

imposition. After four minutes, I shall ring the bell and then you conclude within a minute. This for all and there will be no exception. I hope you all will cooperate with the Chair.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Thank you very much. Let us see whether we can really set a record today.

Now I call upon the hon. Member, Shri Pramotes Mukherjee to speak.

SHRI PRAMOTES MUKHERJEE (Berhampur) (WB) : Madam Chairperson, I thank you for the opportunity given to me to speak at midnight.

On behalf of my Party, RSP, I rise to support the Railway Budget for the year 1996-97. I welcome the proposal expressed in the Budget for giving the top priority to the needs of the North East India. It is highly justified because the prevailing situation therein has led to the growth of terrorism, insurgency and the root of narcotic drug. So, the impetus given to the needs of the North Eastern States is highly justified.

I also welcome the announcement made by our hon. Prime Minister on the floor of the House about the economic package for Jammu & Kashmir, which also includes the part of construction of the railway project in that area.

Madam, if you see the history of the Railways, the East India Company had realised the importance of Railways in India. The British Government of India, at that time, also realised the importance of railway track as the vehicle of progress and modern civilization. They have built up 40,000 kilometres of railway track during the 47 years from 1853 to 1900. But what about the Congress Government? Since 1947, during the last 50 years, the Congress Government could not build up not even 10,000 kilometres. They built up only 8,000 kilometres of railway track. This shows that the Congress Government could not realise the importance of railway track as vehicle of progress and modern civilization.

I am happy that this Government, the present Government of India is committed to secularism and I am also happy that our hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is committed to realise the importance of railway track as an instrument of modern civilization and he has intended to knit together the colourful cultural and religious diversities into one.

It is only the railways which brought the political unification of the country and it is only the railways which can develop the federal structure of our constitution today. But I am sorry to mention that thrust has not been given in the case of Murshidabad district in West Bengal.

Madam, I am very sorry to mention that proper impetus has not been given to the development of Lalgola-Sealdah railway section. My district,

Murshidabad is a territorial district. Prior to 1946, the British Government realised the historic, strategic and to other commercial importance of this district ... (Interruptions) Yes, I am following the time. Do not be hurry.

So I urge upon the Ministry and the Government to make necessary provision for electrification on this Lalgola-Sealdah section from Krishnanagar to Baharampur and then to Lalbag.

Also I would urge upon the Minister to make provision for the construction of double line in this area.

Secondly, I would urge upon the Minister to make provision for the construction of an over bridge at Panchanantala level crossing in the township of Baharampur. I would urge upon the Government to make the provision for the construction of a bridge at Nasipur near Lalbag over the river, Bhagirathi in order to make a connection between this line and North Bengal and then to North India.

Lastly I will conclude with another sentence. Proper impetus should be given to the construction of Eklakhi-Balurghat railway project.

00.09 hrs. (26.7.96)

ANNOUNCEMENT RE: BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. CHAIRMAN : I have to make an announcement. The Business Advisory Committee held its sitting on Thursday, the 25th July, 1996. The Committee after re-considering the earlier decision decided to take the following business as indicated below.

On Friday, the 26th July, 1996

1. Submission to the vote of the House of Demands for Grants on Account (General) for 1996-97
2. Demands for Excess Grants (General) for 1993-94 and their relevant Appropriation Bills.
3. Consideration and passing of the following Bills
 - (i) Conservation of Foreign Exchange and Prevention of Smuggling Activities (Amendment) Bill, 1996
 - (ii) Prevention of Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (Amendment) Bill, 1996.
 - (iii) Representation of the People (Amendment) Bill, 1996
 - (iv) Representation of the People (Second Amendment) Bill, 1996.
 - (v) Arbitration and Conciliation Bill, 1995: (As passed by Rajya Sabha)

(vi) Industrial Disputes (Amendment) Bill, 1996. (As passed by Rajya Sabha)

(4) General Discussion on the Budget (General) for 1996-97.

Tuesday, 30th July, 1996

(1) Reply of Minister of Railways

(2) Submission to the vote of the House Demands for Grants for Railways for 1996-97 and consideration and passing of the relevant Appropriation Bill.

(3) General Discussion on the Budget (General) for 1996-97.

I am calling the next speaker. In the meantime if there is any correction to be made, I will let the hon. Members know.

Now, I call upon Shri Shivraj Singh to speak.

00.12 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET 1996-97 — GENERAL DISCUSSION

AND

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT (RAILWAYS) — CONTD.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH (Vidisha) Madam Chairperson, I had done my homework thoroughly but it is now midnight and your hand is on the bell. I can understand the feelings of my colleagues that it is not the time to make long speech. So, I shall be very brief. Shri Ram Vilas ji is not present but Shri Srikant ji is sitting and I hope he will convey my suggestions to the hon. ble Minister scrupulously.

I shall confine myself to Madhya Pradesh. This State has been neglected in matters of railway service since independence. Whosoever has been the Railway Minister so far has favoured his parent State and I hoped that Shri Paswanji would look beyond Bihar but this time also, Madhya Pradesh has been ignored.

Madam, Madhya Pradesh is the largest State of India territory-wise and the single Bastar district is larger than Kerala State. But it is most backward from railway point of view. This Railway Budget has also not given anything to Madhya Pradesh. The tribals, details and backward people of Madhya Pradesh have tremendous expectations from the Railway Minister. But the Budget does not meet their expectations. He must have heard the name of Jagdalpur which is in Bastar district. In 1973, a survey was conducted for Roghat - Delhi - Rajhara railway line and we are assured every year

that this new railway track would be laid. Bastar has large forest wealth and the mineral wealth but no railway line has been provided there. The construction of new railway line will open up new dimensions of development and it can benefit the SC-ST people.

Madam, seven successive Railway Ministers had promised in their Railway Budgets laying of Dina - Purvai - Mahava - Chowpata - Siroj - Beavara railway line for which survey was ordered. Half the survey has been completed. But what is the use of half survey. Similarly, there is Guna - Shiopuri - Bhind - Etawah railway line and the Railway Minister have been repeatedly assuring its completion. But this Budget does not include any provision for this rail track. The Lalitpur - Khajuraho - Singrauli track was sanctioned in 1981-82. I would like to know from the hon. ble Railway Minister when this line will be taken up for construction.

The Korba-Ranchi line is pending for the last 12 years and a sum of Rs 80 crore has been spent on the survey of it but no action has been taken to start work thereon. The hon. ble minister did not announce yesterday the proposal of surveying Baster-Sarguja-Ambikapur railway line. The Godhara-Dohad-Indore-Muxi line should be linked with Dhar. Work on this line has not progressed. This line will cover Piyampur industrial area, historic tourism centre mandu and famous Jain temple of Mohan Khera. The former Railway Minister Madhavrao Scindia ji had announced surveying of Indore-Khutegaon-Nasrullaganj - Batpara - Udaipur - Jabalpur railway track. But the same has not done so far. I would urge upon the hon. ble Railway Minister to get this track surveyed during this Budget.

There is a long standing demand from providing a rail link between Raisen district headquarters and Begumganj Sagar via Gairatganj but this line has not been included in the Railway Budget. It was promised that conversion of Jabalpur-Nainpur-Mandala-Godia Section would be taken up during the 9th plan but no work has started on this route.

I thank the hon. ble Minister for creating a separate Jabalpur railway zone but there is a long standing demand for creation of Bilaspur railway zone. But the hon. ble Railway Minister has not announced this scheme. When he can create Hazipur railway zone what is the difficulty in creating Bilaspur Zone. I can take full responsibility for making available the entire land required for this purpose. The Gualior Shiopur narrow gauge should be converted into broad gauge. Shiopur should be provided a direct link to Kota by providing broad gauge line. The engines fail and the bogies get derailed on this meter gauge. It is therefore necessary to convert this meter gauge into broad gauge.

There has been a demand for many years for providing a new railway track between Kahandwa and Meghnagar via Bhikangaon, Khargon, Raipur, Ojund Barwani, Kau - Jhabua. A railway link should be provided