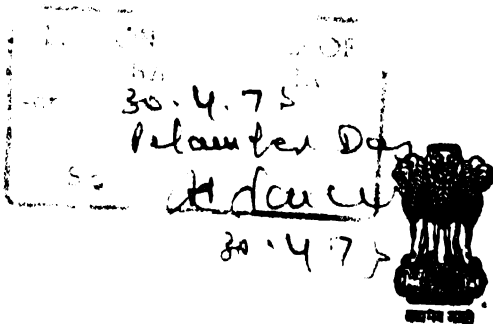


# RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE (1971)

## SIXTH REPORT

RATE OF DIVIDEND FOR 1969-70 AND 1970-71 AND  
OTHER ANCILLARY MATTERS



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT  
NEW DELHI

April, 1973

Vaisakha, 1895 (S)

Price : 0.35 P

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SIXTH REPORT OF THE RAILWAY CONVENTION  
COMMITTEE (PRESENTED ON 30.4.1973)

<u>Page</u>	<u>Para</u>	<u>Line</u>	<u>For</u>	<u>Read</u>
(v)	1	2	"third"	"Sixth"
6	1.2(iii)	1	"extent"	"extant"
9	1.6	2	"37"	"38"
9	1.7(1)	1	"Scheme"	"Schemes"
10	1.7(4)	13	<u>Delete</u>	"long"
10	1.7(4)	24	"olines"	"lines into"
11	1.7(8)	1	"Reorganisation of"	"Reorganisation"
11	-	last	<u>"April Chaitra"</u>	<u>"April 25 Vaisakha 5"</u>
12.	S.No. 1(11)	1	"extent"	"extant"
16	S.No. 4 (3)	9	"thei"	"their"

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385137

RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE

(1971)

1. Shri R. K. Sinha—*Chairman*.

MEMBERS

2. Shri Y. B. Chavan
3. Shri S. R. Damani
4. Shri M. Deiveekan
5. Shri K. Hanumanthaiya
6. Shri M. Kalyanasundaram
7. Shri Mohd. Shafi Qureshi\*
8. Shri M. K. Krishnan
9. Shri N. K. P. Salve
10. Shri Nawal Kishore Sinha
11. Shri Maddi Sudarsanam
12. Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee
13. Shri T. V. Anandan
14. Shri Pitambar Das
15. Shri Harsh Deo Malaviya\*\*
16. Shri Chakrapani Shukla
17. Shri Nageshwar Prasad Shahi
18. Shri M. P. Shukla.

SECRETARIAT

Shri Avtar Singh Rikhy—*Joint Secretary*.

Shri G. D. Sharma—*Deputy Secretary*.

---

\*Nominated to be a Member of the Committee w.e.f. 18th August, 1972 *vice* Shri S. M. Krishna, resigned from the membership of Lok Sabha.

\*\*Nominated to be a Member of the Committee w.e.f. 24th May, 1972 *vice* Shri Ma hitosh Purkayastha resigned from the membership of Rajya Sabha.

## INTRODUCTION

1, the Chairman of the Railway Convention Committee, 1971, having been authorised by the Committee to present this third Report on their behalf, present this Report on "Rate of Dividend for 1969-70 and 1970-71 and Other Ancillary Matters".

2. The Committee wish to express their thanks to the Chairman and Members of the Railway Board and the Financial Commissioner for Railways for placing before the Committee the material and information that they wanted in connection with the examination of the working of the Railways.

3. The Committee also wish to thank the Members of Parliament, Railwaymen's Unions, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, professional organisations, retired Railway Officers, Public Undertakings, State Governments and other individuals who have furnished memoranda to the Committee and given valuable suggestions on the working of the Indian Railways. The Committee also wish to thank the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, New Delhi; the Federation of Associations of Small Industries of India, New Delhi; the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Calcutta; the National Institute for Training in Industrial Engineering, Bombay; National Federation of Indian Railwaymen, New Delhi and Sarvashri D. D. Desai, M.P., G. D. Khandelwal, K. B. Mathur, D. V Reddy and R. P. Srivastava for appearing before the Committee and making valuable suggestions.

4. The Report was considered and adopted by the Committee at their sitting held on 17th April, 1973.

5. The summary of recommendations|conclusions contained in the Report is appended to the Report.

NEW DELHI;  
April 25, 1973.  

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Vaisakha 5, 1895 (S).

R. K. SINHA,  
Chairman,  
Railway Convention Committee.

## INTRODUCTORY

The present Railway Convention Committee was constituted in August, 1971. The Committee presented an Interim Report to Parliament in December, 1971. The recommendations with regard to the rate of dividend and certain other ancillary matters made in the Report covered the period 1971-72 and 1972-73 only.

2. In para 9 of the Interim Report, the Committee had outlined some of the major areas of Railway operations having a vital bearing on the financial position of the Railways which they desired to examine in detail.

3. The Committee accordingly took up the following subjects for examination on a priority basis:—

- (i) Accounting Matters;
- (ii) Suburban Services;
- (iii) Commercial and Allied Matters; and
- (iv) Requirements and Availability of Wagons.

4. The First Report of the Committee on 'Accounting Matters', was presented to Parliament on the 15th December, 1972. The Report dealt with the following matters:—

- (i) Rate of Dividend and other ancillary matters for the year 1973-74;
- (ii) Railway Funds viz., Depreciation Reserve Fund, Railway Safety Works Fund, Development Fund, Revenue Reserve Fund and Pension Fund;
- (iii) Budget and Accounts including improvements in budgetary procedures, modernisation of accounting procedures, traffic costing and computerisation.

5. The following Resolution concerning the Report was moved on behalf of the Government and adopted by both the Houses on the 20th December, 1972:—

“That this House approves the recommendations made in paras 1.1, 2.31, 3.18, 3.19, 3.27, 3.28, 4.12, 4.13 and 5.11 of

the Report on Accounting Matters of the Committee appointed to review the rate of dividend payable by the Railway Undertaking to General Revenues as well as other ancillary matters in connection with the Railway finance *vis-a-vis* the General Finance, which was presented to Parliament on the 15th December, 1972.

That this House further directs that the action taken by Government on the other recommendations made in the Report should be reported to the next Parliamentary Committee which may be appointed to review similar matters."

6. The Second Report of the Committee on "Suburban Services" was presented to Parliament on the 22nd February, 1973. The Report dealt with the growth of suburban traffic and development of suburban services in the metropolitan cities of Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, the classes of accommodation and overcrowding in suburban trains, suburban fares, earnings and losses, ticketless travel on the suburban services and Mass Rapid Transit System including Metropolitan Transport Project Organisation.

7. In their Third and Fourth Reports on "Commercial and Allied Matters" presented to Parliament on 23rd February and 25th April, 1973 respectively, the Committee have dealt with the following nine subjects:—

- (1) Ticketless Travel;
- (2) Thefts and Pilferage;
- (3) Railway Protection Force;
- (4) Compensation Claims;
- (5) Overcrowding;
- (6) Classes of Travel;
- (7) Free Pass Facilities to Railway staff;
- (8) Railway Users' Amenities; and
- (9) Catering Services.

8. The Fifth Report of the Committee on "Requirements and Availability of Wagons" deals with the requirements and production of wagons; their allotment to Zonal Railways; supply to trade and industry; procedure of booking of goods and utilisation of wagons including efficiency indices, turn-round, empty haulage, speeds of



goods trains, detentions in Marshalling Yards, transshipment points, Steel Plants and Ports, Wagons under repair and general matters. The Report was presented to Parliament on the 27th April, 1973.

9. The present report is the final Report of this Committee. It deals with the rate of dividend for the first two years of the Fourth Plan which have not been covered so far i.e. 1969-70 and 1970-71. The Report also contains their recommendations on certain other ancillary matters.

## REPORT

### A. Issues for Decision

1.1. The issues that required the Committee's consideration| decision were summarised by the Financial Commissioner for Rail- ways in this Review as under:—

#### *Dividend*

- (i) Whether the present mode of contribution to the General Revenues, including the element of payment to the States in lieu of Passenger Fare Tax etc., may continue.
- (ii) Whether the existing rates of dividend at 4.5 per cent of the capital invested upto 31st March, 1964, with an addition of one per cent in lieu of the tax on passenger fares and for assisting the State Governments in financing the Railway Safety Works and at six per cent on Capital invested after 31st March, 1964, should be retained.
- (iii) Whether the existing arrangement of either no dividend being paid, or dividend being paid only at the average borrowing rate of Government on certain special elements of capital may continue as at present.
- (iv) Whether the following further adjustments in the matter of calculation of the Capital-at-Charge and arriving at the total of the dividend payable, which are called for, may be made:—
  - (a) The Capital-at-Charge of the non-strategic portion of the Northeast Frontier Railway and the unremunerative branch lines, as also the element of over-capitalisation, may be exempted from payment of dividend.
  - (b) Having due regard to the long period of construction| gestation of Railway investment in general, and the time taken by such investments to reach full earning potential, 25 per cent of outlay in a year on works-in-progress (otherwise liable to payment of dividend at post-March, 1964, rates) may be exempted from payment of dividend for a period of three years.

- (c) The Railways may be given credit, in arriving at the total of the dividend payable, for the difference in the amount of interest on the balance in their (reserve) funds, at the dividend rate of six per cent and the average borrowing rate at which interest is now paid.

*Railway Funds*

- (v) Whether the appropriation to the Depreciation Reserve Fund from Railway Revenues may be increased to an average of Rs. 105 crores per year during the quinquennium 1969—74, or as close thereto as possible taking account of the financial position.
- (vi) Whether the existing provision for temporary loans from General Revenues being advanced to the Railway Development Fund, whenever the available balance in the Development Fund is insufficient to meet the cost of works chargeable to that Fund, and payment of interest on such loans at the average borrowing rate, may be continued.
- (vii) Whether when the Railways' net revenue is not adequate to pay the dividend to the General Revenues in full, and the Revenue Reserve Fund has no or insufficient balance to make good the shortfall, the Railways may be permitted to take temporary loans as at present from the General Revenues to meet the full dividend liability, and interest on such loans may be paid at the average borrowing rate.

*Other Matters*

- (viii) Whether the present rules for allocation of Railway expenditure between Capital, Revenue, Depreciation Reserve Fund and Development Fund may be maintained without alteration.
- (ix) Whether the present scheme for the amortisation of unproductive capital is to be continued in 1969—74 even though, in view of the nominal balance in the Revenue Reserve Fund, the effect will be minimal.
- (x) Whether in future, the construction of an uneconomic new line may ordinarily be undertaken only after the

particular authority sponsoring the construction of such a line undertakes to reimburse to the Railways, annually all losses (including dividend payable) incurred by the Railways in the operation of the line.

- (xi) Whether the arrears of the reliefs referred to in item (iv) above pertaining to 1969-70 and 1970-71 accounts of which have already been closed, may be adjusted in three equal instalments in the accounts of 1971-72, 1972-73 and 1973-74.

### **B. Rate of Dividend etc.**

**1.2. After an exhaustive study of some of the main problems affecting Railway finances as detailed in the Introduction to this Report and considering the financial position of the Railways as it has emerged from the successive budgets for the financial years 1969-70 to 1973-74, the Committee are satisfied that the arrangements proposed by them for the period 1971-72 to 1973-74, may be given retrospective effect to cover the first two years of the Fourth Plan i.e. 1969-70 and 1970-71 as well. The final recommendations of the Committee with regard to the rate of dividend and other ancillary matters on which their decisions were sought by the Railways for the quinquennium 1969-74 are accordingly as under:**

- (i) **No change is called for in the present mode of contribution to the General Revenues.**
- (ii) **Railways should pay dividend to the General Revenues at the rate of 4½ per cent of the Capital invested upto 1963-64 with an addition of 1 per cent in lieu of passenger fare tax and at 6 per cent of the capital invested after 31st March, 1964;**
- (iii) **The extant arrangements for the purpose of dividend in regard to strategic lines, Kiriburu-Bimalgarh and Sambalpur-Titlagarh ore lines and the Kathua-Jammu line and the Tirunelveli-Trivandrum Kanyakumari line may continue;**
- (iv) **The Capital-at-Charge of the non-strategic portion of the Northeast Frontier Railway and the unremunerative branch lines to be assessed precisely in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Report of the Uneconomic Branch Lines Committee, as also the element of overcapitalisation may be exempted from payment of dividend;**
- (v) **The existing arrangements of (a) deferring the payment of dividend on the Capital-at-charge of New Lines chargeable**

at the average borrowing rate of interest during the period of their construction as well as for the first five years after their opening; and (b) closing the account of deferred dividend on New Lines after a period of 20 years from the date of their opening, extinguishing any liability for deferred dividend not liquidated within that period, may be continued;

- (vi) Having regard to the long period of construction/gestation of railway investment in general and the time taken by such investments to reach full earning potential, 25 per cent of outlay in a year on works-in-progress (which could otherwise be liable to payment of dividend) may be exempted from payment of dividend for a period of 3 years;
- (vii) Consistent with the commercial practice of utilising reserves as internal resources, the Railways should be given the benefit of interest at the current dividend rate on the fund balances by being permitted to take credit for the difference between the dividend rate and the average borrowing rate at which interest accrues at present to the Funds as a set-off in the dividend payable from the Railways to the General Revenues.
- (viii) The appropriations to Depreciation Reserve Fund from Railways Revenues may be placed at Rs. 95 crores during 1969-70 and Rs. 100 crores during 1970-71, the total contribution during the quinquennium 1969—74 being of the order of Rs. 525 crores or as close thereto as possible.
- (ix) The existing provision for temporary loans from General Revenues being advanced to the Railway Development Fund when the balance in the Development Fund is inadequate to meet its obligations and payment of interest on such loans at the average borrowing rate, may be continued.
- (x) Further, the Railways may be permitted to take temporary loans as at present, from the General Revenues to meet the dividend liability in case the Railways net revenue is not adequate to pay in full the dividend to the General Revenues and the Revenue Reserve Fund has no or insufficient balance to make good the shortfall. The interest on such loans from General Revenues (including further

loans for repayment of the original loans or paying interest charges on the loans) should be paid by the Railways at the current borrowing rate.

### C. Other Ancillary Matters

#### 1.3. The Committee further recommend that:

- (i) the existing rules of allocation of Railway expenditure between Capital, Revenue and Depreciation Reserve Fund and Development Fund may be continued without any alteration till the results of the comprehensive review of the form and content of the Railway Budget as recommended by the Committee in Para 7.9 of their First Report, become available and Parliament's approval is obtained to the changes that may be necessary.
- (ii) the present scheme of amortisation of the capital-at-charge by utilising the interest on the Revenue Reserve Fund, supplemented by appropriation from Railway Revenues may continue till the matter is examined in all its aspects by the Expert Group suggested in para 5.17 of the First Report and its recommendations are gone into by the next Convention Committee;
- (iii) the arrears of reliefs referred to above, pertaining to the years 1969-70 and 1970-71 (accounts for which have already been closed) may be suitably adjusted in the current year's accounts.

### D. General

1.4. The Indian Railways are the Nation's largest undertaking with an investment of over Rs. 4300 crores and employing about 17 lakh persons. As observed by the Administrative Reforms Commission "the efficiency of the Railways has... a far reaching effect not only on the general transport facilities provided to the community, but also on the general tenor of commercial, industrial and social life of the community. The large number of railway employees cannot but constitute a determining factor in the evolution of the pattern of employer-employee relationship in Government departments. The efficiency of Railway operations is, therefore, a vital factor in the projection of the Government's image both in the country and abroad. In some respects it may provide the acid test of the general efficiency of Government's commercial undertakings."

1.5. The Committee consider that keeping in view the fact that the Railway finances have been showing signs of considerable strain during the past few years, the functioning of this premier public-undertaking should be subjected to a close and continuous parliamentary scrutiny.

1.6. During their tenure of about one year and eighth months, the Committee have held 37 sittings of which 11 were devoted to the examination of non-official witnesses and 15 for the examination of official witnesses. The Committee have also toured all the Zonal Railways and have held informal discussions with representative non-official organisations as well as with the local railway officials regarding the various matters taken up for intensive study by them. They also called for memoranda from eminent non-officials, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Public Undertakings, State Governments, Members of Parliament and some professional organisations on the various problems affecting the Railways. 71 memoranda running into 752 pages were received by the Committee—7 from Members of Parliament, 10 from State Governments/Union Territories, 7 from Railwaymen's Unions, 19 from Chambers of Commerce, 4 from Professional Organisations, 11 from retired Railway Officers, 9 from Public Undertakings and 4 from other individuals.

1.7. Some of the important problems which the present Committee have not been able to deal with and which would require the immediate attention of the next Railway Convention Committee are:—

- (1) Appraisal of Fourth Plan Scheme and projects *vis-a-vis* the expenditure incurred;
- (2) Approach to the Fifth Five Year Plan.
- (3) Social Burdens on Railways.

The financial implications of various social burdens on the Railways are estimated to be of the order of Rs. 127 crores per annum. While the Committee have dealt with the problems of suburban and non-suburban traffic, on which the Railways are incurring a loss of about Rs. 63 crores per annum in their Second and Third Reports, the question of losses on (i) Unremunerative Lines (ii) low rated traffic and (iii) freight concessions on export trade, relief measures etc. which account for the remaining Rs. 64 crores needs to be examined in detail.

It has been suggested that the Railways should, in some way or the other, be compensated for these services by Central or State Governments or local bodies, as is done in many other countries.

This and related suggestions would require to be considered carefully by the new Committee."

#### (4) New Lines and Conversion Schemes

Allied to the above, is the question of policy to be followed in regard to construction of new lines and conversion of existing lines. The Committee note from the speech of the Minister of Railways introducing the Railway Budget for 1973-74 in the Lok Sabha on 20th February, 1973 that the imperative need for development of backward regions on the one hand and the problem of rising costs of construction on the other, require that a new approach to the problem is thought out so that the creation of the infra structure through a policy of deliberate developmental expenditure, yields long long-term benefits. In order to make it financially possible for the Railways to construct new lines in such situations, it has *inter alia* been suggested that they may be granted exemption, full or partial, from payment of dividend liability to the General Revenues during the period of construction and for a specified number of years after completion and opening to traffic.

This and related suggestions would require to be considered carefully by the new Committee.

The criteria followed so far while sanctioning projects for conversion of MG and NG olines BG, the perspective plan drawn up in this regard, the financial implications thereof and the progress made so far are some of the other important issues to be considered in this connection.

#### (5) Efficiency of Railway Operations

Efficiency of Railway Operations particularly in the matter of utilisation of locomotive power, punctuality of passenger trains, express goods services, fuel consumption etc.



- (6) Rail-road Coordination;
- (7) Working of Production Units;
- (8) Reorganisation of and modernisation of work in Railway Workshops for fuller and better utilisation of the available capacity so as to bring down the expenditure on repairs and maintenance.
- (10) Modernisation/improvement of signalling and telecommunication systems.
- (11) Staff matters including amenities to staff and involvement of workers in the management of the Railways.
- (12) Railway Equipment and Stores.

1.8. The Committee have no doubt that the above issues would be gone into in depth by the new Railway Convention Committee to be constituted to review the performance of the Railways during the Fourth Five Year Plan and to give recommendations for determining the dividend payable by Railways during each year of the new Plan.

NEW DELHI;

R. K. SINHA,

April , 1973.  
 Chaitra , 1895 (Saka)

Chairman,  
 Railway Convention Committee.

## APPENDIX

(Vide para 5 of Introduction)

### Summary of Recommendations/Conclusions contained in the Report

S. No.	Reference to Para No. of the Report	Summary of Recommendations/Conclusions
(1)	(2)	(3)
1	1.2	<p>After an exhaustive study of some of the main problems affecting Railway finances as detailed in the Introduction to this Report and considering the financial position of the Railways as it has emerged from the successive budgets for the financial years 1969-70 to 1973-74, the Committee are satisfied that the arrangements proposed by them for the period 1971-72 to 1973-74, may be given retrospective effect to cover the first two years of the Fourth Plan i.e., 1969-70 and 1970-71 as well. The final recommendations of the Committee with regard to the rate of dividend and other ancillary matters on which their decisions were sought by the Railways for the quinquennium 1969-74 are accordingly as under:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(i) No change is called for in the present mode of contribution to the General Revenues.</li><li>(ii) Railways should pay dividend to the General Revenues at the rate of 4½ per cent of the Capital invested upto 1963-64 with an addition of 1 per cent in lieu of passenger fare tax and at 6 per cent of the capital invested after 31st March, 1964;</li><li>(iii) The extent arrangements for the purpose of dividend in regard to strategic</li></ul>

(1)

(2)

(3)

lines, Kiriburu-Bimalgarh and Sambalpur-Titlagarh ore lines and the Kathua-Jammu line and the Tirunelveli-Trivandrum-Kanyakumari line may continue;

- (iv) The **Capital-at-Charge** of the non-strategic portion of the Northeast Frontier Railway and the unremunerative branch lines to be assessed precisely in accordance with the recommendations contained in the Report of the Uneconomic Branch Lines Committee as also the element of overcapitalisation may be exempted from payment of dividend;
- (v) The existing arrangements of (a) deferring the payment of dividend on the Capital-at-charge of New Lines chargeable at the average borrowing rate of interest during the period of their construction as well as for the first five years after their opening; and (b) closing the account of deferred dividend on New Lines after a period of 20 years from the date of their opening, extinguishing any liability for deferred dividend not liquidated within that period, may be continued;
- (vi) Having regard to the long period of construction|gestation of railway investment in general and the time taken by such investments to reach full earning potential, 25 per cent of outlay in a year on works-in-progress (which could otherwise be liable to payment of dividend) may be exempted from payment of dividend for a period of 3 years;
- (vii) Consistent with the commercial practice of utilising reserves as internal re-

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sources, the Railways should be given the benefit of interest at the current dividend rate on the fund balances by being permitted to take credit for the difference between the dividend rate and the average borrowing rate at which interest accrues at present to the Funds as a set-off in the dividend payable from the Railways to the General Revenues.

(viii) The appropriations to Depreciation Reserve Fund from Railway Revenues may be placed at Rs. 95 crores during 1969-70 and Rs. 100 crores during 1970-71, the total contribution during the quinquennium 1969—74 being of the order of Rs. 525 crores or as close thereto as possible.

(ix) The existing provision for temporary loans from General Revenues being advanced to the Railway Development Fund when the balance in the Development Fund is inadequate to meet its obligations and payment of interest on such loans at the average borrowing rate, may be continued.

(x) Further, the Railways may be permitted to take temporary loans as at present, from the General Revenues to meet the dividend liability in case the Railways' net revenue is not adequate to pay in full the dividend to the General Revenues and the Revenue Reserve Fund has no or insufficient balance to make good the shortfall. The interest on such loans from General Revenues (including further loans for repayment of the original loans or paying inte-

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(1)

(2)

(3)

rest charges on the loans) should be paid by the Railways at the current borrowing rate.

2

1.3

The Committee further recommend that:

- (i) the existing rules of allocation of Railway expenditure between Capital, Revenue and Depreciation Reserve Fund and Development Fund may be continued without any alteration till the results of the comprehensive review of the form and content of the Railway Budget as recommended by the Committee in Para 7.9 of their First Report, become available and Parliament's approval is obtained to the changes that may be necessary;
- (ii) the present scheme of amortisation of the capital-at-charge by utilising the interest on the Revenue Reserve Fund, supplemented by appropriation from Railway Revenues may continue till the matter is examined in all its aspects by the Expert Group suggested in para 5.17 of the First Report and its recommendations are gone into by the next Convention Committee;
- (iii) the arrears of reliefs referred to above, pertaining to the years 1969-70 and 1970-71 (accounts for which have already been closed) may be suitably adjusted in the current year's accounts.

3

1.5

The Committee consider that keeping in view the fact that the Railway finances have

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(1)	(2)	(3)
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been showing signs of considerable strain during the past few years, the functioning of this premier public undertaking should be subjected to a close and continuous parliamentary scrutiny.

4            1.7            Some of the important problems which the present Committee have not been able to deal with and which would require the immediate attention of the next Railway Convention Committee are:—

- (1) Appraisal of Fourth Plan Schemes and projects *vis-a-vis* the expenditure incurred.
- (2) Approach to the Fifth Five Year Plan.
- (3) Social Burdens on Railways.

The financial implications of various social burdens on the Railways are estimated to be of the order of Rs. 127 crores per annum. While the Committee have dealt with the problems of suburban and non-suburban traffic, on which the Railways are incurring a loss of about Rs. 63 crores per annum in their Second and Third Reports, the question of losses on (i) Unremunerative Lines; (ii) low rated traffic; and (iii) freight concessions on export trade, relief measures etc. which account for the remaining Rs. 64 crores needs to be examined in detail.

It has been suggested that the Railways should, in some way or the other, be compensated for these services by Central or State Governments or local bodies, as is done in many other countries.

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(1)

(2)

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This and related suggestions would require to be considered carefully by the new Committee.

**(4) New Lines and Conversion Schemes**

Allied to the above, is the question of policy to be followed in regard to construction of new lines and conversion of existing lines. The Committee note from the speech of the Minister of Railways introducing the Railway Budget for 1973-74 in the Lok Sabha on 20th February, 1973 that the imperative need for development of backward regions on the one hand and the problem of rising costs of construction on the other, require that a new approach to the problem is thought out so that the creation of the infrastructure through a policy of deliberate developmental expenditure, yields long-term benefits. In order to make it financially possible for the Railways to construct new lines in such situations, it has *inter alia* been suggested that they may be granted exemption, full or partial, from payment of dividend liability to the General Revenues during the period of construction and for a specified number of years after completion and opening to traffic.

This and related suggestions would require to be considered carefully by the new Committee.

The criteria followed so far while sanctioning projects for conversion of

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MG and NG lines into BG, the perspective plan drawn up in this regard, the financial implications thereof and the progress made so far are some of the other important issues to be considered in this connection.

(5) Efficiency of Railway Operations

Efficiency of Railway Operations particularly in the matter of utilisation of locomotive power, punctuality of passenger trains, express goods services, fuel consumption etc.

(6) Rail-road Coordination.

(7) Working of Production Units.

(8) Reorganisation and modernisation of work in Railway Workshops for fuller and better utilisation of the available capacity so as to bring down the expenditure on repairs and maintenance.

(9) Modernisation/improvement of signalling and telecommunication systems.

(10) Staff matters including amenities to staff and involvement of workers in the management of the Railways.

(11) Railway Equipment and stores.

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The Committee have no doubt that the above issues would be gone into in depth by the new Railway Convention Committee to be constituted to review the performance of the Railways during the Fourth Five Year Plan and to give recommendations for determining the dividend payable by Railways during each year of the new Plan.



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PUBLISHED UNDER RULE 382 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE AND CONDUCT OF  
BUSINESS IN LOK SABHA (FIFTH EDITION) AND PRINTED BY THE  
MANAGER, GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PRESS, MINTO ROAD, NEW DELHI.

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