

**STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAYS
(2004-05)**

FOURTEENTH LOK SABHA

**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(RAILWAY BOARD)**

[The Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/
observations contained in the 16th Report of the Standing Committee on
Railways on 'Resource Mobilisation']

TENTH REPORT



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI**

May, 2005/Vaisakha, 1927 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 11.05.2005
Laid in Rajya Sabha on 11.05.2005



LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

May, 2005/Vaisakha, 1927 (Saka)

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON RAILWAY (2004-05)

Shri Basudeb Acharia - Chairman

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

2. Shri A.Sai Prathap
3. Shri Dharendra Agarwal
4. Shri Atique Ahamad
5. Shri Ajaya Kumar
6. Shri Subrata Bose
7. Shri Bapu Hari Chaure
8. Shri Kishan Lal Diler
9. Shri Giridhar Gamang
10. Shri Pradeep Gandhi
11. Smt. Paramjit Kaur Gulshan
12. Shri Anwar Hussain
13. Shri Mahesh Kanodia
14. Shri C. Kuppusami
15. Smt. Kalpana R. Narhire
16. Shri Rajendrasinh Rana
17. Shri Kishan Singh Sangwan
18. Shri Iqbal Ahmed Saradgi
19. Dr. Arun Kumar Sarma
20. Ch. Lal Singh
21. Mohd. Tahir

RAJYA SABHA

22. Smt. Kamla Manhar
23. Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee
24. Maulana Obaidullah Khan Azmi
25. Shri Lalit Kishore Chaturvedi
26. Shri Su. Thirunavukkarasar
27. Shri Tarini Kanta Roy
28. Shri R. Kamraj
29. Shri Isam Singh
30. Shri Harendra Singh Malik
31. Shri Abani Roy

SECRETARIAT

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|---|-------------------|
| 1. | Shri P.D.T. Achary | - | Secretary |
| 2. | Dr. (Smt.) P.K. Sandhu | - | Joint Secretary |
| 3. | Shri V.S. Negi | - | Deputy Secretary |
| 4. | Smt Abha Singh Yaduvanshi | - | Under Secretary |
| 5. | Shri U.C. Bharadwaj | - | Executive Officer |
-

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairman, Standing Committee on Railways (2004-05), having been authorised by the Committee to present, on their behalf, this Tenth Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (2004-05) on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Sixteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Railways on 'Resource Mobilisation'.

2. The Sixteenth Report was presented to Lok Sabha on 04.02.2004 and it contained 23 recommendations/observations. The Ministry of Railways have furnished their Action Taken Replies on all the recommendations/observations on 23.08.2004.

3. The Standing Committee on Railways (2004-05) considered the draft Action Taken Report at their sitting held on 10.05.2005.

4. The analysis of the action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Sixteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Railways (2003) Thirteenth Lok Sabha is given in Appendix-II.

NEW DELHI;
May, 2005
Vaisakha, 1927 Saka

BASUDEB ACHARIA
Chairman,
Standing Committee on Railways

Report

CHAPTER-I

This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the Sixteenth Report of the Standing Committee on Railways – 2004 (13th Lok Sabha) on ‘ Resource Mobilisation’, which was presented in Lok Sabha on 04.02.2004.

2. Action Taken Notes have been received from the Government in respect of all the 23 recommendations/observations contained in the Report. These have been broadly categorised as follows:-

- (i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government – Para No. 7.2, 7.3, 7.5, 7.7, 7.8 and 7.22
- (ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies- Para Nos. 7.1, 7.6, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.15, 7.17, 7.18, 7.19, 7.20, 7.21 & 7.23.
- (iii) Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee – Para Nos. 7.4 and 7.16
- (iv) Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies are still awaited – NIL.

3. The Committee will now deal with the Action Taken by Government on some of their Recommendations/observations.

Recommendation (Para No.7.2)

Railway's Overall Traffic & Revenue Growth

4. The Committee in the aforementioned paragraph had noted the Railway's volatile, inconsistent and irregular nature of mobilisation of resources through traditional as well as non-traditional sources. They had expressed their concern over the continuously decelerating growth particularly in goods sector from 7 per cent in 1995-96 to 3 per cent in 2001-02. They also expressed their worry over the drifting of high value goods traffic like petroleum products through pipelines and better conditions of roads that might pose a serious threat to the Railways freight earnings. Though they had appreciated the process of reform and democratization of the Railways in the form of more Zones and Divisions, yet, they had emphasized that decentralization of powers should be actually passed on to the Zonal and Divisional level to decide instantly the business perspective strategies and their implementation rather than endlessly waiting for decisions from the Railway Board.

5. In their action taken reply, the Ministry of Railways have stated:-

“The advice of the Committee is noted. Indian Railway have initiated the process of rationalization of fare & freight structure in the Railway Budget 2002-03 and continued in the year 2003-04 with a view to make the fare & freight rates competitive and to arrest the declining trend in Railways' share of freight traffic. Efforts have also been made in the process to reduce the level of cross-subsidization from freight to passenger segment. This has given the desired results in which Railways have achieved a growth of 5.32% in the year 2002-03 and 7.45% in the year 2003-04 in freight traffic.

Some of the other measures taken by the Railways are as under:-

- (i) Affecting greater de-centralization of powers to the Zonal Railways, the powers of General Managers to quote reduced station to station rates have been enhanced to attract freight traffic. General Managers can now offer concessions ranging from 10% to 24% depending upon the classification of the commodity and the quantum of traffic offered.
- (ii) An incentive scheme has been introduced for the Premier Customers of the railways, generating freight earnings of more than 25 crore rupees per annum from traffic originating from their private sidings. Under this scheme, 2% (two

per cent) rebate is granted on every five crore rupees of 'net' additional freight earnings generated from the loading of commodities classified in class-135 and above over the preceding financial year. The rebate is applicable in addition to any other freight concession availed by the freight customer.

- (iii) The charging of freight for all traffic booked upto 100 kms. has also been rationalised through a scheme of graded concessions ranging from 10% to 50%.
- (iv) In view of the increase in international trade, the cargo arriving at the ports is one of the major focus areas of Indian Railways. Concrete steps have been taken for strengthening of rail connectivity of ports and the development of inter-modal corridors to the hinterland to increase the share of railways in transport.
- (v) In order to provide single window services at the railway freight terminals for booking, handling, delivery and road bridging, Indian Railways have signed an MOU with Central Warehousing Corporation to develop 22 rail side Warehousing freight complexes.
- (vi) Train load class at one stage lower than the wagon-load class has been assigned to all commodities where the train load class was not notified earlier. As a result the freight gets reduced by around 4% to 5.26% when such commodities are offered for train – load booking.

6. To cope with Railways' volatile, inconsistent and irregular nature of mobilisation of resources through their traditional as well as non-traditional sources, the Committee, while appreciating the process of reform and democratization of the Railways in the form of more Zones and Divisions, had desired that the actual decentralization of powers be passed on to the Zonal and Divisional levels to decide instantly the business perspective strategies and their implementation without endlessly waiting for the decisions from the higher echelon of powers i.e. Railway Board. They find from the action taken reply that steps have been taken by the Railways to improve the earnings from both traditional as well as non-traditional sources such as rationalization of freight rates, reduction in the level of cross subsidization from freight to passenger segment and giving powers to General Managers to grant concessions ranging from 10 per cent to 24 per cent at discretion depending upon the classification of the commodity and quantum of traffic offered. However, the Committee feel that the desired level of delegation of authority at Zonal and Divisional level to decide the perspective and operational needs has not been manifested so far in the overall scenario of railway reforms and democratization.

Moreover they are of the firm view that the process of decentralization of Railways in the form of more Zones/Divisions and delegation of authority downwards are complimentary to each other and have a synergetic effect to mobilise resources and achieve the desired financial targets. They, therefore, hope that the Railways will take further steps to decentralise the decision making process to Division level also so as to attain the desired financial targets consistently.

(Recommendation Para Nos. 7.4 & 7.5)**Passenger Revenues**

7. The Committee had observed in the above paragraph that the growth in passenger earnings had not been commensurate with the increased growth rate of 4 per cent on an average over the last 4 years i.e. during 1998-2002 of the number of passengers. They had also noted that the passenger earnings had increased in absolute terms i.e. from Rs.8526 crore in 1998-99 to Rs.11,162 crore in 2001-02 but the growth rate of passenger revenue had continuously declined to 6.94 per cent in 2001-02 from 12.87 per cent in 1998-99, which showed an inversely proportional trend. They had also found that the actual passenger earnings vis-à-vis Budgetary Estimate had fallen short to the order of Rs.190 crore in 2001-02 and to Rs.720 crore in 2002-03. They had not found tenable the reasons advanced by the Railways for such shortfall in earnings to the law and order situation in some parts of the country and suspension of leave travel concession.

8. The Committee also noted that the Railways had not been able to rationalize further the passenger fares to the requisite extent taking into account their social obligations. Therefore, they had desired that the Railways should supplement their passenger earnings by plugging the leakages of revenues by adopting fool proof strategies apart from further rationalization of passenger fares to a desired level. In addition to this, they had impressed that passenger amenities with some value addition and safety credibility to the satisfaction of railway users can go a long way in augmenting passenger earnings.

9. The Ministry of Railways in their action taken reply stated:-

“Increase in earning in 1998-99 was 12.9% (even though the passenger growth was only 1.45%) due to increase in fares in all classes ranging from 5% to 20%. Similarly, in 1999-2000, the earning improved by 12.1% due to increase in fare ranging from 2% to 15% (except in II ordinary and II Mail/Express). In the year 2001-2002 there was no increase in fares and therefore, the growth in earnings was to the extent of 6.5% only.

In the year 2002-03 Budget Estimate was Rs. 13,450 crore but it was revised and the Revised Estimate was Rs.12,730 crore, whereas the actual earnings was Rs.12,575 crore. Hence the shortfall was Rs.155 crore only.”

The Ministry further stated:-

“Railways do agree with the suggestion of the Committee that there is a need for supplementing the passenger earnings on the railways by plugging the leakage of revenue and also initiating measures to improve passenger amenities along with safety credibility to the satisfaction of the railway users.

In fact, to attract more passenger traffic and plugging up leakage of revenue, railways take a number of steps from time to time, some of which are enumerated as under:-

- (i) Railways run additional trains, augment the load of existing trains etc. to clear the rush during the busy season. In addition monitoring of waiting list position is done and additional coaches are attached in trains wherever long waiting lists are noticed.
- (ii) With a view to improve the ticket dispensation so as to improve earnings, various new methods of ticket booking/dispensation which include booking through Internet, Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS) have already been initiated. Additional counters are opened from time to time at various stations.
- (iii) For provision and improvement in passenger amenities at station a separate fund is allocated every year. In order to bring about specific improvements at stations, railways have launched a scheme of nominating model stations where service related passenger amenities are provided and these include provision of signages, improvement to waiting rooms/retiring rooms/booking offices/enquiry counters provision of Pay & Use toilets, development of circulating area etc.
- (iv) To plug leakage of revenue, ticket-checking drives are launched in various trains throughout the country. During these drives, the passengers travelling without ticket etc. are apprehended and penalize. These checks also result in diverting people to booking windows for purchasing tickets.
- (v) Action is also taken from time to time to plug the leakage of revenue whenever any deficiency in the system is noticed.”

10. The Committee had noted in their original recommendation that the growth rate of passenger earnings had not been commensurate with the growth rate in the number of passengers. They had further noticed that in the backdrop of 4 per cent (approximately) increase in the number of railway commuters over the last 4 years i.e., 1998-2002, the passenger revenue growth rate had declined to 6.94 per cent in 2001-02 from 12.87 per cent in 1998-99. Although the passenger earnings have increased in absolute terms i.e. from Rs.8,526 crore in 1998-99 to Rs. 11,162 crore in 2001-02, yet the Committee had expressed their unhappiness over the shortfall of Rs.875 crore in the passenger revenue against the Budget Estimates of Rs. 13450 crore. They were unable to comprehend the reason(s) advanced by the Ministry as to why passenger revenue growth rate has not been proportional to the rate of increase in the number of passengers over the last few years. The Committee had desired that to supplement their passenger earnings Railways should plug the leakages of revenues by adopting fool proof strategies apart from rationalization of passenger fares to a desired level.

11. From the action taken reply, the Committee find that the Railways have taken some measures to attract more passenger traffic and plug the leakage of revenues, nonetheless concrete and apparent action as such has not been manifested by the Railways to check the rampant corruption especially in passenger related areas. They are of the considered view that untill and unless the Railways do not take more stringent action against all those including railway officials who are found involved in corrupt practices (causing significant revenue leakages), the Railways cannot enhance their growth rate in Passenger earnings and restore their credibility. They, therefore, emphasise that the Railways should come down heavily on corrupt officials and touts and break their nexus so as to curb leakages on any front in Railways.

(Recommendation Para No. 7.16)**Commercial Publicity**

12. The Committee in the above paragraph had noted that the earnings from commercial publicity on trains, railway premises and level crossing gates had been almost static between Rs.21.70 crore and Rs.24.74 crore during the last few years i.e. from 1997-98 to 2001-02. They had further noted that the Ministry could realise only Rs.27.36 crore and Rs.24.74 crore against a target of Rs.100 crore each during 2000-01 and 2001-02 respectively. They had felt that the Railways had not been able to exploit the tremendous potential of earnings from commercial publicity that still exists. They therefore, had emphasized that the Ministry should adopt a comprehensive marketing policy/strategies and pursue it vigorously to cash in their tremendous commercial potential to the optimum level by giving some incentives to the prospective advertisers.

13. In their action taken reply the Ministry of Railways have stated:-

“The earning through commercial publicity during the year 2000-01 was Rs. 27.36 crore. There has been a steady increase in earnings through commercial publicity from Rs.21.70 crore in 1997-98 to Rs.29.14 crore in 2002-03 and in the current year upto December the earnings have been Rs. 23.40 crore and it is estimated that an amount of Rs. 32 crore would be earned through this in the current year.

The earnings from commercial publicity on Indian Railways in previous years have been as under:-

Year	Earnings (Rs.in Cr.)
1997-98	21.70
1998-99	21.54
1999-00	22.17
2000-01	27.36
2001-02	24.74
2002-03	29.14
2003-04 (upto Dec.)	23.40

There have been certain factors which came in the way of enhancing earnings and these include restrictions being imposed by a number of local bodies in cities like Delhi, Chennai and other Metros.

A number of new areas have been identified which still have not yielded the desired response. These include advertisement on Freight wagons, level crossings etc. It may take some more time for prospective advertisers to get convinced about the utility of such new types of media for publicity. The steps suggested by the Committee have been reiterated to the Railways to maximize the earnings through commercial publicity.”

14. The Committee had noted that earnings from commercial publicity on trains, railway premises and level crossing gates had been more or less static between Rs.20-29 crore during the last few years. They had also felt that Railways had a tremendous potential in terms of earnings from commercial publicity which needed to be cashed in to the optimum level by adopting aggressive marketing strategies. They had emphasized for formulation of a comprehensive and definite marketing policy by reassessing the value of sites, advertising in newspapers, publishing information brochure and conducting meetings with advertising companies to maximize revenues. In their action taken reply the Railways have accepted that there has been steady increase in earnings through commercial publicity from Rs.21.70 crore in 1997-98 to Rs.29.14 crore in 2002-03. The Ministry have attributed this steady increase in the earnings to factors such as restrictions being imposed by a number of local bodies in metro cities. However, they have informed the Committee that steps suggested by the Committee to maximise the earnings through commercial publicity have been reiterated to the Zonal Railways. The Committee, while keeping the vast potential of commercial publicity in mind stress that Railways should prepare a comprehensive and definite policy on commercial publicity and pursue it emphatically. They emphasize that annual financial target be fixed accordingly in this regard. They also desire to be apprised of the action taken by the Zonal Railways in the matter.

(Recommendation Para No.7.22)**Private Participation in Railway Infrastructure**

15. The Committee had noticed that the Railways had started taking initiatives to encourage private participation in mid nineties and launched schemes such as BOLT which was later on modified to BOT Scheme, 'Own Your Wagon' etc. They also noticed that the process of private participation in the rail infrastructure had not attained the required pace. Only two projects one each under the Head New Lines (in Northern Railways) and Gauge Conversion (in Western Railway) had been taken up during the year 2001-02. 3 more projects of doubling and new lines and some more proposals from the State Governments of Karnataka, Jharkhand, and Andhra Pradesh etc. to participate under Special Purpose Vehicle Scheme as joint venture were under active consideration of the Railways which would mobilize about Rs.1534 crore.

16. The Committee had been of the unanimous view that private/joint participation by State Governments in the rail infrastructure projects could prove a panacea to resource constraints being faced by the Railways to finance a large shelf of project with a huge throw forward of about Rs.40,000 crore. They, therefore, had been of the view that the Railways should pursue the policy of private participation more vigorously. They had also recommended that the Railways must clear all such proposals pending with them within three months and must encourage the viable private investors for setting up freight terminals/rail hubs with all model warehousing facilities to cater to multimodal rail borne traffic needs.

17. The Ministry of Railways in their action taken replies stated:-

“Indian Railways have been successful in attracting private participation and schemes such as leasing of wagons under Own Your Wagon Scheme and private participation through BOT have received encouraging response from private entrepreneurs. However private sector's participation in construction of new Railway lines has not been that encouraging. For Private Participation, the Railways need to identify projects with high rate of returns. Railways identified following projects to be taken up under BOT Scheme:-

- I. Track, ballasting and signalling works of Viramgam-Mehesana Gauge Conversion (W. Railway). The BOT contract has been finalized and work

is progressing satisfactorily. Likely to be commissioned in the year 2004-05.

- II. Track, ballasting and signaling works of Utratia-Chandrauli and Sultanpur-Bandhua Kalan (N. Railway) Doubling. The recommendations of the Tender Committee are under consideration.
- III. Track, ballasting and signalling works in connection with doubling, of Amroha-Kankather (N. Railway). The invitation of Tenders bids are under process.

Ministry of Railways has formed Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) for attracting public-private investment in rail infrastructure projects. RVNL will provide focused attention towards resource mobilisation and execution for Railway infrastructure projects, which are financially viable and bankable. The projects assigned to RVNL also include such as may be possible through Public Private Participation after assessment of their viability. Apart from these, at present, there is no proposal pending with Ministry of Railways for private participation in railway infrastructure projects, which are financially viable.

It is to advise that the project of setting up of private freight terminal at Garhi Harsuru, as mentioned in the Committee's recommendation, did not take off. However, as recommended by the Committee, Railways are encouraging development of rail hubs with model warehousing facilities to cater to the multi modal needs of rail borne traffic. Encouraged with the success of the pilot project of setting up of a rail-side warehouse in collaboration with M/s. Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) at White-field, Bangalore in Feb' 2002, Indian Railways have signed a MOU with CWC in Dec, 2003 for the development of rail-side warehousing complexes at 22 locations in the country to develop as rail hubs. Value added services in the form of warehousing and local road bridging will be provided at such terminals."

18. In the backdrop of Railway's inability to mobilize adequate resources to finance a large shelf of projects with a huge throw-forward of about Rs.40,000 crore, the Committee had been of the view that the private/public/state Governments participation in the rail infrastructure projects could prove a panacea to deal with the inadequate mobilisation of resources for financing large

shelf of projects and therefore, the Railways must vigorously pursue the policy of private participation. They had recommended to clear all such proposals pending with the Ministry within three months.

19. In their action taken reply Railways have admitted that private sector's participation in construction of new railway lines has not been that encouraging as in the case of leasing of wagons under Own Your Wagon Scheme and private participation through Build Operate Transfer (BOT). For private participation the Railways need to identify projects with high rate of returns. Therefore, to attract the public/private participation in rail infrastructure projects, Railways have constituted Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) which will focus towards resource mobilization and pursue execution of Railway infrastructure projects which are financially viable and bankable.

20. The Committee construed from the action taken reply of the Ministry that serious/definite efforts have been made by the Railways until now to make private/public participation in construction of rail infrastructure projects conducive enough to attract more and more private investments, which essentially requires such investment in the backdrop of inadequate availability of funds with the Railways to complete projects in time. They are of the considered view that time has now come for the Railways to explore more and more possibilities by providing lucrative incentives to public/private investors for their participation in the construction of rail infrastructure projects. They desire that they may be apprised of the details of private and public proposals received by the Railways which have been cleared so far and those pending for clearance.

**MINUTES OF THE TWENTY SIXTH SITTING OF STANDING COMMITTEE ON
RAILWAYS (2004-05)**

The Committee sat on Tuesday, the 10th May, 2005 from 1500 hours to 1600 hours in Committee Room 'E, Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA - CHAIRMAN

MEMBERS

LOK SABHA

1. Shri Ajaya Kumar
2. Shri Bapu Hari Chaure
3. Shri Giridhar Gamang
4. Shri Anwar Hussain
5. Shri Iqbal Ahmed Saradgi

RAJYA SABHA

6. Smt. Kamla Manhar
7. Shri Karnendu Bhattacharjee
8. Maulana Obaidullah Khan Azmi
9. Shri Tarini Kanta Roy
10. Shri Abani Roy

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri P.D.T. Achary - Secretary
2. Shri V.S. Negi - Deputy Secretary
3. Smt. Abha Singh Yaduvanshi - Under Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairman, welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee. Thereafter, the Committee considered the draft Ninth Report on 'The Railway (Amendment) Bill, 2004 and the Tenth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in the 16th Report of the Committee on 'Resource Mobilisation' and adopted the same with minor changes.

3. The Committee also authorised the Chairman to finalise the Report after making consequential changes, if any, arising out of factual verification by the Ministry of Railways or otherwise and present the same to the House.

The Committee then adjourned.

**ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY GOVERNMENT ON THE
RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS CONTAINED IN THE SIXTEENTH REPORT
(13TH LOK SABHA) ON 'RESOURCE MOBILISATION'**

Total number of Recommendations/Observations	23
(i) Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by the Government – Para No. 7.2, 7.3, 7.5, 7.7, 7.8 and 7.22	6
Percentage of total	26%
(ii) Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government replies- Para Nos. 7.1, 7.6, 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.12, 7.13, 7.14, 7.15, 7.17, 7.18, 7.19, 7.20, 7.21 & 7.23.	15
Percentage of total	65%
(iii) Recommendations/observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee – Para Nos. 7.4 and 7.16	2
Percentage of total	9%
(iv) Recommendations/observations in respect of which final replies are still awaited	NIL