

**THIRTEENTH REPORT**  
**COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS**  
**(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)**  
**MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS**  
**(RAILWAY BOARD)**

**(Presented to Lok Sabha on .....)**



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT**  
**NEW DELHI**

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Petition received from Shri Madhu Kotian and Shri Jitesh Mataliya, forwarded by Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., Lok Sabha, regarding horrible situation of Mumbai suburban trains causing deaths and injuries due to higher distance between platforms and coaches of local trains.

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(i)

**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS  
(2015-2016)**

Shri Bhagat Singh Koshyari -Chairperson

**MEMBERS**

2. Shri Suresh C. Angadi
3. Shri Om Birla
4. Shri Jitendra Chaudhury
5. Shri Ram Tahal Choudhary
  
6. Shri Rajen Gohain\*
7. Dr. K. Gopal
8. Shri Chhedi Paswan
9. Shri Kamlesh Paswan
10. Smt. Krishna Raj\*\*
11. Shri Arjun Charan Sethi
12. Shri Kodikunnil Suresh
13. Shri Dinesh Trivedi
14. Shri Rajan Vichare
15. Shri Dharmendra Yadav

**SECRETARIAT**

- |                          |   |                         |
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| 2. Shri Shiv Kumar       | - | Joint Secretary         |
| 3. Shri Raju Srivastava  | - | Additional Director     |
| 4. Shri Harish Sethi     | - | Sr. Executive Assistant |

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\*Shri Rajen Gohain ceased to be Member of the Committee *w.e.f.* 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2016 on his appointment as Minister of State, Government of India.

\*\*Smt. Krishna Raj ceased to be Member of the Committee *w.e.f.* 5<sup>th</sup> July, 2016 on her appointment as Minister of State, Government of India.

(iii)

## **THIRTEENTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS**

### **(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)**

#### *INTRODUCTION*

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Petitions, having been authorized by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Thirteenth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee to the House on the Petition received from Shri Madhu Kotian and Shri Jitesh Mataliya forwarded by Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., Lok Sabha, regarding horrible situation of Mumbai suburban trains causing deaths and injuries due to higher distance between platforms and coaches of local trains.

2. The Committee also convey their thanks to Dr. Kirit Somaiya for forwarding the instant Petition and also for giving his valuable suggestions in the matter.

3. The Committee considered and adopted the draft Thirteenth Report at their sitting held on 4 August, 2016.

3. The observations/recommendations of the Committee on the above matters have been included in the Report.

**NEW DELHI;**

**BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI**

**Chairperson,  
Committee on Petitions**

**August, 2016  
Shravana, 1938 (Saka)**

(v)

## REPORT

### **PETITION RECEIVED FROM SHRI MADHU KOTIAN AND SHRI JITESH MATALIYA, FORWARDED BY DR. KIRIT SOMAIYA, M.P., LOK SABHA, REGARDING HORRIBLE SITUATION OF MUMBAI SUBURBAN TRAINS CAUSING DEATHS AND INJURIES DUE TO HIGHER DISTANCE BETWEEN PLATFORMS AND COACHES OF LOCAL TRAINS.**

Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., Lok Sabha, had forwarded a Petition of Shri Madhu Kotian and Shri Jitesh Mataliya regarding horrible situation of Mumbai suburban trains causing deaths and injuries due to higher distance between platforms and coaches of local trains.

2 The Petitioners, in their Petition, *inter-alia*, stated that the situation of Mumbai suburban trains has become horrible due to the gap between platforms and train compartments at various stations such as Mulund, Bhandup, Vikhroli, Ghatkopar, Kurla, etc., which causes 8 to 10 thousand human casualties every year. This is because the Railway Authorities purchased new train compartments from Siemens Electric resulting into higher distance between platforms and the coaches. They further submitted that in spite of repeated requests/representations/follow-up to this effect, no strong measures have been taken and the passengers' safety measures are being ignored for the last couple of years. Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., requested to admit the Petition and issue directives to the Railway Authorities to take measures for passengers' safety.

3. The above Petition was referred to the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) on 2.07.2014 to determine its admissibility under Direction 40(2) of the Directions by the Speaker, Lok Sabha.

4. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) *vide* their O.M No. 2014/Sec. (Crime)/42/A/15 dated 5.09.2014, furnished the following reply:-

*"There are several reasons like foot-board travelling, crossing railway tracks unauthorizedly, etc., for the casualties at railway stations, especially in Mumbai. However, 19 and 16 persons died due to gap between platforms and foot-boards of train compartments in Mumbai Suburban railways during the year 2013 and 2014 (upto June), respectively. In order to reduce causalities due to gap between platforms and coaches, the works pertaining to raising of platforms have already been started and so far, height of 17 platforms has been raised and height of another 55 platforms will be raised during 2014-15 and 2015-16, subject to availability of funds."*

5. After the receipt of comments from the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), the above Petition was admitted under Rule 160 (iii) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha. Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., presented the Petition to Lok Sabha on 27.11.2014 (**Annexure I**). In accordance with Rule 169 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha, the Committee took up for examination the above Petition.

6. In order to have a holistic view on the problem of higher distance between platforms and coaches of local trains being operated under Mumbai Suburban section of Central and Western Railways causing deaths and injuries to the commuters, the Committee decided to have a presentation by Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., Lok Sabha, who had forwarded the Petition of Shri Madhu Kotian and Shri Jitesh Mataliya. Accordingly, on 7 April, 2015, the Committee invited Dr. Somaiya to hear his views.

7. During the course of his interaction with the Committee, Dr. Somaiya, *inter alia*, submitted before the Committee that a number of commuters are losing their lives and receiving fatal injuries due to lack of safety and security measures for the commuters in Mumbai local trains and also mainly because there is considerable gap between the coaches of new trains and platforms. He further said that the situation was worsened by the callous attitude of the Railway Authorities. He also drew the attention of the Committee to the fact that the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) had decided to raise the height of 131 platforms of Mumbai which, in turn, goes on to prove that there is a difference of height in the old local trains and the new local trains procured by the Railways. Dr. Somaiya, therefore, suggested that urgent remedial measures are required to be taken by the Railway Authorities to avert further loss of life and injuries to the commuters of the Mumbai Suburban section due to accidental falling.

8. On being enquired by the Committee about the details of the Mumbai Suburban section, technical specifications of the platforms and the efforts made, till date, by the Railway Authorities to rectify the gap between the floor of the coach and the platform which has resulted in innumerable cases of deaths or injuries of commuters, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), in their written reply, stated:-

*"Suburban section of Mumbai is served by Western & Central Railways. Stations under Mumbai Suburban section are categorized as 'C' Category stations. There are 35 'C' category stations on Western Railway and 85 'C' Category stations on Central Railway. As per norms of Minimum Essential Amenities (MEAs) at stations, 'C' Category stations are provided with high level platforms. The height of high level platforms, as per Schedule of Dimensions, is 760-840 mm.*

*The passengers using Mumbai Suburban section did not face any inconvenience earlier since the conventional EMU rakes plying on the system have no horizontal gap and have only minimal vertical gap. The problem was reported after introduction of MRVC Coaches manufactured in ICF, Chennai, with Siemens Electrics in 2007. These coaches have air spring suspension system due to which the vertical gap between the platform level and floor of the coach may increase by nearly 28 mm under loaded condition. It might cause inconvenience to the passengers.*

*Keeping in view a number of representations received from the users and public representatives, Railway Board decided in February, 2014 to increase the height of suburban platforms in Mumbai, on Central & Western Railways, from 760-844 mm to 840-920 mm. In*

*January, 2014, the High Court of Bombay initiated a suo moto Public Interest Litigation taking cognizance of the accidents purported to be caused by vertical gap between the floor of the coach and platform surface. The High Court of Bombay also nominated a Committee comprising officers of Railways, Research Designs & Standards Organization (RDSO) and public representatives for conducting trial of MRVC coaches for finding a solution to the problem. The Committee, in its report, recommended that the height of the platforms be raised upto 920 mm. The High Court of Bombay in July, 2014 had directed to complete the work of raising of platforms to 920 mm by 31.5.2016.*

The Ministry further submitted that there are severe constraints in the execution of works of platform raising in Mumbai Suburban section, as detailed below:-

- (i) Limited window of time (1-3 hours only) is available for execution of works of platform raising.*
- (ii) Shifting of construction material to platforms in very difficult due to fencing between railway tracks provided to arrest trespassing.*
- (iii) Most of the platforms have limited width and don't have the required space to stack the construction material.*
- (iv) Platform raising works are to be closely supervised and monitored as they involve safety of running trains and passengers. Hence, at any given time, work can be taken up at limited number of stations simultaneously."*

9. The Committee undertook an on-the-spot study visit to Mumbai from 19 to 20 May, 2015 to have a realistic assessment of the Mumbai Suburban section of Central and Western Railways. The Committee went on a short train journey from the suburban station of Bhandup to Ghatkopar, Mumbai, and interacted with the commuters. The Committee were informed that the commuters were facing inconvenience due to the low height of the platforms on the Mumbai Suburban section. Thereafter, the Committee interacted with Dr. Kirit Somaiya, M.P., Shri Madhu Kotian and Shri Jitesh Mataliya, Petitioners, and various other commuters/ Agencies/Welfare Organisations at the Church Gate Railway Headquarters to hear their views. Amongst other things, the Committee were informed that due to the apathy of the Railways, nearly dozen deaths and/or injuries occur due to avoidable accidents along the railway tracks every day. The Committee were informed that there are no proper facilities to attend to the injured or for the removal of demised passengers from the area.

10. The Committee asked about the inclusion of Central and Western Railways in Category 'C' stations, in order to accord a higher priority of these stations in view of a large number of passengers using them; the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), in a written reply, submitted that all suburban stations are assigned 'C' category on the basis of their being declared as "Suburban" stations.



11. On a specific query by the Committee about the total number of platforms which fall under the jurisdiction of Central and Western Railways, where Mumbai Suburban trains operate, the Railways, in a written reply, stated that there are 273 platforms on Central Railway and 145 platforms on Western Railway in the Mumbai Suburban section.

12. The Committee then desired to know as to whether the gap between platforms and compartments of trains is also the main contributing factor for accidental falling of passengers of suburban trains, the Railways, *inter alia*, stated that the gap between platforms and coach floor would generally not lead to an accident if passengers board/de-board the train when it has come to a halt. However, it causes inconvenience to passengers when they try to board/de-board a moving train and may sometimes also cause accidents.

13. The Committee then specifically wanted to know the optimum level of height of platforms in terms of the Schedule of Dimensions. The Railways, in a written note, submitted that the Indian Railway Schedule of Dimensions (IRSOD) does not specify any optimum height for the platforms. In terms of comprehensive instructions for provision of Passengers Amenities at stations, high level platforms (760-840 mm high) are provided at 'C' category stations, which include stations in the Mumbai Suburban section. However, in view of the gap between platforms and coach floor, the Railway Board had decided to raise the height of passenger platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section from 760-840 mm to 840-920 mm.

14. Clarifying on the issues raised in the representation, especially the number of deaths and injuries due to the gap between platform and compartment, the Railways, in a written reply, submitted as follows:-

<b>Year</b>	<b>No. of deaths</b>	<b>No. of injuries</b>
2005	22	53
2006	7	88
2007	1	48
2008	1	70
2009	7	56
2010	6	91
2011	6	85
2012	21	17
2013	19	17
2014	34	39
2015	40	26

15. During the course of oral evidence held on the subject, the Committee sought to know the total number of accidental deaths in the Central and Western Railways and the number of deaths due to gap

between the platforms; in response, the Chairman, Railway Board, deposed before the Committee as follows:-

*"We have made an analysis of the total number of accidental deaths in the Central and Western Railways and the number of deaths due to gap between the platforms and floor level of the coaches. During the last years (2010 onwards), there were a total number of 86 cases of deaths due to such gap in Central and Western Railways. During the last five years, 209 cases of injuries had been reported and the bulk of accidents were caused by trespassing out of the total number of accidents in the Mumbai Suburban section. 67% cases were of trespassing and 28% were due to falling from running trains. Since the trains remain overcrowded, some passengers fell due to sudden jerk or collision with some poles and these deaths were nearly 28% whereas the deaths caused by gaps were less than 3%"*

16. The Committee then desired to know the initiatives taken by the Central and Western Railways to prevent mishaps to the Mumbai Suburban train commuters that occurred due to the gap between platforms and compartments. The Railways, in a written reply, submitted as follows:-

*"Following steps have been taken to prevent mishaps to the Mumbai suburban train commuters:-*

*(a) Regular announcements are being made for "not to board/de-board the moving trains", "not to lean out of running trains", "not to travel on foot boards/roof", "not to show stunts in running trains", etc.*

*(b) Regular passenger awareness campaign are being organized at vulnerable stations/ sections with the help of cautionary banners/ posters/pamphlets and announcements are made on Public Announcement system and loudhailers (Megaphones).*

*(c) Assistance is being provided to commuters in boarding and de-boarding the train during peak hours at vulnerable stations.*

*(d) Regular intensive drives (Prosecution) under the penal provisions of the Railways Act for targeting the commuters indulging in the roof top and foot board travel, nuisance, stunts, etc., are being conducted.*

*(e) RPF staff are deployed at major stations/platforms in peak hours to prevent passengers from hanging/leaning on the door side.*

17. The Committee, then, desired to have the details of various factors, other than the low height of platforms and the gap between platforms and compartments viz., platform surface, absence of foot over bridges, etc., which are responsible for accidental falling of Mumbai Suburban train passengers causing deaths/injuries to them. The Railways, in a written reply, submitted as follows:-

- (a) *People falling from trains due to over-crowding, boarding/de-boarding from running trains, travelling on foot board and on roof top, performing of stunts, etc.*
- (b) *Dashing with the poles because of hanging/ leaning on the door side, performing stunts in running trains.*
- (c) *Commuters cross the railway tracks instead of using Foot Over Bridges while changing platforms.*
- (d) *Entry to the stations through unauthorized ways or crossing the railway tracks for taking short cut ways.*

18. The Committee were, however, further informed that the passengers using the Mumbai Suburban section had not faced any inconvenience earlier since the conventional EMU rakes plying on the system did not have horizontal gap and had only minimal vertical gap. The problem was reported after the introduction of MRVC Coaches manufactured in ICF, Chennai, with Siemens Electrics in 2007. These coaches have air spring suspension system due to which the vertical gap between the platform level and floor of the coach may increase by nearly 28 mm under loaded condition; which causes inconvenience to the passengers.

19. The Railways further informed the Committee that the layout design of the newly built EMU coaches with Automatic door closure mechanism is under process. Meanwhile, Railway Board has already advised ICF to plan manufacturing of EMU coaches with Automatic door closure mechanism. One Air conditioned rake with Automatic door closure is under manufacturing at ICF, Chennai. For passenger convenience, ideally, the coach floor and platform should be on the same level with minimum horizontal gap between the platform and coach floor. There has been no change in the horizontal gap since the width of conventional and MRVC coach is the same, i.e., 3660 mm. In the Mumbai Suburban section, there are common platforms for wide body EMU (3660mm) as well as Mainline coaches (3250mm). For the safety of operation of EMU stock, an adequate vertical gap between the coach floor bottom and platform level has to be maintained so that during dynamic conditions, there is no chance of rolling stock grazing the platform surface under adverse conditions.

20. The Committee then enquired about the procedure being followed by the Railways to make sure that the passengers/commuters get immediate medical aid in the event of their accidental falling. In response, the Railways, in a written reply, submitted that for rendering Medical Aid to railway passengers, First Aid Boxes containing essential drugs and dressing material are provided with the Guards of all passenger carrying trains and Station Masters at all the railway stations. In addition, Augmented First Aid Boxes with wide range of medicines, disposable medical material, etc., have been provided at model stations and with the Train Superintendents of Rajdhani/Shatabdi Express trains and Guards of nominated trains. Front line staffs deployed at stations and on the trains are also trained in rendering First Aid. Trains can also make unscheduled halts, if necessary, at the

stations en-route in emergencies. The Station Masters of all the stations have details of Doctors, Clinics and Hospitals, both Government and Private, in the vicinity of the station so that their services could also be availed in emergencies. Ambulance services of both Railway Hospitals and State Governments are utilized, as and when required.

21. On being asked by the Committee about the adequacy of arrangements put in place by the Central and Western Railways to take care of passengers injured as a result of accidental falling, especially in the event of their getting seriously injured, the Railways, in a written reply, submitted that the High Court of Bombay had directed the Railways to consider the establishment of Emergency Medical Centres at each of those Mumbai Suburban stations where more than 100 accidents had taken place in the year 2012. Accordingly, the Railways have set up Emergency Medical Centres at 14 Suburban stations (4 on Central Railway & 10 on Western Railway). All these arrangements are adequate to take care of rail passengers injured as a result of accidental falling.

22. The Committee, thereupon, specifically asked about the number of platforms in Mumbai where the work relating to raising the height of platforms was to be undertaken. The Railways, in a written note, submitted that 83 platforms on Central Railway and 145 platforms on Western Railway in Mumbai Suburban section are proposed to be raised. Railway-wise and Station-wise details of platforms proposed to be raised are as follows:-

<b>Central Railway</b>		
<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Name of Station</b>	<b>No. of platforms</b>
1	Ghatkopar	1
2	Thane	2
3	Kopar	2
4	Chembur	2
5	Sandhurst Road	2
6	Dadar	2
7	Sion	2
8	Kurla	2
9	Vidya Vihar	2
10	Vikhroli	1
11	Kanjurmarg	1
12	Masjid	2
13	Reay Road	1
14	Cottongreen	1
15	Vadala Road	1
16	Dombivali	3
17	Ambarnath	2
18	Kasara	1

19	Byculla	2
20	Curry Road	2
21	Sion	1
22	Matunga	2
23	Nahur	2
24	Kalyan	4
25	Ulhasnagar	1
26	Vithal wadi	2
27	Ambarnath	1
28	Badlapur	1
29	Sandhurst Road	2
30	Dock yard road	2
31	Rey Road	1
32	Cottongreen	1
33	Sewri	2
34	Vadala Road	3
35	Sanpada	5
36	Vashi	2
37	Jui Nagar	3
38	Nerul	4
39	Kharghar	4
40	Belapur	4
41	Turbhe	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>

<b>Western Railway</b>		
<b>Sl.No.</b>	<b>Name of Station</b>	<b>No. of platforms</b>
1	Churchgate	8
2	Marine Lines	4
3	Charni Road	4
4	Grant Road	4
5	Mumbai Central (Local)	4
6	Mahalaxmi	2
7	Lower Parel	3
8	Elphinstone Road	2
9	Dadar	6
10	Matunga Road	2
11	Mahim	6
12	Bandra	7
13	Khar Road	6

14	Santacruz	6
15	Vile Parle	6
16	Andheri	9
17	Jogeshwari	5
18	Goregaon	5
19	Malad	4
20	Kandivali	4
21	Borivali	10
22	Dahisar	4
23	Mira Road	4
24	Bhayander	6
25	Naigaon	4
26	Vasai Road	8
27	Nallasopara	4
28	Virar	8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>145</b>

23. Keeping in view the fact that the matter concerns the safety of passengers, the Committee further desired to know about the special procedure adopted by the Railways to allocate funds from any other Head, as a special case, to attend to the work of raising the height of platforms as early as possible. The Railways, in a written reply, submitted that during 2015-16, funds of Rs.130.65 crore to Central Railway and Rs.102.76 crore to Western Railway have been allocated under the Plan Head 'Passenger Amenities' to which the works of raising of platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section are charged. Additional funds, if required, shall be made available for the works of raising of platform in the Mumbai Suburban section depending upon the progress of work.

24. The Committee desired to know about the physical achievements, till date, in regard to raising the height of 83 platforms on Central Railway and 145 platforms on Western Railway; thereupon, the Railways, in a written reply, submitted that on Central Railway, out of 83 platforms, 60 platforms have been raised, work on 7 platforms is in progress and contracts for another 13 platforms have been awarded. 3 platforms are not to be raised as they are being dismantled in connection with the work of 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> line. On Western Railway, out of 145 platforms, 56 platforms have been raised, works on 15 platforms is in progress and contracts for another 73 platforms have been awarded. 1 platform is not to be raised as the same is being dismantled in connection with the works of 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> line.

25. The Committee further desired to know about the timeline fixed to complete the work of raising the height of platforms of the Mumbai Suburban section; in response, the Railways, in a written reply, submitted that on Central Railway, 24 platforms were targeted to be raised by 31.5.2015 and 59 platforms were targeted to be raised by 31.5.2016. On Western Railway, 48 platforms were targeted to be raised by 31.7.2015. Out of 97 platforms on Western Railway where presently the height is 840 mm

or more, 30 platforms were targeted to be raised during 2015-16 and 67 platforms are planned to be raised during 2016-17.

26. The Committee asked to give the number of cases of compensation claims of deaths or injuries to commuters of Mumbai Suburban trains in accidental falling incidents, filed and settled, during the last ten years (2005-15); the Railways, in a written reply, submitted:-

Number of cases filed			Number of cases settled		
Death	Injury	Total	Death	Injury	Total
8041	2991	11032	5055	2185	7240

27. The Committee further desired to know whether the Railways have developed any mechanism to clear the pending cases of Compensation Claims so as to ensure timely provision of relief to the victims of rail accidents. In reply, the representative of the Railways submitted that the objective of establishment of Railway Claims Tribunal (RCT) as enshrined in the RCT Act is for expeditious disposal of railway claim cases so as to ensure quicker relief to the claimants for the loss/damage of goods booked by rail, refund of fare and for death/injury to the victims of train accidents/untoward incidents. Settlement of claims cases in the RCT is a judicial process in which certain prescribed formalities have to be necessarily completed. It is, therefore, a time-consuming process. However, Chairman/RCT who is the Administrative Head of RCT organisation takes all possible steps to ensure timely settlement of claim cases in RCT. This is done by holding Circuit Benches when there is a vacancy of Members in some Benches; powers are delegated to the Members to carry on the proceedings even when quorum of RCT Benches is not available.

## Observations/ Recommendations

### Suitability of new MRVC Coaches

28. The Committee note that the Indian Railway Schedule of Dimensions (IRSOD) does not specify any optimum height for platforms. However, in terms of comprehensive instructions for provision of Passengers Amenities at stations, high level platforms (760-840 mm high) are provided at 'C' category stations, which include stations in the Mumbai Suburban sections. The Committee also note that the passengers using the Mumbai Suburban section had not faced any inconvenience earlier since the conventional EMU rakes plying on the section did not have horizontal gap and had only minimal vertical gap. The problem was reported after the introduction of MRVC Coaches manufactured in the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai with Siemens Electrics in 2007. The Committee find that in January, 2014, the High Court of Bombay had initiated a *suo moto* Public Interest Litigation taking cognizance of the accidents caused by the vertical gap between the floor of the coach and the platform surface. The High Court of Bombay also nominated a Committee comprising officers of Railways, the Research Designs & Standards Organization (RDSO) and public representatives for conducting trial of MRVC coaches for finding a solution to the problem. The Committee, in its report, recommended that the height of platforms be raised to 920 mm. In July, 2014, the High Court of Bombay had directed the Railways to complete the work of raising of platforms at 920 mm by 31.05.2016.

29. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have contended that the dimensions of EMU coaches manufactured at ICF with Siemens Electrics are suitable to run on the Mumbai Suburban section. These EMU rakes are equipped with pneumatic air suspension system in the secondary stage to improve the riding index and speed potential. With a view to examining the feasibility for raising the platform height, running trials were conducted by the RDSO. After analysis of data and other inputs, the Railway Board, *vide* letter dated 19.02.2014, approved the proposal for raising the height of platform to the revised range of 840-920 mm for the Mumbai Suburban section. Accordingly, the maximum floor height difference between the old and the new rakes under loaded condition is only 28 mm - which is not a major reason for inconvenience to the passengers. The Committee take note of the initiatives taken by the Railways to raise the height of passenger platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section from 760-840 mm to 840-920 mm to ensure the suitability of EMU coaches manufactured at ICF with Siemens Electrics. The Committee would like to point out that in the Mumbai Suburban section, there are common platforms for wide body EMU having a width of 3660 mm, as well as main line Coaches having a width of 3250 mm. Since the width of EMU and main line Coaches are different and for the safety of operation of both types of rolling stock, an adequate vertical gap between the coach floor bottom and platform level has to be maintained for avoiding the rolling stock grazing the platform surface under dynamic conditions. That being so, the Committee feel that the objective of raising the platform height in the Mumbai Suburban section from 760-840 mm to 840-920 mm would not



yield the desired results until and unless the aforementioned aspect is sorted out by the Railways. The Committee, therefore, call upon the Railways to exercise due diligence in sorting out the pivotal issue of operating wide body EMUs, including MRVC Coaches and main line Coaches, having different widths, from the same platforms of the Mumbai Suburban section. The Committee further desire that ensuring the safety of passengers from accidental falling due to the vertical gap between the coach floor bottom and platform level must be definitely factored in while reworking on various other technical aspects.

### Raising the height of platforms

30. The Committee note that there are 273 platforms on Central Railway and 145 platforms on Western Railway in the Mumbai Suburban section. In view of the direction of the High Court of Bombay, 83 platforms on the Central Railway and 145 platforms on the Western Railway were targeted to be raised by 31.05.2016. The Committee also note that, as on 8.04.2016, out of 83 platforms on the Central Railway, 60 platforms have been raised. Similarly, out of 145 platforms on the Western Railway, 56 platforms have been raised. What concerns the Committee is that the Railways are not able to achieve the target of raising the height of all the 228 platforms on Central and Western Railways. As on 8.04.2016, the height of only 50.87 percent of platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section has been raised, which goes against the directions of the High Court of Bombay. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have reasoned that in a project of this magnitude, there are various constraints in the execution of work of raising the height of platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section, viz., availability of limited window of time (1-3 hours daily) for execution of works, difficulty in shifting of construction material to platforms due to fencing between railway tracks, difficulty in stacking of construction material due to limited width of the platforms, difficulty in co-ordinating the construction work on platforms and safety of running of trains and passengers, etc. The Committee do not accept the contention of the Ministry in view of the fact that the responsibility of fixing of targets and assessing the ground realities in the overcrowded Mumbai Suburban section lies with the Railways themselves. The Committee are of the firm view that had the implementing Authorities resorted to prudent planning, including consultations with domain experts in the field at the very beginning itself, it would have been possible to minimize uncertainty on account of constructability, thereby paving the way for time-bound implementation and completion of the project of raising the height of platforms in line with the directions of the High Court of Bombay. Considering the fact that the project is one of the important ventures undertaken by the Railways - directly connected with passenger safety - the Committee impress upon the Railways to draw suitable lessons from the shortcomings/ impediments that have surfaced in course of the execution of the project and take all requisite remedial measures to complete the work of raising the height of the remaining 112 platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section at the earliest. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the revised target date of completion of the project.

### Safety Measures to avert accidental falling of commuters

31. The Committee have been informed by the Ministry (Railway Board) that the gap between platform and coach floor would not lead to accidents, if passengers board/de-board the train when it has come to a halt. The Committee have also been given to understand that various safety measures, other than raising the height of platforms or decreasing the gap between platform and train compartment, have been taken by the Railways to avert accidental falling of passengers of the Mumbai Suburban trains which include - (i) regular announcements at stations and inside trains regarding 'Do not cross the tracks', 'Use of FOBs/ Escalators', 'Not to travel on foot boards/roof', 'Not to show stunts in running trains'; (ii) launching of a drive, namely 'Track Suraksha Jeevan Raksha' and 'Naya Jeevan Nayi Aasha' with the help of NGOs, Scouts and Lions Club; (iii) identification of 70 trespassing locations; (iv) organising regular passengers' awareness campaigns at vulnerable stations/sections with the help of cautionary banners/ posters/ pamphlets; (v) deployment of Railway Protection Force staff at major stations/platforms in peak hours to prevent passengers from hanging/ leaning on door side; and (vi) conduct of regular intensive drives (Prosecution) under various penal provisions of the Railway Act for targeting the commuters indulging in the roof top and foot board travel. The Committee are not fully convinced of the impact of these safety measures in averting accidental falling of commuters of the Mumbai Suburban trains. In this connection, the Committee strongly feel that the Ministry must resort to out-of-box thinking on this issue and display readiness and workable propositions to prevent death and/or injury of commuters within the Railway premises. The Committee, therefore, recommend that innovative measures like introduction of automatic door closure as well as automatic foldable stairs in EMU coaches should be worked out. As a matter of fact, the automatic door closure mechanism of the Delhi Metro in averting accidental falling of commuters is worth emulating. The Committee would like to be apprised of the action taken by the Railways in this regard.

#### Availability of Medical Aid to railway passengers

32. The Committee note that for rendering Medical Aid to railway passengers, First Aid boxes containing essential drugs and dressing material are provided with the Guards of all passenger carrying trains and Station Masters of all railway stations. The Committee also note that the Station Masters of all stations have details of Doctors, Clinics and Hospitals, both Government and Private, in the vicinity of the Stations so that their services could also be availed, in emergencies. Ambulance service of both Railway Hospitals and State Governments is utilised whenever any case of accidental falling of commuters from trains occurs. The Committee also find that the High Court of Bombay had directed the Railways to consider the establishment of Emergency Medical Centres at each of those Mumbai Suburban stations where more than 100 accidents had taken place. In this regard, the Railways have informed that 14 Emergency Medical Centres (*4 on Central Railway and 10 on Western Railway*) have already been set up. They have also informed that all these arrangements are adequate to take care of rail passengers injured as a result of accidental

falling. In view of the fact that the success of Emergency Medical Centres or apparatus for providing medical aid to passengers injured on account of accidental falling is heavily dependent upon the availability of skilled Ground Duty staff and infrastructure, the Committee urge the Railways to provide the Station Masters, officials of Government Railway Police and other functionaries with more infrastructure and financial powers so as to enable them to take quick decisions in the case of emergency relating to accidental falling of rail passengers in the railway premises. The Committee would like to be apprised of the measures taken by the Railways in this regard.

### Compensation Claims

33. The Committee note that during the last 10 years, 124 commuters had died and 564 commuters had been injured in the Mumbai Suburban section due to the gap between platform and the compartment of trains. In this context, the Committee looked into the aspect of compensation claims filed and settled during 2005-15. The Committee note that out of 11032 compensation cases filed in different Benches of the Railway Claims Tribunal, claims had been given only in 7240 cases. On all-India basis, during the last five years, an amount of Rs. 13.65 crore has been given by the Railways as compensation to railway passengers who died or were injured due to accidental falling from trains. The Committee are appalled to find that as many as 3792 compensation claims which comes to around 35 percent are still pending. Though the reasons for non-settlement of compensation claims could be manifold, in the Committee's view, the foremost reason for the rising number of unsettled compensation claims is the non-availability of requisite infrastructure within the Railway premises to arrive at a quick decision as to whether the passenger had died or had been injured due to accidental falling from a train or otherwise. This deficiency has resulted in prolonged litigation for settlement of compensation claims between the injured passenger/dependants of deceased passengers and Railway Authorities. The Committee recommend that the Railways should strive to enhance the infrastructure within their premises so that any untoward incident resulting in death or injury of a passenger within the railway premises could be quickly identified/categorized as a case of accidental falling or an intentional act so that compensation claims are settled by the Railway Claims Tribunal within a fixed time frame. This can easily be done with the help of CCTV cameras not only on all the major stations across the country but also on small stations as well, where the inflow of passenger traffic is more. The Committee, therefore, further recommend that a scheme for installation of adequate number of CCTV cameras at all the strategic locations on all the railway stations across the country should be finalised within six months of the presentation of this report.

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