. On the basis of life expectancy at the age of 58, the number of retired officers at any particular point of time may only be of the order of a thousand and if, in respect of these, a reduction is made to conform to the similar concessions for subordinates, the reduction in the total number of passes per year would be only a thousand (i.e. two thousand single journeys). As the bulk of the retired officers would not have dependent children, the number of persons travelling would on the average be only 2 to 2.5 per pass. Therefore, the total number of passenger journeys could be about 5 thousand which, evaluated on the average fare for I class, would amount to Rs. 1.25 lakhs.

In view of the relative financial insignificance, the Ministry of Railways would earnestly request the Committee to re-consider their recommendation and be pleased to agree that, as the curtailment serves no special purpose but would affect the cherished privilege of employees who have given a life-time service to Indian Railways, the status quo may be permitted to be maintained.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 68-B(C)-EC/IV/29 dated the 10th July, 1968].

#### COMMENTS OF THE COMMITTEE

*As already stated in the observations of the Committee against replies of Government to recommendations Nos. 5 & 8, the question of continuance of the scales of existing travel concessions cannot be viewed merely from the point of view of the quantum of the financial value of the concessions enjoyed by a particular category. In view of the fact that the total number of Railway Staff have risen from 923 thousand in 1950-51 to 1366 thousand in 1966-67, the Committee are unable to accept the presumption of the Railways that the number of Class I, II, and III retired officers at any particular point of time might only be of the order of a thousand. In fact the Committee are surprised that it is not possible for the Railways from their records to readily indicate the precise number of persons who are entitled to these privilege passes. It appears that even in this regard no precise statistics are kept.*

*The Committee feel that in the changing general conditions in the country, it should suffice from the point of view of social obligations and other relevant factors, if a retired Railway Officer is allowed to have one set of free passes per year.*

*The Committee would, therefore, reiterate that the Railways should as a first step reduce the number of passes being allowed to Class I, II and III<sup>a</sup> retired officers with a view to bring about uniformity.*

NEW DELHI;

*Dated the 6th January, 1969.*

*Pausa 17, 1890 (Saka).*

P. VENKATASUBBAIAH,

*Chairman,*

*Estimates Committee.*

## APPENDIX

*Analysis of the action taken by Government on the recommendations contained in the Twenty-ninth Report of the Estimates Committee  
(Fourth Lok Sabha)*

1. Total number of recommendations ..	8
2. Recommendations that have been accepted by Government ( <i>Vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 1, 2 and 3 referred to in Chapter II)—	
Number	3
Percentage to total	37.5%
3. Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's reply ( <i>Vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 4 and 6 referred to in Chapter III)—	
Number	2
Percentage to total	25%
4. Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government have not been accepted by the Committee ( <i>Vide</i> recommendations at Sl. Nos. 5, 7 and 8 referred to in Chapter IV)—	
Number	3
Percentage to total	37.5%

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