

further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and the Representation of the People Act, 1951.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill further to amend the Representation of the People Act, 1950, and the Representation of the People Act, 1951."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP : I introduce the Bill.

20.12 hrs.

1996-97

RAILWAYS BUDGET - GENERAL DISCUSSION

AND

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT (RAILWAYS) - CONTD.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Those who want to go for dinner they can go. Their names are not called. Again they can come back.

SHRI DWARAKA NATH DAS (Karimganj) : Sir, I rise not to support this Railway Budget but, at the same time, not to totally oppose it. This Budget is not a very good one but at the same time, not a very bad one also. It is in between.

The present Railway Budget 1996-97 is simply a copy of the earlier one. That is, there are no innovations at all. Second class fare has not been increased. There are frequencies of trams and some new trains have been introduced and there are a few extensions. Except this, this Budget is thoroughly urban-oriented and not at all rural-oriented.

In this Budget, Southern Assam and Tripura had thoroughly been neglected although the hon. Railway Minister has assured that rural and backward areas will be connected by rail. But his assurance is totally in vain. (*Interruptions*) In all the branch sections of railways in Southern Assam, running of trains is being withdrawn. In course of time, this branch line will probably be closed. Previously, the trains used to run two to three times in 24 hours but now it is only one time.

So, I feel that there is some secret agreement between the surface transport and the rail transport. Otherwise, it could not happen.

As there is not sufficient time at the disposal of the Chair, I am not going to discuss some aspects of the Railway Budget but simply I want to put forward my demands. The railway line should be extended from Dullabcherra to Ranpur. Of course, this is in my

constituency. This proposed Dullabcherra-Ranpur Branch Section is in Karimganj district of Assam. People of that backward area have been demanding for the same since 1977. But till this date, nothing has been done. Further, the Badarpur railway junction in Karimganj district of Assam should be upgraded as a railway division which has been assured by the previous Congress Government as it is the nerve centre of rail service in Southern Assam.

Next, the proposed broad gauge line should be extended from Lumding to Kumarghat in Tripura via Badarpur as it is the lifeline connecting Tripura with Assam. Of course, the broad gauge line should be extended to Silchar via Badarpur as provided in the Budget. It is a long-pending demand. I hope that the construction of the broad gauge line would be taken up very soon. But the budgetary provision for this broad gauge line is so small that I think within 10-15 years it cannot be completed.

Construction of Lala Bhairangti line in Katakhal-Bhairabi branch section in Hailakandi district of Assam should be taken up soon for which the survey has already been made. But up to this date nothing has been done. Then, why has the survey been made for this line? There is a strong demand for this branch line.

The frequency of trains in branch sections in Karimganj and Hailakandi districts of Assam should be increased for the convenience of the passengers. In this branch line from Katakhal to Bhairabi, the train goes only once in a day and from Karimganj to Dullabcherra also the train goes only once in a day. Previously, this train used to go two or three times in 24 hours. But it is available now only once.

20.20 hrs.

(Prof. Rita Verma - *in the Chair*)

Madam, the Cachar Express connecting Silchar with Lumding through the hill section should originate from Karimganj because the Barak Valley Express as well as the Cachar Express originate from Silchar ignoring Karimganj. So, I hope that the hon. Railway Minister would make a provision so that the Cachar Express can originate from Karimganj junction of my constituency. If the Cachar Express originates from Karimganj junction, I think the passengers of not only the Karimganj district but also of Kailakandi district will be benefited. The hundred coaches of two prestigious trains, that is, the Barak Valley Express and Cachar Express, connecting Silchar and Lumding and also of trains in the branch section of Southern Assam should be replaced by new ones because these coaches are worn out. In these two trains, that is, the Barak Valley Express and the Cachar Express, there should be a provision for AC coaches. The railway tracks in all the branch section in Southern

Assam are the worst in the entire area. These should be improved immediately.

So far as reservation centres are concerned, there are only nine computerised reservation centres in the North-Eastern Frontier Railways whereas there are as many as 52 reservation centres in the Northern Railway zone. So, such centres should be extended to Badarpur Railway Junction in Karimganj district of Assam and also to Dharmanagar in Tripura State.

There should be a double track railway lines from New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati because there is at present, a single track between New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati. That is the main reason for late running of trains in the North-East. So I demand that these tracks should be doubled at least from New Jalpaiguri to Guwahati. At the same time, there should be erection of concrete walls in the railway track from New Alipurduar to New Coochbehar station to save the track from awful floods caused by River Teesta and its branches.

At the same time, I would suggest that there should be social forestry done on both sides of the railway track to preserve the environment. I am not speaking about the North Frontier railway area, but I want that there should be social forestry done on both sides of the railway track on an all India basis to maintain and preserve the natural environment.

All the distant casual labourers of NF railways should be re-employed as assured by the previous Government. But nothing has been done in this respect upto this time. It is a common aspect that trains are running late sometimes from five to twenty hours. This has been the case in case of trains running from North-East to Delhi, Bombay and other western cities. In my constituency it is common that all the trains on the branch lines always run late. So I request the hon. Railway Minister to look into the affairs to the Railways.

So far as the unmanned level crossings are concerned, there are some accidents in my constituency itself. So far these unmanned level crossings there should be some arrangement so that in future accidents do not occur.

Last but not least, I should say the freight charges in this Budget have been increased by ten per cent. Of course in the case of some consumer goods, they have been exempted. But in other cases there is a ten per cent increase. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to make it five per cent. Our hon. Member Shri Ram Naik also expressed this view.

With these words, I hope the hon. Railway Minister will look into my demands and do the needful at an early date.

SHRI UDAYSINGRAO GAIKWAD (Kolhapur) : Let me at the outset congratulate the hon. Minister for Railways Shri Paswan who has presented the first excellent Railway Budget of the National Front Government.

I would like to point out some salient features and also some highlights of this Budget. There is no increase in the fare of Second Class ordinary and Second Class mail and express trains. There is no increase in the fare of monthly and quarterly season tickets for Second and First Class. There is no increase in the existing freight rates for newspapers, magazines, foodgrains for public distribution system, edible oil, salt, fruit and vegetable, edible cakes and oil seeds. They have been exempted. The minimum distance for the freight charges is to be revised from 75 to 100 kms. All these proposals are in the larger interest of the community at large.

The burden of resource rising is shifted to upper class. There is a 10 per cent rise for all distance in respect of Air Conditioned First Class, AC Sleeper both in 2 tier and 3 tier, and AC Chair Car Fares of prestigious luxury cars like Rajdhani, Shatabdi, August Kranti Express will also go up by ten per cent. I hope our friends from upper class of the society will bear this burden willingly as it is not much for them. Thus, the hon. Minister has distributed the burden equitably.

There are also some important features of the Budget. As far as the new developments are concerned, fifteen new trains are being introduced. All the religious places of the country are being connected by fast trains and a new Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation is being set up. Modern communication facilities are being introduced between the train driver and the nearest railway station in case of accidents. There are welcome features, though some of these projects were launched in the Congress regime by the previous hon. Railway Minister.

The other problem about which I must make a mention is the difficulties of the suburban traffic. Especially, the Metros like Mumbai are facing tremendous problems of communication. Last year, a promise was made to undertake developmental works. In this year's Budget, adequate attention has not been paid to this aspect and the issue appears to have been neglected. Some hon. Members from Mumbai have already mentioned about this and I only say that I support their views. So, please pay adequate attention to these problems and take some effective steps in this regard.

I would like to congratulate, once again, the dynamic hon. Minister of Railways for fulfilling the long awaiting aspirations of the people of the North-East by connecting their trains with each other and also to the national capital. In these remote areas a lot of people have not seen trains as of date. The hon. Minister has mentioned this in his speech also. I would like to mention that hon. Member, Shri Santosh Mohan Dev has already mentioned about this historic fact and also noted the efforts that he has taken to get these trains for that region connecting the 'seven sisters' to India.

The hon. Minister, during his speech, requested the Minister of Finance to allocate more funds. In this context, I must mention that the Minister of Finance, in

his speech, has given the green signal for the request. When I was looking at the hon. Minister of Railways during the speech of the Minister of Finance, I could make out that he was relaxed and relieved.

I will now come to make suggestions regarding my district, Kolhapur. I would like to give some important suggestions for my district and my constituency. Kolhapur is a historical place and an industrial town, having about 7,000 small scale industrial units and also some spinning mills and fourteen sugar factories, functioning well to their crushing capacity. My district has also some export oriented units. The Kolhapur Railway Station has completed hundred years of its existence and the people of my district have celebrated the occasion by organising a big function.

The traffic from Kolhapur to Mumbai and back is very heavy and to get the reservation for air-conditioned two-tier sleeper class is very difficult. All the business men from Mumbai come to Kolhapur and it is very difficult for them to get the reservation. We are having only two trains from Kolhapur to Mumbai. One is the Mahalakshmi Express and the other is the Sahayadri Express. It is very difficult to get accommodated in air-conditioned two-tier sleeper class coaches in these trains. So, I would urge upon the Government and the hon. Minister to provide one such coach for each train as early as possible.

We have been requesting for years together to have a superfast train introduced between Kolhapur and Mumbai and back. This longstanding demand is still pending. Even though justice has been rendered to other States, we have not been given this superfast train. This has not been done even though Kolhapur is an industrial and a historical town.

I now come to the Konkan Project. In the State of Maharashtra, Kolhapur is a border district of Ratnagiri. The Konkan Railway Project is to be opened up by October for goods trains and by December for passengers.

This would provide the much needed vital communication to this under developed area. While speaking on this subject, I would like to mention that I had mentioned last year also that the rail link between Kolhapur and Ratnagiri is very important. This will connect Konkan Railway with the Decker Plateau and will give the much needed rail connections. This will encourage trade, tourism, commerce and industry between the two regions which will trigger off further economic development.

Unfortunately, the present Budget does not mention anything about this longstanding demand of ours. I, therefore, request you to include this demand in your future railway development plans. I have requested several times to get a survey done on the rail link between Kolhapur and Ratnagiri stations, including the renovation of one hundred year old station of Kolhapur. The above demand includes the beautification of

surrounding areas of the railway station and widening the platforms of Hathangale and Rekadi railway stations. At present, if the trains come to these two railway stations, the platforms are so small that half of the train remains outside the platform and the passengers find it very difficult to get down and get back into the train again. So, kindly see that the platforms are widened.

Sir, we had requested for an over-bridge at Temblinaka on Pune-Bangalore highway. For the construction of this over-bridge, fifty per cent of the funds is to be shared by the local bodies, such as corporations, zilla parishads, municipalities etc., and MLAs and MPs are also ready to contribute money from their own funds, so that fifty per cent can be covered by local bodies. MLA and MPs and the rest fifty per cent shall be given by the National Government and the Railway Department. So, I kindly urge upon the Minister that he should part with this fifty per cent so that we can get this overbridge.

I request the hon. Minister that while replying to the suggestions that I have made, he should come out with a statement that he would honour the assurance given by our Minister, Shri Suresh Kalmadi. He had visited Kolhapur long back and he had announced in a public meeting that he would give this fund from his discretionary quota for widening of the railway platforms and also for the beautification of the hundred year old railway stations. He had given an assurance that he would see that the rail link between the Kolhapur and Ratnagiri stations is surveyed immediately.

While concluding, I must say that my Party, the Indian National Congress supports such a policy because this is in line with the thinking of providing relief to the poor people of this country. Therefore, on behalf of myself and my party, I strongly support the Budget presented in this august House by the hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan.

SHRI AJAY CHAKRABORTY (Basirhat): Madam Chairperson, this is the first Railway Budget of the new Government. I do support this Railway Budget and I do appreciate the outlook of the Railway Budget. There is no doubt that Railway plays an important role in our country. Railway is the symbol of national integration. The railway compartment is like a miniature India in which people of all regions, religious, castes, creeds and economic background get together.

Railway is the main means of transport for travel by the common people and also for carriage of goods for daily use. The Railway Budget this time exempted the common people from the burden of rise in fares. Here I would mention that the betel leaves have also been included in the list of perishable goods and for this, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways.

The hon. Minister in his speech during the presentation of the Budget had assured the august House that the projects which have not been taken up for consideration for want of time and for other technical

reasons, would be taken up in the next Session; and I am very much hopeful about this matter.

During the presentation of the Budget, the hon. Minister has categorically emphasised that the people residing in the undeveloped areas, the people who are living in the farthest corner of the country, those who are economically weak and belong to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes are not connected with railway line facility. Practically those people are detached from the mainstream of our country. He has categorically emphasised that the Railways would render all possible railway facilities to these people. About this assurance I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways.

In this context, I would like to draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister as well as that of the august House, that in my area maximum number of people belong to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes who are economically weak and backward. My constituency is Basirhat and it consisted of two districts which are North 24 Paraganas and South 24 Paraganas of West Bengal.

All of us know that the Sunderbans is famous for the Royal Bengal Tiger, the man eater. A major portion of Sunderbans falls in my constituency. Basirhat-Hasnabad is the gateway of Sunderbans. We, the people of Basirhat, supply and feed the Calcuttans. We are supplying vegetables, meat, milk products and fish to Calcutta in general and particularly Central and North Calcutta. We are feeding the Calcuttans, but we are deprived of the railway facilities. Thousands of daily commuters are coming to Calcutta from the Sunderbans and from Hasnabad and Basirhat for their jobs. Thousands of students from Hasnabad and Basirhat come to Calcutta for higher studies in reputed colleges in Calcutta, in the Calcutta University and also in Jodavpur University. They are all deprived of the railway facilities.

We are very much neglected in the Indian Railway map. Our line belongs to Barasat-Hasnabad section under the Sealdah Division of the Eastern Railway. If we want to go to Hasnabad from Sealdah, then we have to get another train from Barasat. The trains which are running from Barasat to Hasnabad are moving like old hackneyed carriages, called *lal gadis*. Those trains should be removed. My specific demand is for introduction of facility of electrification from Barasat to Hasnabad - a distance of only 50 kilometres. Considering the price hike of diesel, it is feasible for the Railway Board to introduce electrification in those lines. I demand electrification from Barasat to Hasnabad. During finalisation of that, I want at least six DMU coaches with frequent service directly to and from Sealdah-Hasnabad and *vice-versa*. I want that double line from Sonarpur to Kaniung and also from Baruipur to Lakhikantapur of South 24-Parganas. Railway Board should be provided to fulfil the genuine grievances of

the Basirhat sub-division and people from other parts. They had started a movement from year to year for redressal of their demand. But the Railway authorities kept mum and are quite blind about that movement. We had the opportunity of having Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Choudhury. He appreciated our demand. During his tenure, a direct train was introduced, that is, *Ichhamati* passenger. But after his tenure, that coach has been withdrawn. The reason is best known to the Railway authorities. The people are agitated. Irrespective of political parties and political affiliations, the people of Basirhat organised a *dharna* at Sealdah station. But no fruitful result has yet from the Railway authorities.

The people of Basirhat are waiting and observing that the new Government has been formed. And they are observing the work of Railways and they are aspiring that our young and jubilant Railway Minister will look after the railway facilities for the Basirhat people.

I had the occasion to meet the hon. Railway Minister in a meeting convened by him on 25th June. I urged upon him that he should look after the facilities not from the commercial point of view but from the welfare point of view. So our Railway officials are saying that our line is not viable. But the Railways should decide its policy not from the commercial point of view but from the welfare point of view.

I humbly submit before the Railway Minister that he should look after our problems and provide all possible facilities to the people who are living in the Basirhat-Barasat sub-division (Sunderbans) and to the people belonging to the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes and to those who belong to the weaker sections of our country.

He should render all possible railway facilities to the people who are living in Sunderbans and people belonging to the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and weaker sections of our country. I again humbly submit before the House and I categorically demand electrification from Barasat to Hasnabad under Sealdah Division of Eastern Railways. I urge upon the Railway Minister through you, to consider our demands and render all facilities to the people of Basirhat in respect of railways.

MR CHAIRMAN: Shri P. Chanmugam may speak now.

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI (Belgaum): Madam, we have also given our names. But the order of our names are changing from time to time. You may kindly look into the file and tell me where my name stands.

MR CHAIRMAN: The names are called strictly in the order in which the parties have recommended.

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI: Order of names is changing. For the same purpose, I am requesting you to give me some time to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You please check up the list from your party.

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI : I have checked it and we are within time. Janata Dal party is within time.

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI : I have also given my name for participating in the discussion. Why do you allow more time to others? What do they speak from other side?.. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please sit down. You will be allowed to speak as per the priority list given by your party

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI : We have given the list of names but the list has been changing. I am requesting you to look into it. If you want who is changing the order. I can explain it. If you permit me and if the Chair wants, I can tell you how the list is changing and how things are going on. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Ram Vilas ji please control your hon. Members

(Interruptions)

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : I am also waiting. (Interruptions)

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI : I am also sitting. I have also been elected. I have to highlight the problems of my constituency. (Interruptions) What do you speak from that site? It is now ten days and I have not spoken even once. I do not get opportunity to speak during zero hour and under Rule 377. (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Seven hon. Members from Janata Dal have spoken.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI : I am not objecting to other Members speaking. I am requesting you for a chance to speak. (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Seven Members from Janata Dal have spoken which is more than the share of your party

(Interruptions)

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HUSSAIN (Murshidabad) : Seven Members from Janata Dal have spoken. How many have spoken from C.P.M.?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am trying to accommodate all the parties. Please do not try to interrupt.

(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SHIVANAND H. KOUJALGI : This is an important debate on the Railway Budget. I am requesting you to give me an opportunity.

MR. CHAIRMAN : This is an important discussion on the Railway Budget and so everybody wants to speak. Let us not waste the time of the House any more. Mr. Shanmugam may speak now

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SURENDRA YADAV (Khalilabad) : Names of six Members were given then how is it that seven Members have spoken? (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : They have spoken you can come and check up. (Interruptions)

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA (Bilhaur) : The Janata has 45 Members and seven have spoken. Our party has 160 Members and very few have spoken. (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P. SHANMUGAM (Vellore) : Mr. Speaker Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget for the year 1996-97 presented by the United Front Government. I compliment the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan for an excellent Railway Budget.

While supporting the Railway Budget, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister that a new railway-line from Kanchipuram to Kalampur via Cheyyar and Arani which is about 50 kilometres is very much necessary.

Sir, Vellore is my Parliamentary constituency. It was named after Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. This is the only district in India which has been named after Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. I am proud to say that it was as Kaliawar, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu who named this district of North Arcot in the name of Dr. Ambedkar. I am sure the hon. Minister would consider my request and sanction the necessary amount for this railway line. Kalmipur is already linked to Tiruvannamalai. If this new line is sanctioned then Kanchipuram can be connected to Tiruvannamalai which is an ancient and important temple-town for the past 300 years. I would also like to point out that thousands of pilgrims throng these temples. Over and above Arani is one of the famous places for silk sarees in addition to Kanchipuram. I take this opportunity to invite the hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan to kindly visit Arani, Kanchipuram and Tiruvannamalai.

Tindivanam to Kannamangalam via Thellar, Vandavasi, Arani which is about 90 kms may be

surveyed and a token amount be provided for starting these two works. Arani and Kanchipuram which are very famous temple towns, if they are connected to Vellore, Bangalore and other Southern States, it will be really helpful to businessmen, the pilgrims and also the general public. Arani which is famous for silk sarees, some quotas for reservation of tickets may be provided for travelling in the blue mountain trains. In the Nagarcoil - Bombay express at least reservation quota for four tickets may be given for Arani. Some reservation quota should also be provided in the Jayanti Janta Express from Kanyakumari to Bombay. Reservation quota for four tickets in the Trivendrum Mail, which runs from Madras to Trivandrum via Coimbatore, for Coimbatore may be provided. Some quotas may also be provided for Coimbatore in Cochin Mail and Mangalore Mail for Arani and Thiruvambeli.

The National Highway No. 46 between Madras and Bangalore is a very busy highway. They drain out very heavy traffic. Two broad-gauge railway lines are crossing at 73/6 of National Highway No. 46, near Pachakuppam. Due to frequent closing of railway gate, the through traffic in National Highway is very much affected due to which a lot of delay takes place. Because of this, there is not only a heavy loss of fuel but also manpower. Hence it is essential to construct a road over-bridge at Pachakuppam.

The construction of Road Over-Bridge at Pachakuppam was included in the Sixth Five Year Plan itself *vide* Government of India letter no. PL4/8/79 dated 3.11.79. The alignment for Road Over-Bridge was also approved by the Government of India *vide* letter dated 18.10.79. For the last twenty years the matter has not been taken up. The land acquisition was also sanctioned by Government of India *vide* letter dated 31.3.87. So, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railway to kindly consider the construction of the ROB at Pachakuppam.

My another request to the hon. Minister of Railways is that the Vaniampadi Road Over-Bridge should be constructed immediately so that people can reach Bangalore early. This may be done on a top priority basis. If this is done, the people would be ever grateful to the hon. Minister of Railways as also the Central Government.

Katapadi, which is a part of my constituency, in Southern India should also be made a model station just like Gwalior. It is situated near Vellore. Vellore has a very famous hospital *viz* the Christian Medical College. People from all over India come to Vellore hospital for treatment. In addition to this, people from all over India come and visit Vellore Fort which is very ancient. People who want a quiet atmosphere also come and visit Amirthi forest and they also get an opportunity to see Vellore. Vellore is also one of the very famous business centres of Southern India. So, kindly consider the construction of a ROB at Katapadi.

Last but not least, Vaniampadi Road Over-Bridge should be constructed immediately. With these few words, I support the Railway Budget presented by hon. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and I also congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing a very good Railway Budget.

21.00 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE (Ratnagiri) : Madam Chairperson it is my maiden speech as far as Railway Budget is concerned and I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. The prices of petroleum products were increased just before the presentation of General Budget. As a result of it, the people will have to bear the burden of additional Rs. 12000 crore and there was widespread discontentment among the people because of this price hike. Agitations, demonstrations and bandhs were organised in every part of the country against this increase in prices. The people were already under pressure of price rise and the Government presented in this House, first the Railway Budget and then the General Budget.

I was hearing the Budget speech of the hon'ble Railway Minister and I think while presenting the Railway Budget, he must have in mind the difficulty people are facing because of hike in petroleum prices. He has tried to pacify the rising sentiments of the people of the country.

During the course of his budget speech, many hon'ble Members tried to interrupt him to draw his attention towards the demands of their respective States and he wanted to appease every section. He was thinking that he would be able to do justice with every State but in fact, he has not been able to do so.

The hon'ble Railway Minister had at the fag end of his speech, gladly announced that he had not hiked the Second class fare and suburban passenger fare. The increase was also not effected in the rates of monthly/season tickets in respect of suburban trains of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Madras. He knew that more than 50 percent commuters use sub-urban trains and therefore, he has tried to appease them in this budget. I would definitely appreciate this gesture but I would like a categorical assurance from him that second class fares and sub-urban train fares will not be increased till the next Railway Budget. He can at least give an assurance that these fares would not be hiked so long as he holds this Portfolio and I would resume my seat if he gives this assurance.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : There is no need of an assurance because fare hike will be resorted to only in the next Budget.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE : Madam, I have said this because the price of petroleum products were hiked before the General Budget was presented and there was great resentment throughout the country. So,

I apprehend that fares can be hiked even after the presentation of the Budget. That is why, I sought an assurance from him because we are not tired of pleading for the poor, for the backward in this House and this assurance will give solace to them that the fares would not be increased at least for one year.

I represent Ratnagiri Parliamentary Constituency of Konkan region of Maharashtra. The people of Konkan have been dreaming for years for the Railway line and this dream is going to come true. The people of Konkan have welcomed Konkan Railway. Thousands of people of from Konkan region welcomed the first Mumbai-Konkan train in the manner they celebrate their festivals.

Konkan is a backward and hilly region and people want its development. The Railway is the means to achieve this end. The Railway department has given a new slogan about Konkan. When we travel by road between Mumbai and Goa, we witness a hoarding saying 'Konkan Rail, Pragati Ka Parisar Se Mail' (The Konkan Railway will usher in prosperity). This is a very good slogan. We want the Railway should help in the progress of Konkan. One of my friends here also mentioned Konkan Railway in his speech. I hope the Railway department will fulfil the objective of this slogan.

Madam, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon'ble Minister that the farmers have given their cultivable lands for this Railway project and he should give preference to these affected farmers. They should be given priority in the matter of recruitment in Konkan Railway Corporation. They should be provided jobs not only in this Corporation but be allotted stalls at the stations being set up on this line. Unfortunately the Konkan Railway has not only given preference to these affected people.

Madam, there is one more point. In Maharashtra the project affected people are given a certificate about acquisition of their land and these people get many facilities besides priority in employment under various new projects and under the State Government. I would therefore request the Railway Ministry to issue such a certificate to the project affected people so that they get the benefit of the new schemes.

Madam, while making my demands, I would also like to make some suggestions. Every hon'ble member has mentioned Mumbai in his Speech. The prevailing prices of land in Mumbai are the highest world over. It is costlier than the cost of land in Chicago in America. As my friend Shri Prakash Paranjpe has said, the Railway have the vast area of land from Churchgate to Borivelli and from VT to Thane and if Commercial buildings are constructed on these lands, we can mobilise huge resources which can be utilised for laying new railway tracks.

The railways have high rise buildings at Mumbai VT Railway Station and Churchgate Railway Station which house the Railway officers and, if, in the same way, multistory buildings are constructed at other Railway

stations and sold to multinationals or big industrialists or rented out to them, the Railways can get huge amount of revenue. Today, the rate of land in Mumbai is Rs 10,000 to Rs 20,000 per sq. feet. There is no space in the city. The big industrialists will purchase this land.

Madam, I would like to make one more point. The Railways should pay greater attention to hygiene and cleanliness. This will mitigate many of our problems.

MR CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE: All right Madam, I would not give suggestions. I thank you as well as the hon'ble Minister and conclude.

MR CHAIRMAN: Shri Syed Masudal Hossain will speak now. Some Members wanted to know Partywise number of Members who have already spoken during this discussion. The position is: BJP-8 members, CPM-3, United Front-13, Janta Party-4, Samajwadi Party-2, TMC-2, TDP-1, AGP-1 and MCP-1.

SHRI S.P. JAISWAL: Madam, please tell us how much time each of them has taken.

MR CHAIRMAN: I will not go further. The Hon'ble members should be brief in their speech.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN: You have given the party wise number of members who had spoken. I would like to say only one thing in this regard. *(Interruptions)*

MR CHAIRMAN: You please speak on the subject.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN: It has been my experience in this House that those who get opportunity to speak in the beginning get maximum time. There is no time limit for them. I am not accusing the Chair. This has become a practice. The speakers who get their turn at the end of the debate are advised to speak for 5 minutes or 2 minutes. I am against this practice.

MR CHAIRMAN: Therefore, I will ring the bell after 10 minutes in each case. You please also take note of it.

SHRI SYED MASUDAL HOSSAIN: I will finish in 5 minutes. I don't know the art of making a speech, nor do I want to make a speech. I have one or two demands which I would like to put before hon'ble the Railway Minister through you.

It is a sorry state of affairs that every General Manager of the Eastern Railway comes to my area in a Saloon. Once upon a time, Murshidabad used to be the Capital of West Bengal. It has a very big palace and people come to see it. The Chairman of the Railway Board forgets this line once he assumes office in Delhi. No expenditure has been incurred on Krishna Nagar Lalguda section since independence. We have been demanding gauge conversion and electrification but to no avail. It is the question of only Rs 5-6 crore. I demand that a bridge be constructed over the Bhagirathi river. It will facilitate smooth travel from Sealdah to

North Bengal and Patna. The Nasirpur-Azamgarh Railway line was laid during the Second World war and this line exists even today but this is not being made use of. Similarly Howrah-Gede line which is in East Bengal is not being utilised...*(Interruptions)* I am not demanding new lines. What I am demanding is that the existing lines should be utilised by spending some money on them. Whenever new trains are introduced they are introduced from Sealdah or Howrah towards North Bengal or Patna via Dholpur, Rampur but the Railway Board forgets that there is yet another line which is via Katwa and Azamgarh. There is no train on this route. What is the reason? We have, on the one hand, heavy traffic and on the other, the line remains unused. I am not talking of new railway lines. I want that the existing track should be utilised.

He has paid greater attention to North Eastern region and the people of the region are grateful to him. I would like to make yet another point. We have now very good relations with Bangladesh. Can he not consider of providing a corridor with Bangladesh which will provide link with seven sisters via West Bengal? We have already a road corridor on 3 Bigha Land. We can have talks with the Bangladesh Government for providing a corridor on this railway line...*(Interruptions)* They have not been given 3 bighas of land. There is a track which is used by them as well as by us.

We have a magnificent museum which is visited by 14-15 lakh tourists every year. It is connected by a single line. The line should be doubled. The Railway Station in my Constituency has only two retiring rooms which are occupied by the Railway Officers. I have been demanding that a 20 bed dormitory should be constructed there. It will cost the Railways only Rs. 5-6 lakh. Sufficient land is available there. The hon'ble Minister should look into this demand...*(Interruptions)*

We have railway hawkers at every Station on various railway lines throughout the country but the Railways can neither remove them nor retain them. I am associated with the hawkers' Union. I would suggest that the hawkers should be given identity cards, licenses to bring about some sort of discipline among them because it is beyond our power to remove them. Many big industries are closing down gradually and you talk of self employment. The hawkers are self employed and Government is also in favour of encouraging self employment. So, they must be given identity cards cum-licenses. This will add to the income of the Railways. There are 60,000 railway hawkers in West Bengal and their number is increasing day by day.

Madam, the hon'ble Minister and I, both were Members of the Official Languages Committee. We had together toured many places. Computers have been introduced almost in every department. We have also launched Literacy programmes and the local people have learnt their regional languages. So, I would suggest that the reservation charts should be printed in local

languages. This can be done through computers. If the reservation charts are not in the mother tongue of the people of the region, particularly of the 'C' category regions then, I think, the money Government has spent on making these people literate is a sheer waste. Madam, it is now 9.30 p.m. and no pressmen or T.V. men are sitting here. My speech is not meant for radio or T.V. It is meant for the Minister. I hope he has given ear to my suggestions and would take into account while replying to the debate. I thank you for giving an opportunity to speak.

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI (Kota) : Madam, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is expert in public relations. It is not a Railway Budget but a means of public relations. I am sorry to say that in spite of his being an efficient person, he has not been able to impress the hon'ble Prime Minister and the hon'ble Finance Minister.

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN : You do impress them.

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : During his one hour 27 minutes budget speech, the hon. Prime Minister was so absorbed in the Railway Budget that he was caught napping throughout. When some hon. Members from this side drew the attention of the House to the fact that the hon. Prime Minister was sleeping, he said that he was listening to the budget very attentively. Yesterday, Shri Anantji was saying that when Shri Jaffar Sharief was presenting the Railway Budget last year, he was also twinkling because the budget provisions he had included for his State Karnataka were slashed considerably. How could he then listen to the budget? Budget for his State was cut down. The hon. Minister has...41 pages...*(Interruptions)*

PROF. I.G. SANADI (Dharwad South) : He is the Minister. How the budget was slashed...*(Interruptions)*

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI : The budget provisions for Karnataka were slashed. Now, the hon. Prime Minister was caught rapping here. He did not take it seriously. It would have been better if both of them had been impressed upon and large outlay included in the Budget.

In my opinion, he has done the job of reading out the Budget performing the rituals and we are also performing these rituals on our part. The situation is analogous to the rituals of a marriage when the 'Baratis' request the priest to complete the hymes early but he says that he will perform the rituals duly. Same is the position of all of us. We want to finish the discussions early, so wants the Madam and she will ring the bell after two minutes and ask me to sit down after five minutes. She will ask me to resume my seat after 10 minutes. This practice has been continuing for the last 4 years. Earlier we used to get full time for taking part in the discussion on Railway Budget when the House used to adjourn at 4 O'clock. But today it appears that they want to complete the discussion soon and therefore, we are compelled to do simple rituals. This is not going to help the country anyway.

I have read the Railway Budget running into 41 pages, out of which 11 pages are devoted to Route Surveys and the routes he has promised to get surveyed would need an outlay of Rs. 30,000 crore. The former Railway Minister Shri Madhavrao Scindia had got the Kota-Sopar Railway track surveyed. When I went to Rail Bhawan to enquire whether the survey had been completed and if so, by when the work of the project will be completed, I was told that if they continue to get the provision which has been given this year they would be able to complete the Survey work in 10 year time because survey work on 110 lines was pending. It was further told that it was not possible to construct this railway line. I have been elected to this House third time but the railway line has not been constructed nor is there any hope because we are in the opposition and we can only criticise the Government.

He has tried to get pat on his back by not increasing second class fare upto 200 kms. Ninety seven percent people travel by second class. What was the necessity for providing video coach and audio and telephone services in the coaches? He has taken care of only 3 percent passengers. He has proposed to introduce executive chair coaches. He has not taken note of the horrible state of railway journey performed by 97 percent people. This Budget philosophy does not conform to the ideology of his party. He has increased the fare of sleeper coaches which will affect the second class commuters. If he wants to generate resources, he should check Rs. 20,000 crore annual scams in the purchasing department and if this is done it will not be necessary to hike the fares and freights. The former Railway Board Chairman Shri Rao, while reading to the Railway Budget, said that the Railways have done a great harm to themselves by hiking the freights. He must have read the report published in the Economic Times which says that the wheat prices galloped following the day of hike in railway freight was announced. He has done the job of snatching the bread piece from the mouth of common man but he has not proposed any mechanism for checking rapidly increasing pilferages in railways. He has done the job of a manipulator by inviting the Members and having discussions with them. But we are not going to allow him to have a peaceful sleep.

SHRI RAM KRIPAL YADAV (Patna) The Minister has not done anything commendable for which he may deserve appreciation.

VAIDYA DAU DAYAL JOSHI I would also like to dwell on the deficit in the railways. The goods trains are involved in many accidents. If we try to pin point the reasons we can understand the same from an incident which I would like mention. On 21st instant a goods train was going from Ratlam to Kota. Four-five fish plates had been removed from the line and the train was taking curves. The instruments used for the removal of the fish-plates were recovered, pieces of rails were recovered, Couplings and signal equipments were recovered but main culprit fled. Now, 4 have been

apprehended as suspects. I also cite yet another incident. At Kota junction, 2 boys steal iron from the stationary trains. Four years ago, an honest officer of the RPF had apprehended 4 thieves while stealing iron and these ruffians had tried to snatch his rifle. He had no option but to allow them to snatch his rifle or shoot them. He shout ruffians to death and later he was sentenced to 10 years imprisonment. His department has not till today enquired whether the officer Shri Bhanwar Singh was still alive or not. The position today is that there is competition between the RPF and the employees of the platform to afford protection to these thieves. We have two types of force, i.e. RPF and the police. The former protects the railway coaches and the latter, platforms. If somebody is found pilfering at platform, the RPF doesn't show any concern and similarly if pilferage takes place in the bogies the Police take no action. The thieves are handed over to the Police but no action is taken. These things have to be viewed seriously. There are several gangs which are operating in the railways but the department is unable to apprehend them. The position of trains on Kota-Bina railway line in my area is very pitiable. This section is under Central Railway while the trains of Western Railway operate on it. I have been demanding for running an Express Train between Kota-Damoh, Kota-Bhopal. The existing train takes 18 hours to reach Bhopal from Kota while the bus takes only 7 hours to cover this route. The train generally runs empty. That is why I am submitting that unless an Express Train is run on this route, we will not get proper railway facility. I had put this demand to former Railway Minister Shri Kalmadi also. Infact I have 3 demands. First, we should be given a Kota-Bina Express train. Second, a train should be introduced between Jaipur and Madras because a large number of people belonging to Madras reside in Kota. This train is needed for them. The train that has been provided will not go via Kota-Bina. It will operate via Kota-Nahata and this will not give us any facility. This job involves a petty sum of Rs. 5-6 Crore. He should get the job of signal done and this will give him the Express track and the railways will get heavy passenger traffic. Similarly, a new train should be introduced on to Kota-Nahata route. Another train should be introduced between Kota and Baran. About 15000 railway employees reside on the other side of Kota railway platform and they have been demanding for the last 20 years construction of an overbridge. But this has not been provided so far. Former Railway Minister Shri Suresh Kalmadi had announced the construction of this over bridge and had said that 50 percent cost thereof would be borne by the State Government. The State Government has nothing to do with this. The Central Government I should fully finance this project. A similar overbridge is necessary between Kota and Gudli.

I have some more small demands. The local train which operates for Mahadev Mandir should also be

stopped at Ramgarh Station. A stoppage at Kapren station should be provided for Dehradun Express. The Jaipur super fast train should also be stopped at Keshwarai Patan Station which is a very famous place of pilgrimage of Hindus and Jains. The Avadh Express should also be provided halts at Darah and Keshwarai Patan Stations. I have reasons to speak only for Rajasthan. So, I would like to put some more demands. A survey for Ajmer-Kota track should be conducted. A separate train between Jaipur and Kota should be introduced. Pushkar is a famous place of pilgrimage in India which is visited by the people professing different faiths. A survey for providing railway line to Pushkar should be conducted. Similarly, a survey should be ordered for Kota-Bhilwara line. In the end, I would request the hon'ble Minister to check pilferages and corruption in the railway. He has no fund constraint. He should accelerate the pace of development. When the last Session of the outgoing Lok Sabha ended, I reached the Railway Junction and announcements were being made there that such and such train will arrive late by two hours, such and such train will arrive late by three hours or five hours. Such announcement was being made in respect of nine trains. When I went from my home and enquired about Dehradun Express I was told that it was on time but when I reached the Station I found it was first late by 2 hours and then by 5 hours. The Railway Minister said that the Station Master would be punished if trains run late but no Station Master or officer has been punished so far. The trains are running late as usual. He should make adequate arrangements for second class coaches because 97 percent commuters travel by second class bogies. The sanitation condition is very bad. The passengers ease themselves in the bath rooms. He has to give proper attention to the sanitation and hygiene aspect. The honourable Minister should not worry about the affluent class but should be concerned about providing maximum facilities and amenities to the poor Commuters. With these words I conclude.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : Madam, I have the pleasure of supporting the Railway Budget which is the maiden Budget of the present Minister of Railways. Madam, every year in this House we have the Railway Budget which is presented and a discussion takes place. But this year's Budget, it seems to me, is characterised by some unique features. At least there are two unique features which I find in this year's Budget.

21.45 hrs.

(Mr. Deputy-Speaker in the Chair)

Sir, every year in the speech on Railway Budget by the Minister of Railways there are different proposals which we find in the Budget. New railway lines, gauge conversion schemes, track renewals, rolling stock etc. are mentioned in the Budget speech. Some new trains

are introduced. These are the usual things which are there every year. For some parts of the country, some sort of these things are there. But this year, I find two unique features.

Firstly, they have decided, and it finds a place in the speech of the Minister, that six additional zones will be established in the country. For decades, the Government, the Rail Bhavan was toying with this idea because there has been a sea-change in the situation ever since independence and we have passed from Plan to Plan. This is the Eighth Plan which is coming to an end. The work has multiplied everywhere and pressure on Railways has also gone very high. That way, it is a very historic decision that there will be six new additional zones in the country and one of them will be in Orissa. I congratulate and thank the Minister for this.

There are various other features also which are connected with the Railways for which we feel delighted, we feel happy, and sometimes we feel proud of Indian Railways. The Indian Railways are the largest in the world. They were the second largest till the USSR was there on the map. As you know, Sir, we do not find USSR now, Russia is there. Therefore, now, the Indian Railways are the largest in the world. It is also the biggest employer in the country, almost 46 lakh employees are there on its roll. The Railways are also the biggest caterer in India. In the whole world, if I am not wrong, passenger fare etc. is also the lowest. As compared to our neighbouring countries, like Pakistan and Bangladesh also it is cheaper. These are the very special features of our Railways. That is why it has been decided that besides the General Budget, Railway Budget is presented separately since 1924. There is a history behind this.

Due to the time constraint, I would not like to go into other things. The provision for six additional zones is one special feature and the other special feature which is also unique is the introduction of five new tourist trains that will start this year. This will be done in collaboration with the private sector because our economy has undergone a drastic change. Some people put up some resistance, but now we all have fallen in line with the entire world, that is, privatisation of economy. Even in China, this element of privatisation is growing day by day. We have put privatisation in practice and for the first time we have included it in our Railway Budget. These are the two unique features.

Sir, I would like to say something about taxation etc. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, who is concerned about the poor people, who has a feeling for the poor people, has taken care in increasing the fare and freight charges. He has made some adjustments here and there in such a way that this increase will hit only three per cent of the total passengers. Of course, it is inflationary in nature. It cannot be denied that ten per cent freight increase - exempting, of course, 15 items of essential

commodities - will push up the prices of certain commodities. Different types of transport will become slightly costlier. In the process the Minister proposes to mop up an additional revenue to the tune of Rs. 927 crore for the rest of the year and annually, it should be Rs. 1,390 crore, about Rs. 1,400 crore.

I will come to the specific demands of my area a little later. In general, I would say what is very important for everybody and for the House also to think about and address itself to it, that the transport system is the main component of our national economy. In the transport, again railway transport plays a very dominant role. For India, I would say, everybody knows how important it is for our national unity. Apart from economic considerations, there is a social consideration, there is an emotional element, there is an emotional appeal and for emotional integration and national integration, the Railway is an instrument. The Railway is a medium to strengthen national integration in a country of the size and complexion of India, which is more than a nation, which is more than a country. India is a country of continental proportions, multi-racial, multi-lingual, stretching from Srinagar to Kanyakumari.

We have seen the concern expressed by the Members from North-East to Kutch in this side. So, here, the Railways play a very vital role in strengthening our much needed national integration. We are a developing nation. It is our bid and, just like everybody, we want to occupy the front seat in the comity of nations. We want to be reckoned internationally and we want to complete with the advanced countries. It is not an impossible task. In the telecommunications sector, we are a nation who can figure comparably well along with the developed nations. Our system can be favourably compared with that of the developed countries. So, in a situation like this, in this background, I find some disparities, some aberrations in the Budget. Last year, in the Economic Survey, our G.D.P. growth was targeted at 6.2 per cent and we have exceeded that target. We have achieved seven per cent G.D.P. growth. This year also, we would like to achieve seven per cent GDP growth. The industrial growth is at the rate of 12 per cent. In this background, what has been provided in the Railway Budget is very disappointing. The Railway Budget provisions do not match with the general expectations that were generated in the General Budget. The industrial growth rate is 12 per cent, whereas the growth rate in freight loading, which was provided here, is 5.1 per cent. In freight loading, the anticipated growth rate is 5.1 per cent. The annual outlay provided in this year's Budget is only eight per cent more than what was provided in the last year's Budget.

The purpose of the discussing the Budget is two-fold. One is, we have to review the performance of the Railways, if it is Railway Budget; if it is General Budget, we have to review the performance of the general economy of the previous year or outgoing year, and also discuss the Budget proposals for the current year.

Last year or in the outgoing year, the Railways have performed very well. The Railways performance had been good, had been commendable. The targets have been exceeded in freight movement and in passenger movement. In the passenger movement, the target was exceeded by 33 lakhs people or so. In respect of gauge conversion also, whatever was the target, that also had been achieved. Overall last year's performance was very good, including the backward areas. It is not for the first time that in the backward areas, we have taken notice of their demands for railway lines etc. The needs of some backward areas were considered during the period of Smt. Gandhi and Shri Rajiv Gandhi and some projects were undertaken.

It is in continuation of that some more new lines are included this year. But we have such vast backward areas that whatever we do is not considered adequate and that cannot be adequate because we have resource constraint. But anyway that continuation is there and some more emphasis also has been placed by the hon. Minister on the development of some railway lines in certain backward areas. With 7 per cent GDP growth and 12 per cent industrial growth, 5.1 per cent growth in freight movement is falling short. Taking into consideration the inflation rate, 8 per cent extra in Plan outlay will not match the expectations in real terms and Railways will not move forward as expected and as required.

It is a fact that out of the three modes of transport, road transport is not marginalising on railway transport. But railways cannot be substituted by road transport for carrying passengers and for movement of goods for trade. Of course, there are some shortcomings in railways in the matter of planning and operation. The Railways need Rs. 40,000 crore for the purpose of modernisation, gauge conversion, laying of new lines, electrification and expansion of the railway network. If I am wrong, the hon. Minister may correct me. Wherefrom can we get this fantastic amount? We cannot get it. But since it is the main component of infrastructure which has been very much emphasised upon by hon. Finance Minister Shri P. Chidambaram in his speech, why not we get more support from the General Budget? The Finance Minister has taken the credit. He has rightly said that "We will place emphasis on building infrastructure in our country". Is not railway considered as infrastructure? Can anything be considered as greater infrastructure than the railways? Budgetary support has come down progressively over the years from Fifth Plan onwards from 75 per cent to a meagre 19.2 per cent. In this background, there should be greater Budgetary support to the railways. Railways have to generate internal resources. The BOLT and the 'Own Your Wagon Scheme' should also start well and be implemented. I understand that certain international organisations, monetary organisations and financial institutions are willing to finance our projects here. They are willing to help us financially, as for instance the

EXIM Bank which is prepared to advance loans at 2 per cent interest. Orissa Chief Minister also had taken some initiative to negotiate with them for funding certain railways projects in Orissa. The hon. Railway Minister is not aware of it. Therefore, such sources should also be tapped. At the same time, the growing corruption has to be checked. Operational efficiency and customer service quality should be improved. We come across slogans like punctuality, safety and cleanliness written on boards on railway platforms as the motive and objective of the railways.

22.00 hrs.

Our motto is punctuality, cleanliness and safety. I would request the hon. Minister not to judge the punctuality aspect by taking into account the timings etc. of the Rajdhani Express as it is an erroneous thing to judge the rural condition of India moving about in the Connaught Place of Delhi. Similarly if we judge what is happening in the rural areas in different States, trains are running very very late. For example, in respect of the Utkal Express, the Hirakud Express and the Nilanchal Express which are originating from Orissa, there is no punctuality. There are certain trains which are being monitored from the Rail Bhavan here. There, the Railway Authorities can claim that the trains are running right on time. But what about other trains? By and large, we have to see that punctuality is maintained.

About cleanliness, the less said the better. There is no drinking water, no electric bulbs etc. in the trains. About the safety side also, I am constrained to make one observation. Even the people who are charged with this task of safety and security are accused of these things. Of course, not all are involved. In certain cases, it happens. Daylight robberies and dacoities are being committed in running trains. 15-20 days ago, near Jharsuguda in my constituency, there was a serious incident. How could the train remain there for more than half an hour when the dacoits moved from one compartment to the other compartment and looted the passengers? Like that, there is much scope for improvement of punctuality, cleanliness, safety etc.

Now, I come to the demands of my constituency. Kindly bear with me and give me some time. There is a new Zone. Naturally, the whole of Orissa, I believe, will be its jurisdiction with some additions this side and that side. But there is a division at Sambalpur which is yet to be made full-fledged. In September 1984, its foundation stone was laid by the late Shri Rajiv Gandhi. Whatever area was carved out as the original jurisdiction of this division at the time of inauguration, it is now being reduced and reduced gradually. It is a truncated division now. Jharsuguda, a railway junction in Orissa, is located at a distance of 50 kilometres from the divisional headquarters of Sambalpur. But peculiarly enough, surprisingly, it comes under Chakradarpur division which is more than 300 kilometres away from Jharsuguda. I feel there is some conspiracy. Several

times I have raised this matter here because the Sambalpur division will be one of the richest divisions if all these areas come under this division. This side, Rourkela and Jharsuguda are there. On the other side, Ib, Brajarajnagar etc. are there. In all these areas, all the big industrialists like the Tatas, the Birlas and the Dalmias have their presence... (Interruptions) Kindly give me some time.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You have already taken seventeen minutes. Please conclude.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh) : I will conclude. I would request one thing. Since there is going to be a Zone, at least now, this is the appropriate time to get the entire portion of Orissa along the Howrah-Bombay main railway line under the Sambalpur Division.

Next, about local appointment etc., this morning there was some discussion. The hon. Minister also reacted to it. But there is also something fishy going on. There is a racket working. What happens is that whenever there is some accident somewhere, some derailment due to which some wagons fall on the line, some workers are engaged. They are taken as regular workers of the Railways. When there are regular appointments, they are given preference. People from outside the State are brought to attend to this sort of a situation. They are on their record showing that they are the railway employees and whenever the regular employment question comes, these people are considered ignoring the legitimate demand of the local people.

Those who had given their land for railway projects, even they are not given employment. Therefore, the land oustees should be given top priority in the matter of employment.

Now I come to the proposal about construction of over-bridges.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please conclude.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : Please do not be restive. More than half an hour time has been taken by some individual Members belonging to both sides. Kindly give me five minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You conclude within one minute.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI : We had a meeting with the hon. Minister of Railways yesterday or day before. We had discussed certain things and he was very sympathetic. I am not repeating those projects. My request to him is, whatever has been agreed upon, may be implemented. The urgency should be realised. But our experience has been, when it comes to implementation, on one plea or the other, such things are deferred. This should not happen.

We have suggested about some new trains to the hon. Minister. There should be a survey conducted for the Raipur-Berhampur line and the Talchar-Bimlagarh line.

These are all mineral areas. The survey has been completed on Talchar-Sukhinda line. Since there is no time for me to place all the demands of my Constituency and Orissa, I will give the same in writing to the hon. Minister about these things. These are the demands of a very backward area. I would request the hon. Minister to sympathetically consider those things. I wholeheartedly support the Railway Budget.

SHRI N.S.V. CHITTHAN (Dindigul) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this is my maiden speech in this august House. On behalf of the Tamil Manila Congress, Moopnar Party, I rise to welcome the Budget presented by our hon. Minister of Railways.

As we all know, this is the first Railway Budget of the United Front Government which has assumed office on the 1st June, 1996. I join with our Railway Minister in praising the Railways for their contribution to the nation's progress. Indian Railways are the largest railways in the world, and they serve not only as a basic infrastructure for the economic growth but also as an instrument of fulfilling the social and natural objectives. They are the veins of the country, the backbone of our nation and more so, the symbol of our national unity.

I would like to congratulate our hon. Minister that after assuming the office, within a short span of one and a half months, he has presented this Budget. Within that period had found time to go over to Madras and obtain the views of our parliamentarians on 6/7/1996.

From the Budget details, I find some deviations made by the Minister of Railways from the accepted principle of unigauge in converting most of the country's metre gauge line into broad gauge, to foster the economy of the country in which his predecessors had shown keen interest. The revised target fixed earlier for conversion of at least 8,100 kilo metres of railway lines into broad gauge before the end of the Eighth Plan period appears to have been ignored now. Till March, 1996, one year before the terminal year of the Eighth Plan, only 5,000 kilo metres have been converted into broad gauge. The fact that an amount of Rs. 1,175.97 crore was spent for such conversion works during 1995-96, the allotment made for broad gauge conversion for the year 1996-97 is only Rs. 829.56 crore. I fear that this will bound to retard the industrial and economic advancement of the nation. The freight rate was increased by seven per cent in the last year and further ten per cent hike has been made in this year. The abnormal hike in railway freight rate may divert the goods traffic to road which is quicker at the expense of the rail transport.

The huge Railway vacant lands and unused properties should be commercially exploited to earn substantial additional revenue for the Railways.

I am happy to note that under Mass Rapid Transport System in Madras the first phase from Madras to Luz will be completed by December, 1996 covering 8.79 kms distance and phase two of the MRTS from MS to

Velachery covering 10.32 kms. distance has been included in this Budget. As the commuters and general public of Madras are eagerly awaiting the speedy implementation of this phase two, I repeat what the Minister has said in his speech - "The project will not be starved of funds."

I feel that the Southern Railway being one of the leading revenue earners of the Railways including the least ticketless travel zone of the Railways has not been given a proper share of the Budget allocations for new projects which will generate more revenue and earn foreign exchange also through development of tourist and business centres of Tamil Nadu.

The hon. Minister has said while introducing the Budget that members will be happy to know that high priority is being given to the gauge conversion in Tamil Nadu. Madras-Trichy-Dindigul would be completed by March, 1998.

Sir, I want to go into the detail regarding Madras-Dindigul gauge conversion. To cover a distance of 340 kms from Madras Beach to Trichy, the revised cost is 296.90 crore, of which the approximate expenditure to the end of 1995-96 is Rs. 88.37 crore. The provision for 1996-97 is only Rs. 74.84 crore and the balance to complete the work is Rs. 133.69 crore.

Secondly, to cover a distance of 93 kms between Trichy and Dindigul, the latest anticipated cost is Rs. 95.45 crore. The approximate expenditure to the end of 1995-96 is Rs. 13.41 crore. What is more shocking and disturbing is the provision for 1996-97 is barely Rs. 2 crore and the balance to complete the work is Rs. 80.04 crore. The people of Tamil Nadu are very much disappointed at the meagre allocation of Rs. 2 crore. In Tamil a proverb is told *Yanaipasikku Solappori*. It is like offering a grain of maize to a hungry elephant!

The Minister has repeatedly assured that the scheme between Madras-Trichy and Dindigul would be completed before March, 1988.

By the conversion of Dindigul-Tiruchirapalli and Tiruchirapalli-Madras Egmore metre gauge system to broad gauge, a direct route between Kanyakumari and Madras will be available which will shorten the present distance between these two cities by more than 100 kms, thus reducing the journey time. This will also reduce the heavy congestion on the existing saturated railway route between Madras and Erode as a number of trains running between Madras-Trivandrum-Kanyakumari can be diverted via this direct route. There is a very heavy traffic demand for passenger traffic on Kanyakumari-Tirunelveli-Tuticorin-Madurai-Dindigul-Tiruchirapalli-Madras-Egmore sector. But neither additional train can be introduced because of lack of line capacity, nor can additional coaches be attached as the existing trains are running with maximum capacity. Therefore, it is essential to increase the carrying capacity on this section by introduction of broad gauge at the earliest, so that the rising passenger demand can be

met. The demand is so high that when broad gauge trains with higher carrying capacity coaches and also additional coaches are introduced, the earnings just by passenger traffic on this sector can be increased by about Rs. 100 crore and thus fully paying back the investment made by the Railways in less than three to four years.

While many metre gauge to broad gauge conversion projects, where functional returns are not adequate, are being given priority, adequate funds are not allotted for conversion of Dindigul-Tiruchirapalli section in the current financial year. Since this conversion project will give maximum financial benefits and maximum returns, it is essential that adequate funds to the extent of Rs. 50 crore for 1996-97 are allotted immediately in this Budget to the Southern Railway for early completion of Madras Egmore to Dindigul conversion project.

I want a categorical assurance from the hon. Minister of Railways when he replies to this Budget discussion. It may also be pointed out that the passenger traffic earnings is the highest in Madurai Division. This is indicative that the lines on Madurai Division should not be enlarged but that they should be converted into broad gauge. I would even suggest that the Madurai Division, because of its importance, may be divided again and two separate sub-divisions may be set up. Further, with the prospect of a High Court Bench being set up in Madurai shortly, the traffic may further increase. This should also be borne in mind while re-organising the Madurai Division.

It is sad and even frustrating for the people of Tamil Nadu that even the changed political scenario in the country has not produced a Railway Budget satisfying even their minimum requirements. The importance given to the requirements of the States like Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka has not been shown to Tamil Nadu. Even though fifteen new trains have been introduced in the Railway Budget, the demand for introduction of the Kanyakumari-Madurai-New Delhi train has not been met. The distances of thirteen trains have been extended but the demand for extension of Howrah-Tirupati or Puri-Tirupati train to Madurai has not been conceded by the Minister of Railways. No new broad gauge projects or broad gauge conversion projects for Tamil Nadu have been mentioned in this Railway Budget.

Not even a survey has been sanctioned in the Budget for the demand for the laying of a broad gauge line to connect Karur and Salem via Namakkal, to relieve the ever-growing congestion in Erode area. No mention has also been made regarding the inclusion of Bodinayakanur-Madurai in the gauge conversion project in the survey of Dindigul-Kottayam via Sabarimala.

In Madurai city, the Railways have been regularly proposing the construction of over-bridges within Madurai city limits on the New Jail Road railway level crossing as well as Thathaneri railway level crossing.

These level crossings have heavy vehicular traffic as well as large number of trains running between Madurai and Madras, causing great inconvenience both for running of trains as well as for vehicular traffic which remains blocked for a long period whenever a train crosses. This leads to a severe traffic bottleneck in Madurai city. I request the hon. Minister to take up the construction of these two over-bridges to smoothen the traffic flow within the city limits of Madurai.

I also appeal to the Minister that the construction work of the over-bridge at my constituency, Dindigul is very low resulting in great hardship to the public. The work may be speeded up for early completion.

The work on the new line from Dindigul to Sabarimala may also be speeded up as this line would be of great advantage to the devotees of Lord Ayyappa. It would reduce the burden of their strenuous journey to Sabarimala.

I would also like to submit the following few points for the consideration of the hon. Minister of Railways.

The ICF, Parambur is the prestige of Tamil Nadu. The installed capacity to produce modern coaches should be upgraded and new technology in the production of railway wagons and coaches should be introduced so that we can meet the local demand and also tap the export market in wagons and coaches.

The Madras-Tambaram electric train service should be converted into broad gauge and it should also be extended to other satellite towns around Madras city to cater to the needs of the passengers who use trains regularly to reach Madras.

The cancellation charges which are charged presently should be reduced so that the commuters do not lose much money if they have to cancel their journey due to unavoidable circumstances.

The concession for senior citizens, which is presently given at 25 per cent should be increased to 50 per cent as in the case of the Indian Airlines. Also, the age limit may be reduced to 60. This scheme should be extended to the air-conditioned two-tier class and the air-conditioned three-tier class so that elderly persons can travel comfortably.

The running time of the Rajdhani Express from Delhi to Madras should be minimised to at least 24 hours. Or else, the basic idea of this train would not be served and if this is done, the Railways would earn a good revenue through this train. In the Rajdhani Express and Tamil Nadu Express, telephone services should also be introduced.

As there is a heavy passenger traffic between Dindigul and Virudhunagar, I request the hon. Minister to introduce a 'Rail Bus' between these two towns. It would earn very ample revenue for the Railways. Several years ago, this traffic was in vogue. This could be started again.

Courtallam is a health resort in Tamil Nadu. There are so many natural water falls there. It is considered to be a 'poor man's paradise'. So, I request the hon. Minister to kindly arrange to run special trains between Virudhunagar-Kollam through this route during the months between June and September.

Sir, the Coimbatore-Mettupalayam route is having very heavy passenger traffic. This route should be electrified and suburban trains should be introduced. At present, bus traffic is available for every three minutes. If suburban trains are introduced, the Railways would earn a decent revenue out of that.

I would request the hon. Minister to introduce a superfast express train between Madras and Rameshwaram.

In the Railway Protection Force, 50 per cent of the posts of Assistant Security Commissioners are set apart for promotee officers from the eligible Inspectors. The regular selection for the posts of Assistant Security Commissioner was held way back in 1983. Thereafter, the Inspectors have been promoted only on an *ad hoc* basis without regularising them in the posts though they were promoted against regular vacancies. Therefore, the Assistant Security Commissioners, who are promoted on an *ad hoc* basis, are anguishing in the same post for more than a decade and the eligible Inspectors anguishing in the post of Inspectors for more than 15 years without being elevated. I request the hon. Minister to rectify the anomaly by regularising the officers.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI (Jhansi) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, they are from Treasury Benches and they should be asked to conclude and give their suggestions in writing... (Interruptions)

SHRI BANWARI LAL PUROHIT (Nagpur) : Sir, if you want to accommodate all the speakers, you should not allow more than five minutes.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if the hon'ble Members put their demands and give their suggestions they can complete their speech in 5 minutes.

SHRI PRABHU DAYAL KATHERIA (Firozabad) : Sir, only 5 minutes should be given to each hon'ble Member. They should not repeat what has already been said.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please listen for a minute. Everybody demands that none should be allowed to continue beyond 5 minutes. But when you start your speech, you take at least 20 minutes. I had said that I will ring the bell after 10 minutes.

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Jammu region of Kashmir is an

area where, not to speak of trains, many people have not seen even the bus particularly in the area from where I have been elected to this House. We had the railway line upto Jammu. In 1983 Shrimati Indira Gandhi laid the foundation stone of Udhampur line and at that time, she had promised completion of this railway line in 5 years. A sum of Rs. 50 crore was earmarked for this purpose.

Sir, I would like to tell you the position of this railway track. The hon'ble Railway Minister has said that this line will be completed by 1997 but, in reply to a question, he stated that the expenditure on this line has gone upto Rs. 346 crore. In other words, the railway line which was to be completed in 1989 with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 50 crore is now likely to cost Rs. 346 crore in 1997.

Sir, it is said here that the projects are not completed because of paucity of funds but I would say that their method of working is not effective. In reply to my unstarred question No. 801 answered on 16.7.96, I was informed that an expenditure of Rs. 1.25 Crore was provided for Udhampur railway line in 1981-82 and Rs. 84 lakh in 1982-83, while in 1983-84 a provision of Rs. 1 crore was included. How can we complete this railway line with this meagre provision of 1 crore annually. It is true that last year Rs. 50 crore was provided. As per the position available today, the completion of this railway line involves an expenditure of Rs. 151 crore. Moreover, Six bridges are yet to be constructed.

Sir, a bridge is half constructed and it has developed cracks, the Government itself has admitted this fact. The same contractor is being asked to repair the bridge. He will spend Rs. 8 lakh and repair the bridge. My submission is that he has given commitment to this House that this line will be completed by December 1997, but no allocation has been made in the budget. We need Rs. 191 crore for its completion. The construction of 6 bridges will not involve less than 5 years. He is misleading this House. The hon'ble Prime Minister has given us a package and I welcome it. Shri Sontosh Mohan Dev is not present. It is said that Railways are the best means of integration of the country. We should have started the process of connecting Kashmir with the railway network in 1949-50. We have only been supplying cheap wheat flour, free education as if they are goat and Sheep. We were trying to bring them in the mainstream by appeasing them. Today, he has thought of giving them a Railway Line. The people from Kashmir come to Delhi and see for themselves how the Muslim League functions here, how the Hindus and Muslims live together throughout the country. They were misinformed that if they go to India they will not be allowed to offer Namaz. This forced them to take to guns. Therefore, I will suggest that he should try to complete this railway line as early as possible. This will benefit Kashmir and help us in maintaining the unity and integrity of the country.

He has made a mention of taking the railways to Kashmir. I said that it was upto Jammu only. We have not been able to take the railway line an inch further. The proposal of taking the railway line upto Udhampur does not find any mention in his Budget, nor any allocation has been made in his Budget for it. The Prime Minister's announcement of this package coincided with the announcement of elections. We must have some decorum. I wanted to know from Shri Sontosh Mohan if it was the way of their working. I think the senses of the people who are supporting this Government are not functioning. That is why such announcements are being made at this moment.

He has announced that the Udhampur Railway will connect Katra and Baramulla but the Chief Engineer of the proposed railway is sitting at Delhi headquarters. He doesn't want to send him to Jammu. If the Chief Engineer doesn't have his headquarters at Jammu, he will have to come to Delhi everytime. Jammu and Kashmir is really in the grip of insurgency which has turned Kashmir into a cremation ground, a graveyard. We used to call Kashmir as the 'Nandan Van' of India. People from far and wide used to come for study in Kashmir. The same Kashmir is burning today. If we want to save Kashmir, we have to take steps which are necessary for total integration. I would suggest that maximum possible provision should be included for this region. The hon'ble Prime Minister had said that this line will be completed in 10 years and an expenditure of Rs. 50 crore will be provided annually. I have already given an example of Udhampur line. This Rs. 2500 crore project will go up to Rs. 10,000 crore in 10 years. So, neither we will have funds nor will this line be completed. If he wants this line to be completed in a real sense then he must make continued allocation therefor.

I would like to highlight some specific difficulties. More than 40 lakh pilgrims visit Veshno Devi every year. During holidays, a sort of anarchy prevails there and people are stranded at railway stations, on roads for 15 days together. They don't get rail reservations. So I would like to request the hon'ble Minister to increase the number of trains to Jammu to facilitate comfortable travel for the pilgrims of Jammu and tourists going to Kashmir. A Shatabdi Express should be introduced immediately. The Rajdhani Express presently operates once in a week. Some special trains should be run on this route during vacations so as to clear the entire traffic in an orderly manner.

Some express trains operating on this route have a stoppage at Chakkibank before Pathankot and then straight at Jammu. The distance of Jammu-Pathankot section is 125 km and no train stops at any station of Kathua district and Jammu district. I would request that these trains should be provided stoppage at Hiranagar, Samba, Kathua etc. So that the local people are not required to catch a train after performing a road journey

of 125 km. So some more stoppages should be provided on this section.

The railway track between Jalandhar and Jammu should be doubled because the express trains take more than 4 hours to cover 100 km distance between Pathankot and Jammu. All the trains run the single track. I would therefore, urge him to take up the work of doubling the track very soon.

Jammu receives many long distance trains. They come from Kanyakumari, from Calcutta after covering hundreds of kilometres. These trains do not have cleaning arrangements in between. Bogies become very dirty. Similarly, they have no catering arrangements. The passengers arriving here from Lucknow or Saharanpur feel exhausted. He is very much aware of the arrangements that is available in various stations. I would, therefore, request that arrangements for catering and cleaning should be provided in these long distance trains.

Most of the trains get delayed. The Jhelum Express arrives late on Wednesday by even twenty hours. Infact, all the long distance trains are delayed. This aspect has also to be taken care of.

There are many unmanned railway level crossings on this track. This point has been raised by many Members. There are atleast six stations between Kathua and Samba where the railway crossings are unmanned. Many accidents take place there. Many animals get killed. The State Government has deposited its share of Rs. 3.80 lakh for providing a level crossing at Gagwal Station, and the Central Government should have provided this railway crossing by contributing its share. But the same has not been provided. I would request him to look into it. I have had a talk with the Chairman of the Railway Board. He said he had not gone to Jammu and Kashmir for a long time. I would request the hon'ble Minister to visit the State and also ask the officers to go there and assess the position. The Udhampur railway line was taken up in 1981. But is it not seen anywhere even after the lapse of 16 years. There is something wrong with the working of the Railways. A tender was floated for the construction of the bridge and the tender was quoted for Rs. 4 crore but the same was perhaps not acceptable to the railways. The tender was again floated and at that time it was finalised for Rs. 9 crore but was never allotted. Now for the third time, they are going to finalise the tender for Rs. 15 crore. This is the position. The bridge which was estimated to cost Rs. 3 crore will now cost Rs. 15 crore. Some tenders for lower amount were also received. But the Ministry used its discretion and allotted the work to its favourite company. Undoubtedly railways are the best means of national unity and integrity. I have given my suggestions keeping this aspect in view because people from all over the World visit Jammu and Kashmir. This region needs his special attention.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : All of us want that the entire country integrates with Jammu and Kashmir. Although I did not want to ring the bell but it was obligatory for me. You have given very good suggestions. Now, I would like Shri Mangat Ram to give his suggestions.

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA : Sir, I have one more point to make. All the tourists of Punjab, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir who visit Devi Shrine desire to go to Hardwar but there is no direct train for them. They are left at Ambala. They experience great difficulty in going to Hardwar from this place. Those who have travelled by this route have the experience. So I would request that a train should be introduced between Jammu and Kashmir.

SHRI MANGAT RAM SHARMA (Jammu) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with those hon. Members who have expressed their support for the Railways Budget. No much time has lapsed since this Government was formed. I think the budget which has been presented by the hon. Railway Minister under this time constraint deserves appreciation. The budget provides for expansion of rail tracks, introduction of new trains and conversion of rail tracks into broad gauge. Funds are needed for expansion and ensuring efficiency. I think hike in fares and freights to meet the expenditure, will not affect poor and common man. An effort has been made to pass on this burden on middle and affluent sections. I think he has prepared and presented the best railway budget in the present scenario.

We all know that we need resources to run the country and in this resource mobilisation, the affluent people have to bear a little more burden, although it is the common man who has to share the major part of it. So, all of us should commend this budget and support the hon. Minister.

In Jammu and Kashmir from where I come, the Sialkot-Jammu railway line existed before partition in 1947 and it was closed by Pakistan. Efforts were made during the period of Pandit Nehru's, Lal Bahadur Shastri and Indira Gandhi to provide rail link between Jammu and Kashmir and Pathankot-Kathua line was laid and made operational. Thereafter, it was extended from Kathua to Jammu and made operational then. In 1983, Indira Gandhi laid foundation of Udhampur line but I am sorry to say that it has not been completed so far. We are happy that our hon. Prime Minister, Shri H.D. Deve Gowda made three announcements three days ago, the most important of which is construction of Jammu-Udhampur-Katra-Riyasi-Basrihat-Kazikund-Srinagar and Baramulla rail track. It involves an outlay of Rs 2500 crore. So, at least Rs 300 to Rs 350 crore should be allocated every year. Then only will we be able to complete this work in 8-10 years. If he really was to bring Kashmir valley under the railway network, then maximum funds should be allocated for it and at the same time, as Shri Chaman Lal Gupta has said, the office of the Chief Engineer should be shifted to Jammu

from Delhi and Jammu should be declared a Railway Division because it qualifies for it. The hon. Minister must pay attention to this aspect. The people of Jammu and Kashmir, particularly Muslim community, have always proved their secular credentials. I am proud that, during militancy, the people of Muslim dominated areas of Poonchh and Rajouri proved their patriotism and maintained peace and order. I would request the hon. Minister to order immediate survey for Jammu-Poonchh-Rajouri rail track to give the benefits of railway network to the people of Jammu. I would also demand extension of the Shatabdi upto Jammu. It has already been pointed out here that 20 lakh people visit Mata Vaishno Devi daily and they get stranded at Jammu for many days because of non-availability of reservation facility. I would request that train services between Jammu and other places should be improved to attract more and more tourists to the State. Jammu also has many places worth seeing. The tourism input in Himachal Pradesh has increased. Jammu Division also has many attractive places from tourism angle. Rajouri, Udhampur, Kathua and Doda are hilly areas and have good lakes. I want tourist to visit these places to offset the set back received by Jammu and Kashmir. Pilgrims of Mata Vaishno Devi and Amarnath can stay at these places and enjoy the charms of these spots. I hope our Government will run as many trains between Jammu and other parts of the country as are necessary for smooth flow of passenger traffic. In a meeting with hon. Minister the Members of Parliament from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and the representatives of parties demanded direct rail link between Jammu and Hardwar. The workers required for Srinagar and Baramulla line should be recruited from Jammu and Kashmir. It will remove local unemployment.

Again, thousands of Hindus go to Hardwar daily in their moments of festivity, gaiety as well as mourning. During our meeting with hon. Minister he accepted our demand. I would expect an announcement in this regard when he replies to the debate. Similarly, survey of railway track between Jammu and Poonchh should be conducted on war footing. I am happy that thousands of workers of our railway network, which is the largest in the world, have proved their mettle by toiling day and night. I hope the hon. Minister will extend cooperation and encourage the officers of Railway Board and the railway workers at large to ensure maximum efficiency. He should also ensure train punctuality and better facilities. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI PRAMOTESH MUKHERJEE (Berhampur, WB) : Please give chances to smaller parties also. All the Members from big parties are speaking.

PROF. JITENDRA NATH DAS (Jaipur) : Sir, I rise to support the Budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railway.

This Railway Budget placed by the hon. Minister is the Budget for the poor. But I have some points to raise on this Budget discussion. So far as communication is concerned, the Railways are the best. The economy of any area, in any sorts, or the economy of any part of India will depend upon communications. The better the communication, the better the development of that area.

I am coming from North Bengal. North Bengal is a backward area and this area has been neglected since long. It was neglected and it is being neglected in the field of communications. In this Budget, I am very sorry to say that the hon. Minister will not be able to see any sentence regarding the development of the railways in this area, except one, i.e. Eklakhi-Balurghat and for this scheme, the fund has been drastically cut down.

On the other hand, there is another scheme, Gazol-Gunjaria which was duly surveyed during Shri Gani Khan Chowdhury's Ministry and this has been dropped.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister regarding these peculiar conditions in the field of communication. As you know, the North Bengal is very much rich in the field of tourism. Every year, Railways are earning a lot of revenues from this area but the people of this area are being deprived of the benefits. So, I would like to request the Government and the hon. Minister concerned to look into the matter so that the railway communication may be upgraded in this area.

Sir, M.Ps of North Bengal were invited by the hon. Minister. A number of suggestions were given to him but not a single suggestion has been accepted or ventilated in the Budget. In this connection, I would like to say that the M.Ps of that area has been neglected and their sentiments have been ignored. The number of trains is very small. The time-table of these trains are not maintained at all. All the coaches are in a dilapidated condition. I would like to mention about Teesta-Torsha train running between Coochbehar Haldibari to Sealdah. All these coaches are in a dilapidated condition. One passenger train that is Haldibari passenger train is also in a very dilapidated condition. There is no bath room, no toilet, no water supply and no sweeping arrangement.

So, I would like to give a suggestion to the hon. Minister that an enquiry should be made to look into all these things along with the M.Ps of that area. In addition to these things, I would like to make some suggestions as well as demand of the local people so that the hon. Minister may incorporate all these suggestions for execution in this Budget while giving his reply.

To take immediate steps to hand-over the Railway land near Jalpaiguri Railway Station to the District Magistrate, Jalpaiguri for construction of a market complex. It is noted that a market is already existing on the plot. We have been demanding this for a long time. However, there is no reply either from the Railway Board or from the Ministry of Railways in this regard.

To take steps to introduce a Stabadi Express from New Jalpaiguri to Howrah.

To revive Haldibari-Chilahati (Bangladesh) railway line and reduce pressure on roads. This is a very important road to Bangladesh. I would like to request the Government to look into this matter so that this line may be revived again to shorten the route between the North Bengal and Calcutta.

To modernise Jalpaiguri and New Coochbehar Railway Stations which are in dilapidated conditions.

To retain and strengthen DRM Office at Alipurduar. In this regard, an agitation is going on.

To expedite the gauge conversion of New Jalpaiguri-Siliguri line into Broad Gauge.

To take up gauge conversion of Siliguri-Alipurduar-Bongaigaon immediately. An agitation on this issue is also going on.

To accelerate the construction of double line from Maldah to Guwahati. This is also an important demand of this area.

To take immediate steps to change the dilapidated coaches of Teesta-Torsha and N.J.P.-Haldibari passenger train.

To attach A.C. II tier and A.C. III-Tier coaches with Teesta-Torsha Express regularly.

To extend the Goar Express up to NJP.

To take immediate steps to introduce a superfast express train from Coochbehar to Calcutta.

To speed up the construction of Eklakhi-Balurghat railway line and allot adequate fund for its early completion and to resume the Gazol-Gujaria railway scheme.

To take steps to run the weekly Howrah-Guwahati express daily.

To introduce one more express train between New Jalpaiguri and Calcutta.

To increase the frequency of the Guwahati-New Delhi Rajdhani Express to run it daily instead of tri-weekly and to provide its stoppage at New Coochbehar and New Alipurduar. This is a very important train but the people of this area are not getting benefited as expected.

To construct a fly-over at Mohitnagar Railway Gate which is essential to avoid frequent accidents.

To take up conversion of Radhikapur-Barsol gauge line into broad gauge.

To introduce an express train from Calcutta to Dimapur.

To modernise and improve the Himalayan Railways of Darjeeling to promote tourism.

To construct Railway Hotels at Darjeeling, Jalpaiguri and Coochbehar to promote tourism.

To take the district of Coochbehar under the integrated railway network.

Lastly, I would like to say that the freedom fighters have been provided free railway pass but they have to renew it every year, causing them much difficulties. I propose to increase the period from one year to five years.

SHRI P. KODANDA RAMAIAH (Chitradurga) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister is welcomed by all sides of the House and I also join them in welcoming the Budget.

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan is a very pleasant man, always smiling, keeps everybody happy, and so is his Budget. I am reminded of the famous painting called the Mona Lisa by Leonardo Da Vinci. If you look at the painting from any angle and from any distance, you get the feeling that the portrait is looking at you and smiling at you. And this feeling Shri Ram Vilas Paswan was able to create in different sections of the House and probably among the different sections of the people in the country. To that extent, we all feel happy about this Budget, though it has got certain features which do not seem to be healthy. For instance, we had for so long, nine railway zones in the country and in one go, the Budget has given six new zones in the country. I am happy to the extent that my State is getting one of those zones, like many other States, such as, Bhubaneswar and others. But then the administrative expenses on the expansion plans of the Railways involve Rs 414 crore on general superintendence and services. With every new zone that is coming up, I am sure this particular head of account is getting inflated and it only involves extra expenditure without providing commensurate additional services to the public.

Secondly, with the idea of having zones on regional basis, we may not be sponsoring the cause of integration, in the sense that we have had zones encompassing different areas of different States in the Past. The trend appears to be to have a railway zone for reach moderate to big State and probably for two small States each. I would not be surprised if in the next year we are going to have additional zones for the small States of North-East at the rate of one zone per two States. I do not think this is a healthy trend and this only involves additional outlays without any productive motive involved in the expenditure.

23.00 hrs.

Sir coming to my State of Karnataka, we have had - after independence - four Railway Ministers in the Union Cabinet, namely Shri K C Reddy, Shri Hanumanthaiah, Shri Poonacha and Shri C K Jaffer Sharief. I do not want to dwell much about what the Railway Ministers in the distant past have done. But I must say a word of praise for Shri C K Jaffer Sharief who for the first time, has taken cognizance of the

requirements of Karnataka and did something for the State, though there is a lot to be done.

I think the Budget is mostly favouring the Gangetic belt and what we call the route from Punjab to West Bengal. You take the route length; you take new lines; you take the new trains - most of these seem to be going to these four States - Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and probably West Bengal. The South, even now, gets a step-motherly treatment and I am sure that at least in the next Budget the hon. Minister of Railways will give some weightage to the Southern States especially Karnataka.

While praising Shri Jaffer Sharief for whatever he has done for the State I do not say that we have had many new railway lines. After all said and done, we have had one new line and that is from Chitradurga to Rayadurga. Beyond that I do not think much has been done as far as the route length is concerned. But then the conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge was done in a big way and we are grateful to the previous Minister of Railways for the work he has done in that behalf.

In the present Budget the hon. Minister of Railways has included certain routes like Hubli-Ankola. I think most of the routes mentioned in the Budget seem to be in the stage of survey like Hubli-Ankola, Talaguppa-Honnava, Munirabad-Mahabobnagar, Dudda-Tiptur, Mysore-Tellicheri and Chamarajnar-Mettupalayam. These are all the new lines mentioned in the Budget. Most of these lines seem to be still in some stage of survey. For example the particular route of Chamarajnar-Mettupalayam - I was told by my colleague from that area - was surveyed twenty years back and every time we raise this subject we always get the reply from the Railways that this route is still under survey. I really wonder what is the time frame for a survey on a route involving not more than 100 kilometres. I would request the Minister of Railways to get this file and find out why this survey is being done repeatedly *ad nauseam* and this reply is given to us. I am sure the survey is over and the work of laying the new line can be taken up straightaway.

We have got a railway line, a sort of trunk line from Bangalore to Bombay via Tumkur, Chitradurga, Hubli and onwards. This has been converted into broad gauge in the last two years. But then we have got a train running from Bangalore to Hubli only. We do not have any train from Bangalore to Bombay on that route. And this route is very peculiar in that from Tumkur which is the district headquarters and a fairly big town, the route takes a circuitous way. It goes to some interior places called Tiptur, Arasikere, Kadur, Ajampura, Tarikere, Chikkajalur and on to Davanagere which is again on the mainline. We have got a National Highway running from Bangalore to Hubli on a different route, on a shorter route and this is via Tumkur, Sira, Hirayur, Chitradurga and on to Hubli. (Interruptions) Sir, please give me some more time. It is an important line for my constituency.

Sir, I was told that this particular route has already been surveyed to lay a direct track from Tumkur to Chitradurga on the direct line along with the National Highway instead of the existing line which adds an extra distance of 100 kilometres. If you go by train from Tumkur to Davanagere you have to traverse 300 kilometres; but if you go by road on the National Highway, it is only a distance of 200 kilometres. We request the hon. Minister of Railways to take out the file regarding the survey of this line. The survey has already been done - at least partially been done. I would urge upon the hon. Minister to take up this work seriously to lay a new track from Tumkur to Davanagere by the shortest route via Sira and Hiriyur reducing the distance of 100 kilometre. We have got another proposal which was announced by the previous Railway Minister and that is about establishing a new wagon production-cum-repair shop, probably, because of the shortage of wagons, the previous Railway Minister thought it fit to establish this shop very close to Chitradurga town. This Budget also makes a token provision of Rs. 2 lakh for this project. It was planned to establish it at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 100 crore and I was told that it had been scaled down to Rs. 30 crore. I would have been happy even with this reduced layout on the project, but it looks as if this project has been given up now. The quantum of investment was Rs.30 crore earlier whereas now, there is a token allotment of Rs. 2 lakh for this project. This is an important industry for us in a backward area like Chitradurga. Even drinking water itself is a problem there. Therefore, the creating of employment is very essential for this area. By establishing this wagon production-cum-repair shop, we will be able to mitigate the unemployment problem in a big way and give some boost to the agricultural as well as industrial production in the area.

There is another line from Hospet to Kottur and the line stops at Kuttur. Then, people from Kuttur will have to go back to Hospet, or Guntal. There is an important route on this line connecting Kottur with Harihara on Bombay line. This survey has been done. This is an important route for us to connect the iron-ore route, Bellary district with the main line at Harihar. This probably could again be surveyed and the Railway Minister is requested to look into this matter also.

As far as general revenues and expenditure of the Railways is concerned, I would like to make a small observation before I conclude. 67 per cent of the revenues of the Railways consist of freight haulage and 27 per cent of passenger haulage. It would appear that we are not giving much importance to passenger haulage. If you take into consideration the number of luxury coaches that traverse between Bangalore and Bombay, Bangalore and Goa, and Bangalore and Coimbatore. I wonder whether we have been exploiting the long-distance passenger potential by adding some more trains on the main lines.

SHRI SURESH KODIKUNNIL (Adoor) : What about Bangalore-Trivandrum line?

SHRI P. KODANDARAMAIAH : On Bangalore to Trivandrum and Bangalore to Tellicherry routes of these areas, we are not tapping long-distance passenger revenue and are allowing buses - which do not have permits most of the time or have bogus permits - to run on these routes, causing a lot of loss to the legitimate earnings of the Railways.

I would request the hon. Minister of Railways to conduct a road-rail as well as goods should be more or less monopolised by the Railways and short distance haulage could be left to the road transport system. It would appear that there is no coordination between these two modes of transport. Unless you achieve some coordination or some understanding between the surface transport and the railway transport, we would be doing things in a very haphazard manner which would be resulting in a big loss to the Railways, whereas the road transport stands to gain in this process. I, therefore, request the hon. Minister of Railways to conduct a survey about the road and rail traffic to ensure some amount of coordination between them.

I have got many other points, but then I would like to stick to the time schedule given to me. I would thank you, Sir, for the opportunity given to me. At the end, I urge the hon. Minister of Railways to take down the suggestions I have made and give serious thought to them.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please listen to me. I have a list of 130 speakers. No hon. member is taking less than 15 minutes. If I allot 6 minutes to each hon. Member, we need 12 hours.

Now it is for you to decide.

[English]

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : Please allow everyone to speak for five minutes only.

[Translation]

SHRI PRITHVIRAJ D. CHAVAN (Karad) : We can finish, only if you allow 5 minutes to each.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : All right.

[English]

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN (Alleppey) : Sir, you stick to your earlier ruling. Earlier, you have ruled that the Members should complete their speeches within five to ten minutes time. Please do not allow anybody to exceed this ten minutes limit.

[Translation]

RAGHUVANSH RPASAD SINGH : By what time we are going to adjourn?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You have to decide this. At the moment, I will allow five minutes to each.

[English]

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Sir, I am soory to say that the earlier speakers have spoken for more than half-an-hour.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Do not make speeches. Give points only. This is my suggestion.

[English]

Anyway, let us start now.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Sir, the better thing would be not to allow anybody to speak beyond ten minutes.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I am not allowing anybody to go beyond five minutes time limit. The hon. Members can simply mention the points, and that is all.

[Translation]

SHRI G.M. BANATWALA (Ponnani) : Senior citizens enjoy concessions in railway matters.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You will get. I also belong to the same category.

[English]

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir, we are the victims because we have been waiting since yesterday onwards. We cannot be the victims. Please allow us to explain our position also. As you have suggested, let the hon. Members confine themselves to the points and not go beyond the time limit of five to ten minutes because we have been sitting here for quite a long time.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You must all think about Shri Ram Vilas Paswan who is sitting through-out.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : We are all grateful to him.

[Translation]

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA (Bilhaur) : Mr Deputy Speaker, Sir, the Railway Budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister reminds me of that moments of childhood when a mother asks her child to call the Moon and it will come to him. Similarly, it has been said that it is a progressive budget, an anti-inflationary budget. But the fact is that it is a budget of political gimmicks, a day dream and it has detailed from the track of development. I will not take much time, but what I am saying is true and I will prove it. The hon'ble Minister says he has not increased fares of second class. But what has he given to second class commuters in this budget? He has given 15 trains but not a single passenger train. 400 crore commuters travel by this class, and according to him, this number will go up by

4% this year, i.e., 16 crore new passengers will be added, but no train has been given.

The hon-Minister comes from Bihar. His Government is the Government of the poor. Has he not seen the labourers and peasant travelling on roof tops of trains operating from Bihar to Punjab and vice-versa? What has he done for providing them convenient travel? Not a single bogie has been added to passenger trains. According his estimate, passenger traffic will increase by 4% i.e. 16 crore new commuters will be added. Now if we make calculations, 15 trains can carry 4 crore passengers annually. His claim is of 16 crore passengers. How will the rest 12 crore commuters travel? Will they travel sitting in toilets? It is the Government of the poor! How long will they go on deceiving the poor? Once you go and sit in our ordinary class bogie, passengers are crammed like fodder. He has done nothing for the poor, he not given a single new passenger train.

Secondly, he says that he has exempted consumer items from the freight hike. But what has he given? 14 items has been exempted from freight hike which include foodgrains and that too meant for PDS. Now the consumer get ration for only 6 days in a month from PDS. Rest is supplied by grain dealers, but these foodgrains have not been exempted. He can calculate the quantity of grains moved by trains. Oilseeds have been exempted, but how much, what quantum is lifted by goods train? No wagon is available for oilseeds. Full rake is allotted. Where from that much oilseeds would come? This is also a day dreaming. Similarly, he says sugar, jaggry and gur are transported by rail, but what amount? The exemption is for name sake. He is collecting the entire freight revenue. Why is he befooling people by saying that so many items have been exempted? He says that freight hike will not bad to increase in prices, but I say it will. If he needs funds, he can raise them by other means, but not from hike in freight.

Thirdly, he is not able to provide wagons. 6 thousand wagons are lying damaged. (Interruptions) I will come to that also, if it relates to making money. If you say I should speak for five minutes only, I shall not be able to make my suggestions. You must give me more time. The wagons are damaged, they have outlives their utility, they are not being replaced. The department has started the own-your-wagon- scheme. This is meant for big people and not for common man. The damaged wagons should at least be got repaired. Some wagons loaded with foodgrains were despatched to Bangladesh. It should be seen whether all those wagons have come back. There is great shortage of wagons throughout the country. The Kiln-owners are not getting wagons for the movement of coal. When 2-4 rakes are given, the Coal of India Ltd. does not have coal. When Coal is available, wagons are not available. So, the Brock Kilns are facing closure, the workers are being rendered jobless. Sir, I would like to make one more point.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mishraji, you are making very good points, but you have consumed the time allotted to you.

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA : Sir, I would like to make one point more. The hon. Minister has estimated an increase of two crore tonne in freight. They are not building wagons. The turn-over time of wagons which was 10 days two years ago, has gone up to 10.8 today. This 10.8 increase is reducing the availability of wagons. The Railways Department is not making efforts to maintain 10 days turn-over and if this is done, more wagons will be available. It is said that fare for sleeper coaches upto 200 kilometres has not been increased. This distance is covered in 3—3½ hours and no reservation is done for this distance. He has again mislead the people. His department refuses to make reservation for two hours. Suppose a train starts at 6 clock and we ask for reservation for the sleeper coach, the booking office refuses to oblige us by saying that this can be done only after 10 o'clock. How many passengers travel upto this distance? They are deceiving the people. It has been the policy of his party. The people were promised that their loans will be waived off, but nothing has been done...*(Interruptions)* The number of unreserved bogies has not been increased, mislead, number of reserved bogies has been increased. He can check it...*(Interruptions)* If you are not prepared to listen to the problems faced by the poor, I resume my seat. But you will have to listen to the grievances of the poor, whether it takes ten minutes or one hour...*(Interruptions)* Entry into reserved bogies has been prohibited. It is a good step. But what provision has been made for increasing the number unreserved bogies? I have figures with me. Last year, a provision of Rs.281.78 crore was made for new tracks which has been reduced to Rs.220 crore this year. Still he claims of a progressive budget. He has himself admitted in his budget that we had inherited 54693 kilometres rail track in 1947 from Britisher and it increased upto 62,660 kilometres during the last 49 years. That means we added 258 kilometres per year. He says his budget is progressive! The budget has to be viewed in the light of above facts.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please conclude.

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA : What steps has he taken to check corruption and pilferages? I do not want to go into details, as this subject has been with by many hon. Members. How much provision has been made for modernisation? This is also an act of cheating of the people.

Travel by train is becoming unsafe. He says telephones have been provided but this will not mitigate the problems. In reply to a question he said that G.R.P. is not under his control. Then, are the railways not accountable for loots being committed on passengers at railway platforms? What measures has been taken to check train-robberies? There is no mention in the budget in this regard.

They launched a cleanliness campaign, large banners were displayed throughout the country, but nothing tangible was achieved. This has also to be taken care of.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You have consumed ten minutes. Now please conclude in one minute.

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA : Now I would like to take up the problems of my area. First, the Kanpur-Jhansi line is a single line. It leads to Bombay and links the whole South-India. It is necessary to double and electrify the Kanpur-Jhansi line. Second, intercity train should started between Kanpur-Etawa, Kanpur-Allahabad, Kanpur-Jhansi and Kanpur-Farrukhabad. There is no such train. Last year, Farrukhabad inter-city trains was started, but the same has been discontinued. This should be taken note of. There is no direct train from Kanpur for South India cities. Kanpur is an industrial and business town. So, direct trains for Madras, Bangalore and Mumbai should be started. There is no direct rail route from Kanpur for Barielly, Moradabad, Saharanpur and Hardwar. We have Balamanu rail-track. If this track is improved, we can operate mail and Express-trains on this route. At present, only passenger trains operate on this line.

Railway over bridges are needed at four places in Kanpur, which has a population of 40-50 lakh. There is need for overhead crossing at Rural-Suburban for linking Kanpur Mahanagar South Road with G.T. Road at Medical crossing. Otherwise people have to wait for hours together.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mishraji, please conclude now.

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA : There is imperative need of widening of Panki railway station because it is the station of Kanpur Mahanagar and depot of Indian Oil and Steel Authority are located there...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mr. Mishra, I am calling the next speaker.

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA : It is essential to widen the station because of all these things.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Similarly there is Rura Station...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Mishra ji please conclude.

SHRI SHYAM BEHARI MISHRA : Sir, I have to make only one point. I have curtailed my entire speech. It is no use of being here, if we are not able to highlight our problems. This will not do. Some hon'ble Members have spoken for three hours.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Please conclude. I am calling the name of next member.

23.26 hrs.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Sir, Barhamavart is associated with Maharani Laxmi Bai, Tatyá Tope and Nanaji Peshwa. Lav-Kush were

also born at Brahamavart. It is the ashram of Maharishi Valmiki. The train linking this place has been withdrawn. It is necessary to restore this train. Rura is the city station of newly created Kanpur Dehat district. Rura should be given the status of an urban district. There is also need of starting a rail-bus service between Unnao and Panki. The Kanpur-Lucknow D.M.U. service should be extended upto Panki. A computerised reservation system should be provided at Panki. A direct train between Kanpur and Jammu-Tawi should be introduced. I would urge upon the hon'ble Minister to exceed to these demands. The Budget should be over hauled to make it more pragmatic so as to extend benefit to the poor section of the society.

[English]

SHRI ANIL BASU : Sir, it was announced by the hon. Deputy-Speaker that each Member would confine his speech to five minutes. But he has taken forty minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the debate should continue whole day tomorrow because there are about 130 speakers more.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : We have to take some decision now. There are almost hundred names. We have to confine it either to a very-very limited or we have to fix the time by which we will conclude the debate.

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN (Alleppey) : May I submit something? The discussion on railways is very important. We all represent people and we have to ventilate the feelings of people. What happened yesterday was that many people spoke for half an hour, 45 minutes or fifty minutes and today also, some of the Members spoke for more than half an hour. Now the Railways as such has abolished the third class, but unfortunately, now we are treated as the third class Members of Parliament. There were first class Members, who spoke 50 minutes there were second class Members who spoke half an hour. Unfortunately, we, the third class Members, are the victims. My humble request to you is that we must be allowed to speak for five to ten minutes.

MR. SPEAKER : Shall we tentatively say that we will conclude by 3 o'clock?

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN : We should be allowed to speak.

MR. SPEAKER : If you confine your speeches strictly to five minutes, we will conclude it by 3 o'clock.

Shri K.P. Singh Deo to speak.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Budget which is, in reality, a Vote on Account for the next six months for a sum of Rs.19,629.32 crore. Since the Minister in his speech

has stated his intention as - national security, freight, economic progress, cultural integration and secularism - he has also reiterated that his intention is to go to the backward and the under-developed regions, the tribal areas and to the people of weaker sections. He has also mentioned in his speech that it is an irony that after 143 years, there are lots of areas where people have not even dreamt of a railway line. Most particularly, para 16 of his speech is rather heartening and he makes a categorical assurance. He says :

"Mr. Speaker, India is a welfare state. Our government is committed to the upliftment of poor and to improve the standard of living of people residing in backward and undeveloped areas. To fulfil this commitment, Indian Railways has to mobilise more funds. This would be done to take up the rail projects in backward areas which would result in expansion of rail network in remote regions; this will act as a catalyst for further development of that area and people of these regions would also be joining the main stream of the country. This will further result in creation of more employment in these areas resulting in improvement in the standard of living of the poor."

Sir, I congratulate him for his very bold, courageous and frank admission. I only hope that what he has intended will see the light of the day. Otherwise, like his distinguished predecessors in that Ministry, I do not want my friend Shri Ram Vilas Paswan to feel embarrassed later on.

I am very happy that northeast has been given special attention by the hon. Minister as it should be. He is trying to bring into the mainstream to achieve national integration, to instill a sense of belonging into them as well as to give free them from the sense of neglect. The performance of the Railways over the last year has been very impressive indeed, whether it is in traffic, whether it is in financial results. In fact, the financial results from the Minister's speech are unprecedented and praiseworthy. I do hope Shri Chidambaram will be sufficiently impressed with the financial discipline and financial management to give him more budgetary support than the paltry Rs. 200 crore which he has given.

Even the traffic prospects have improved like improvement of passenger services, new trains, frequencies extensions and tourism services. I come from a tiny little State, maybe a little bigger than your State which was till 1st April, 1936 a part of Bihar and Bengal. I do hope the special consideration which the hon. Minister has shown to the special States, that is, Northeast, J&K, Himachal Pradesh will also be shown towards a State called Orissa. It starts with 0. It should not be Omitted; it should not be a zero because 0 also denotes a zero.

I would like to congratulate all the States which have had the good fortune to receive the Minister's and the Railway's attention and generosity and those States about which we heard a few discordant note because they will benefit when he presents the next regular Budget in February. Apart from the budgetary support being increased by the Planning Commission or by the Finance Ministry which itself is a very difficult and delicate job, I would urge upon the hon. Minister to also consider that over the last five years, as an advent of liberalisation it has been possible in the infrastructural field to attract foreign investment and particularly my State, Orissa, has been trying for Asian Development Bank as well as the Exim Bank of Japan who are quite keen to invest Rs 2900 crore in the eastern coast of Orissa for Railways as well as for port handling. We remember that it is due to the paucity of reserves for infrastructure that one of the deepest sea ports in the eastern sea-board, Paradeep was not given permission for a long time by the Central Government. We had to struggle for quite a lot because there were no railway lines before it became major port.

I would like to thank the Minister for the six new zones, including Bhubaneswar. It took us forty years and we are grateful to Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. We are also thankful for Haridaspur-Paradeep line, although only Rs 1 crore has been kept. But, while forming the zones I wish there would have a little more transparency because we are not sure how viable it will be from the economic point of view, from the operations point of view and from the administrative point of view.

I say this because, it is, 'once bitter twice shy' as the proverb goes.

We have a truncated Sambalpur Division. It was started in 1984. It was supposed to progress by phases. Most of the revenue earning areas, that is Rourkela, Ib Valley, Brajrajnagar and Bondamunda fall in the Bilaspur and Chakradarpur Division and the entire revenue of Orissa goes outside and so Orissa is impoverished. I do not wish to say that it is a systematic loot or it is a subtle loot. The fact is that the revenue of Orissa does not come to Orissa. Therefore, the tax mobilisation or the resource mobilisation of Orissa is that much less.

Historically, Orissa has had only one thousand kilometres of railway line from 1853 to 1947. It has had another thousand kilometres from 1947 to 1996. It comes to about 28 per cent of the South-Eastern Railway zone, which is the highest revenue earning zone of the Indian Railways. In fact, the revenue earnings are Rs 108 million tonnes out of Rs 318 million tonnes and yet we are the most least developed because, historically - the hon. Minister has also mentioned in his speech - the imperial requirements of the Bombay Army and the Madras Army entailed that the Calcutta-Madras and Calcutta-Bombay lines went to the periphery of Orissa. Therefore, if you see the map of Orissa, it is a blank.

The Government of Orissa has been, and the Members of Parliament of Orissa have been, for the last four decades, demanding certain Railway lines. Today, if you look at Orissa, you will see that the land mass is 4.74 per cent; population 3.74 per cent; forest 7.4 per cent; iron ore 26 per cent; coal 24 per cent; chromite 98 per cent; nickel 95 per cent; bauxite 70 per cent; and human resources ranges from 45 per cent to 55 per cent of the people living below the poverty line. The figure for human resources fluctuates between 45 per cent and 55 per cent. I do not know how it fluctuates. Maybe, it fluctuates due to the Planning Commission's various indices. Till 1995, it was 55 per cent ... (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : The House has agreed for five minutes for each Member.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO : I beg your indulgence, Sir

Therefore, there is a feeling of neglect, for which all the Members from Orissa went on a *dharna*. I am grateful that the hon. Minister called us and discussed some of our points. In a mineral rich and marine rich State like Orissa, we are in the lowest rung of the economic ladder and the reason is infrastructural inadequacy. This has been brought out by Shri P. Chidambaram in his Budget speech, in the updated 'Economic Survey' and also in the B.D. Pandey Committee Report on Transportation. Shri Pandey has brought out with illustrations from Orissa that today the transport and economic development are inadequate - this inadequacy is a deterrent to growth - and the need for increased financial allocation. Transport investment and economic growth have an empirical relationship and there is stagnation. After fifty years of Independence, Orissa is a paradox of poverty amongst plenty. Therefore, these regional inequalities which are existing should be removed.

My suggestion to the hon. Minister of Railways is to review and reconsider the effectiveness of the pan-Indian Railway Policy, which has been followed from colonial times and also to see whether the less developed, backward and remote areas require a separate approach; a policy and a strategy somewhat like the Tribal Sub-Plan, if a Railway Sub-Plan can be thought of in the light of social cultural and economic needs of the area. One of the railway lines which the Government of Orissa has been pressing is the Rupsa-Bangiriposi on which many of my colleagues have said that there is a token grant. The foundation stone was laid at both the places by then hon. Railway Minister, Shri Zaffer Sharief. If that investment can be stepped up and expedited, it will have a direct link not only to Jamshedpur but also the mineral-rich iron ore areas of Badampahar and Gormahisani.

Then, the Daitari-Banspani has been languishing for the last 20 years. Only 33 kilometres of Jakhpura-Daitari section have been completed. Otherwise, from Daitari to Banspani, this will shorten the route to Paradeep by 35 kilometres. At the moment, it is being

used for iron-ore as well as other ores. Six steel plants are coming up and two power plants are also going to come up. Same is the question of the Angul-Talcher-Budhapanka-Kamakhyanager-Dhubri-Sukinda road. Survey indicates it is one of the highest rate of returns in the entire Railway - 23.43 per cent. This will also have a direct link from Haridaspur to Paradeep.

For Talcher-Sambalpur, Rs.50 crore have been given. We had demanded Rs.100 crore. We would like to have a commitment, if necessary, for grant of Rs.50 crore more because by 1997, it has to be completed. This will shorten the route from Delhi to Bombay by 350 kilometres.

Then, I come to doubling of Talcher-Nirgundi-Cuttack-Paradeep. As you are very well aware, Sir, it was your old department. This coal goes to Karnataka-Kerala-Andhra Pradesh-Tamilnadu. Sir, all these power plants are dependent on this. Then I come to Largigarh-Junagarh Ambagudu, near Jagdalpur like the rich Aluminium and Bauxite area in the most backward tribal area of Kalukandi and Karaput.

Then, I come to Malkangiri-Jaypore. Malkangiri is the tail-end of Orissa. The only tin reserves of India are in Malkangiri.

Bolangir-Khurda which the Minister has been very kindly updated agreed to increase the allocation to Rs. 5 crores. This will reduce the distance to Bhubaneswar from Delhi and Bombay by 250 kms.

Then, there is Rayagada to Gopalpur Port connecting the Aluminium plants of Kalukandi and Koraput. Lastly a new division at Raurkella.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hooghly) : Mr. Speaker Sir, I have written to the hon. Minister and I shall be continuing to write to the Minister on very important points making suggestions. So, I am taking the time of this House. High hopes have been raised among the people of this country particularly the common people that the long neglected problems of the people of this country will be properly attended to by the new Minister who is considered to be the leader of the Dalits and the champion of the cause of the weaker sections of this country.

I know about the financial constraints faced by the Railways supporting the Minister in his demand for more budgetary grant for the Railways.

23.44 hrs.

(Shrimati Geeta Mukherjee in the Chair)

I shall not mention about any particular demand at the beginning but about a disservice that is continuing for the last few years in a part of my constituency. It may seem that it is a very ordinary problem. But it is not so. If the economic life of thousands and thousands of people in a particular area is totally dislocated by a problem created by the Railways, then it can never be

considered as an ordinary problem. I am stating about the waterlogging problem in a part of my constituency that is, Bandal. It is one of the most important stations in the Eastern Railway. And I have been writing to the railways repeatedly. I have met the Eastern Railways authorities in a deputation. This House will be amazed to know that in the latest reply given to me by a very high officer of the Eastern Railway, they have written very absurd things. I am constrained to say that. They have not cared to visit that place. A road which has been used as a road for decades has been described as a waterway. A place which is under panchayats has been described as a municipal area. In such a way absurd things have been stated in the reply. So I have no option but to mention here that this disservice should be discontinued. I am not making any demand for any service or extension or expansion of service or a new service of any line. I am talking of a disservice. The Railways are dislocating the economic life of thousands of people of that place. I have said that as thousands of commuters cannot go their place of work, one wooden foot bridge can be constructed or something should be done in this regard. I am told - I do not know but for reasons best known to them - that whatever work has been started has stopped due to bickerings among the contractors. Madam, I would suggest that the Standing Committee on Railways should make very important suggestions about passenger amenities with regard to very important stations. I would mention only a few of them.

Chandannagar is a very historic place and Chinsura is a very old place and divisional headquarter. The passenger amenities in these important stations as also in places like Bhadrashwar and Mogra Maukundu etc. are very poor. We have been making a demand for a new railway station between Bhadrashwar and Baidyabati. So many agitations had taken place and I had to intervene so many times. Once it went to the extent of 'Rail Roko'. The name of the place is Khurigachi. Hence new railway station should be constructed. It is in the Eastern Railways of Howrah Division.

We have been making a demand for doubling a very important railway line between Tarakeshwar and Sheoraphuly. As you know, Tarakeshwar is a very important place of pilgrimage and lakhs of people go there. We are happy that electrification between Bandal-Katwa has started and is completed now. We want that it should be doubled.

I have made a suggestion for a connection between Howrah-Sealdah-Burdwan cord line and Tarakeshwar line at a place near Haripal which will help the Railways to earn more revenue and also help the railway commuters from joining Tarakeshwar railway line directly to Sealdah via the chord line. It should be considered.

I have also made a suggestion that trains should be run between Bandal and Sealdah because so many railway passengers who want to reach Calcutta earlier

from Burdwan or Bandel crossing the river Ganges need them. Service is there but this service should be increased and more trains should be provided.

I also demand that more trains should be run between Bandel, Howrah and Sealdah. The old demand for extension of Amta line upto Seakhala and Champadanga has been long neglected. High hopes have been raised among the people of this area that the new Railway Minister will attend to all these things.

It is a happy thing that Tarakeshwar-Arambagh-Vishnupur railway line has been considered by the Railway Minister and a provision of a survey has been made in the Railway Budget. We welcome that but it should be expedited.

My last suggestion is this. When I was associated with a very important committee, we had made certain suggestions about utilisation of the railway land. We find that railway land is being used by usurpers. They are occupying it in an unauthorised manner. Sometimes, municipal bodies or State Governments or panchayats want to have the railway land for developmental work like passenger amenities. But that is not being provided. Why should the railway land be used by outsiders? A policy should be made with regard to proper utilisation of railway land in the interest of the people, panchayats, municipal bodies and State Governments.

I shall be brief and I will not take much of the time of the House. I know that there are problems related to Railways and the Government is trying to give a new direction in the interest of the people. I am very much of the constraints but still priority should be so fixed that the new orientation which the hon. Minister wants to give should be in the interest of the common people.

The question generally asked is For whom the trains runs? Is it not for the common people who cannot afford other forms of transport like motor cars and other things. So, the railway amenities for the common people should be provided.

Lastly, I welcome the steps taken by the Government. Taking up projects for the long neglected areas like the North-East is in the right direction. I would also suggest that the long neglected areas of the Eastern parts of India should also be attended to properly.

DR. JAYANTA RONGPI (Autonomous-District, (Assam) : Thank you Madam Chairperson. I shall be very brief. It is almost midnight. So, I will not repeat those points that have already been raised by the other hon. Members.

At the very outset, I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for his maiden Budget which has intended to give a special and never emphasis for the North-East and other backward areas and also for Jammu and Kashmir. We also deserves appreciation for his emphasis on better passenger services and better performance in the traffic section. I also welcome his decision of not increasing the fare of short distance

second class traveller and also for the urban and suburban commuters. This is indeed a pro-people and pro-poor step and I also welcome this particular decision.

At the same time, I also, as many of the hon. Members, an aware of the limitations of the Budget and other constraints he has been facing and especially the Annual Plan allocation which is Rs.8,138 crore, which is only eight per cent more than the last year. I am afraid that the inflation will sat up, will neutralize the marginal increase of eight per cent. That is why, I say that though the Budget has proposal for so many new lines and new services, I am afraid whether all these provisions and proposals can be turned into reality because out of the Annual Plan of Rs 8,130 crore, the Budget has proposed to raise Rs.900 crore from two schemes. One is from the BOLT scheme, that is, the Build Own Lease Transfer scheme - Rs.500 crore and the other one is from the OYW scheme, that is, the Own Your Wagon scheme Rs.400 crore Rs.900 crore has been proposed to be raised by these two schemes.

In the Budget speech itself, the hon. Minister of Railways has conceded the fact that these two schemes are not successful. If that be so, then with the ten per cent of the total Budget allocation, in question mark and the hon. Minister of Railways himself is not sure whether they will be able to raise it or not. There is also the matter of raising through bonds, etc. In the international markets, One cannot be sure of it. That is why my request to the hon. Minister of Railways is that as per the Budget allocation, if a proper fund raising cannot be done, in that case, many of the proposals and schemes have to be dropped or postponed. In that case, the promise he had made to the North-East and Kashmir and other backward areas, I hope, will not be dropped.

At the same time, the support from the General Budget is only to the tune of Rs.200 crore, which is very meagre. Here, I wonder how the last Government and also this Government is saying that the private participation in our economy is essential so that the funds from the Exchequer, that is, the Consolidated Fund of India or the Public Fund can be spared for building up the infrastructure and core sector.

At least this plea is taken for inviting the public participation in our national economy. If that be the case, the Railways is vital for our economy. Why then the Budgetary support to the Railways is so meagre? Rather it has been successively decreased. Therefore, there should be a radical change in our thinking and I hope, if hon. Minister of Railways tries to bring a consensus among all the parties and all the Members, we can make a common effort so that the Budgetary support to the Railway Budget is increased substantially so that all the promises can be met with.

I will now very briefly simply mention the problems of my constituency because of paucity of time. Firstly, there is only one fast train from Delhi to Guwahati, that is Rajdhani Express. This train should be made more

frequent. At least daily and if it is not possible then at least it should run six days a week because this is the only fast train for the entire North-Eastern region. People of seven sisters of that region come to Delhi by Rajdhani, one of the fastest trains. So the frequency of this train should be increased.

Secondly, the electrification target of Railways for this year is 634 kilometres. In Assam and other North-Eastern States, not a single kilometre is going to be electrified. So, I request the hon. Minister of Railways that electrification work should also start in the N.F. Railway in the North-Eastern region.

So far as computerised reservation is concerned, now the hon. Minister of Railways has himself agreed that many of the State capitals of North-East India are not connected with railway line. But if reservation service is made available at the State capitals of Meghalaya, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh, then the people of these States can avail the trains either from Dibrugarh or from Guwahati. Therefore my specific request to the hon. Minister is that all the State Headquarters of North-East and all the Headquarters of the Autonomous Councils should be computerised. Autonomous Councils are very important as far as North-East is concerned. Diphu is the Headquarters of Karbi Anglong Autonomous Council, Haflong is the Headquarters of North Kachhar hill Autonomous Council and Kokrajhar is the Headquarters of Bodoland Autonomous Council. In these three Autonomous Councils computerised reservation facility should be made available as it will not cost much.

So far as employment is concerned, the claim made here

MR CHAIRMAN: No, you wanted to speak without your constituency.

MR JAYANTA RONGPI: Yes Madam, I am speaking about my constituency because I belong to a tribal constituency.

MR CHAIRMAN: Then do not touch the subject of unemployment.

DR JAYANTA RONGPI: Madam, mine is a tribal constituency and people there are not getting employment. That is why Madam, the problem of my constituency is unlike the problems of rest of the country.

Only few years back when people of other parts were making a demand for a railway line there in Shillong, Meghalaya there was a movement against that that people did not want a railway line there. As soon as it was declared in the Parliament that there would be a Railway Survey from Diphu to Korang as a first step to link Manipur, there was a hue and cry in my constituency. People were saying that if a railway line comes they would not get employment and people from outside will come and work there. This way our democratic pattern will be changed. That is why I want to bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister of Railways.

So far as employment is concerned, local people, the tribals and the people belonging to Scheduled Castes should get employment.

The Minister himself has once said that in many cases the officers are responsible for this. Those officers who are responsible for this should be punished so that these adverse remarks about Railways should be removed. These problems should be addressed by making a proper employment policy.

24.00 hrs.

Moreover, the headquarters of my constituency, Diphu is also the headquarters of the Hill Autonomous Council. Madam Chairperson, if you go there, you will notice that probably this is the only platform in this country just opposite to the town area and at the backyard of the platform there is a reserved forest. It is just on the opposite side and the town is on the other side. This is a very unusual scene. The jungle forest starts from the backyard of this platform. That is why my request is that this platform should be shifted to the town area so that the commuters can get the facilities and all the main trains and the express trains should have a proper stoppage there.

I hope, the Ministry of Railways will take care of my suggestions and the suggestions made by the hon. Members of the North East.

With these suggestions, I support the Railway Budget.

MR CHAIRMAN: I have to inform the House that in the meeting of the Business Advisory Committee held on the 25th July 1996, it has been decided that the Railway Minister will now reply on the 30th July 1996 after the Question Hour instead of 26th July 1996. The Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1996-97 will be put to the vote of the House along with the concerned Appropriation (Railways) Bill 1996. However, the discussion will conclude at the present sitting itself.

Along with this announcement, I would like to make a request to the hon. Members that you all had agreed, when the hon. Speaker was here that each Member would take only five minutes. That should be stuck to. After four minutes, I shall ring the bell and you should conclude within a minute.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN: Madam Chairperson, there is a problem. (Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN: This has already been decided. Kindly cooperate. Now it is midnight. Let our brains be alert.

(Interruptions)

SHRI V.M. SUDHEERAN: Now the point is that there are announcements but we are not sticking to the announcements. (Interruptions)

MR CHAIRMAN: You all had agreed that each Member would take only five minutes. There is no

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 Pramothas Mukherjee to speak.

SHRI PRAMOTHES 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)