

**THIRTY - SIXTH REPORT
COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS**

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS

(Presented to Lok Sabha on 26.7.2017)



**LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
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**COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS
(2016-2017)**

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 Chandra Prakash Joshi
7. Dr. K. Gopal
8. Shri Kodikunnil Suresh
9. Shri Chhedi Paswan
10. Shri Kamlesh Paswan
11. Shri Arjun Charan Sethi
12. Shri Dinesh Trivedi
13. Shri Rajan Vichare
14. Shri Dharmendra Yadav
15. Vacant

SECRETARIAT

- | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| 1. Shri Shiv Kumar | - | Joint Secretary |
| 2. Shri Raju Srivastava | - | Additional Director |
| 3. Shri Harish Kumar Sethi | - | Senior Executive Assistant |

THIRTY - SIXTH REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS**(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)****INTRODUCTION**

I, the Chairperson, Committee on Petitions, having been authorised by the Committee to present the Report on their behalf, present this Thirty Sixth Action Taken Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee to the House on the Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations of the Committee on Petitions made in their Thirteenth Report (16th Lok Sabha) on the representation of S/Shri Madhu Kotian and 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 considered and adopted the draft Thirty Sixth Action Taken Report at their sitting held on 30 June, 2017.

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

NEW DELHI;**30 June, 2017****9 Ashadha, 1939 (Saka)****BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI**
Chairperson,
Committee on Petitions

REPORT

ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS MADE BY THE COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS (SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA) IN THEIR THIRTEENTH REPORT ON THE REPRESENTATION RECEIVED FROM S/SHRI MADHU KOTIAN AND 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.

The Committee on Petitions (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) presented their Thirteenth Report to Lok Sabha on 10 August, 2016 on the representation received from S/Shri Madhu Kotian and 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 had made certain observations/recommendations in the matter and the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) were asked to implement the recommendations and furnish their action taken notes thereon for consideration of the Committee.

3. Action Taken Notes have been received from the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in respect of all the recommendations contained in the Report. The recommendations made by the Committee and the replies furnished thereto by the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) are detailed in the succeeding paragraphs.

4. In paras 28 and 29 of the Report, the Committee had observed/recommended as follows:-

"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 (760-840mm 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."

"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."

5. In their Action Taken reply, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated as follows:-

"Floor height of new EMU coaches with Siemens electrics and pneumatic air suspension system is 1206 mm as compared to 1196 mm in conventional DC EMU coaches under unloaded condition. Maximum difference in floor height between new and old coaches under unloaded condition is 10 mm and 28 mm under loaded condition. Width of new EMU coaches with Siemens electrics and old conventional DC EMU coaches is same (3660 mm). Horizontal gap is same in both type of coaches. Floor height difference in new and old coaches is not a major reason for inconvenience to passengers. Problem of vertical gap will be addressed in the ongoing work of raising of platform height from (760-840mm high) to (840-920mm high). The range has been stipulated to account for the tolerances during construction/maintenance, operation in respect of platforms floor levels, rail levels, heights of the coach floors (in empty and loaded conditions) etc. Accordingly, the raising of the platforms is presently being done upto a height of 900mm."

"The EMU coaches were designed with reduced floor height. Further reduction in design of floor height was not possible due to technical & safety considerations."

6. In para 30 of the Report, the Committee had observed/recommended as follows:-

"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 coordinating 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.”

7. In their Action Taken reply, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated as follows:-

“Gap between platforms and coach floor would not lead to accident if passengers board/de-board the train when it has come to halt. However, it causes inconvenience to passengers as when they try to board/de-board the moving train, then may sometimes miss a step causing accidents. On Central Railway, out of 83 platforms, 80 platforms have been raised. 3 platforms are not to be raised as they are being dismantled in connection with works of 5th and 6th line. On Western Railway, out of 145 platforms, 111 platforms have been raised and balance 33 will be raised by July, 2017. One platform is not to be raised as the same is being dismantled in connection with works of 5th and 6th line. Height

of platforms at remaining stations conforms to the height range prescribed in Board's letter dated 19.02.2014."

8. In para 31 of the Report, the Committee had observed/recommended as follows:-

"The Committee have been informed by the Ministry of Railways (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."

9. In their Action Taken reply, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated as follows:-

“Integral Coach Factory has been advised to manufacture one non air-conditioned 12 car EMU rake with automatic door closure and vestibule. Western Railway has also been instructed to provide automatic door closure in one unit (1 MC and 2 TC).”

10. In para 32 of the Report, the Committee had observed/recommended as follows:-

“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.”

11. In their Action Taken reply, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated as follows:-

“The financial powers of officials of Medical Department of Zonal Railways are already adequate.”

12. In para 33 of the Report, the Committee had observed/recommended as follows :-

“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.”

13. In their Action Taken reply, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated as follows:-

“At present, 344 railway stations have been provided with CCTV cameras over Indian Railways (including 94 under Integrated Security System (ISS) for ensuring round the clock security surveillance at these stations.

Installation of CCTV cameras over 202 stations has been further approved under Integrated Security System (ISS), out of above, 94 stations have already been provided with CCTV surveillance system under ISS.

It has been further decided to install CCTV cameras at 983 more stations with allocation of budget to the tune of Rs.500 crore from 'Nirbhaya Fund'. Target date for installation of CCTV cameras under Nirbhaya Fund is December, 2016. Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance on 06.05.2016 issued authorization letter to take supplementary in the first batch through the Railway Budget for drawing Rs.200 Cr. from Nirbhaya Fund as 'Dividend Free' amount in the next session of Parliament.

It is pertinent to mention that strengthening and upgradation of security infrastructure is an ongoing process, CCTV surveillance system is accordingly be provided at sensitive stations over Indian Railways."

Observations/Recommendations

Suitability of new MRVC Coaches

14. The Committee while noticing 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 and the problem was reported after the introduction of MRVC Coaches manufactured in the Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai with Siemens Electrics in 2007, had recommended the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) 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 platform of the Mumbai Suburban Section.

15. In response, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) has submitted that width of new EMU Coaches with Siemens Electrics and old conventional Coaches is the same, i.e., 3660 mm. Horizontal gap is same in both type of Coaches and the Floor - Height difference in new and old Coaches is not a major reason for inconvenience to passengers. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) has further submitted that the problem of vertical gap will be addressed in the ongoing work of raising of platform height from 760-840 mm to 840-920 mm. The range has been stipulated to account for the tolerances during construction/maintenance, operation in respect of platforms floor levels, rail levels, heights of the Coach floors (in empty and loaded conditions), etc. Accordingly, the raising of the platforms is presently being done upto a height of 900 mm.

16. It is evident from the details furnished that the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) is silent on the issue of common platforms for wide body EMU having a width of 3660 mm, as well as main line Coaches having a width of 3250

mm due to which 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 aforesaid aspect is sorted out by the Railways. The Committee expect that the replies of Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) should be complete and elaborate. They, therefore, await Railway's response to their recommendation. While reiterating their recommendation, the Committee desire that the Railways should ensure the safety of passengers from accidental falling due to the vertical gap between the coach floor bottom and platform level for which all the aforementioned factors should be factored in while reworking on various technical aspects.

Raising the height of platforms

17. The Committee note from the action taken reply that the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board), while updating the status of raising the height of platforms in the Mumbai Suburban section, has submitted that on the Central Railway, out of 83 platforms, 80 platforms have been raised. Three platforms are not to be raised as they are being dismantled in connection with works of Fifth and Sixth line. Similarly, on the Western Railway, out of 145 platforms, 111 platforms have been raised and the balance 33 will be raised by July, 2017. One platform is not to be raised as the same is being dismantled in connection with works of Fifth and Sixth line. The Committee also find that the height of platforms at remaining stations conforms to the height range prescribed in Railway Board's letter dated 19 February, 2014. The Committee have been also apprised that gap between platforms and coach floor would not lead to accident if passengers board/de-board the train when it has come to halt. However, it causes inconvenience to passengers when they try to board/de-board the moving train and sometimes miss a step causing accidents. While appreciating the steps taken by the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) to raise the height of 85%

platforms on the Central and Western Railways in the Mumbai Suburban Section, the Committee would like to be apprised of the status of raising the height of remaining 33 platforms on the Western Railway in the Mumbai Suburban Section within the prescribed dateline, i.e., by July, 2017 as already determined by them.

Safety Measures to avert accidental falling of commuters

18. The Committee while noticing the ineffectiveness of various security measures in averting accidental falling of commuters of the Mumbai Suburban trains had recommended that the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) should work out innovative measures like introduction of automatic door closure system/ automatic foldable stairs in EMU Coaches. The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) in their action taken reply has submitted that the Integral Coach Factory has been advised to manufacture one non air-conditioned 12 car EMU rake with automatic door closure and vestibule. Besides, the Western Railway has also been instructed to provide automatic door closure in one unit. The Committee are dismayed to note that progress of introduction of automatic door closure/ foldable stairs in EMU coaches in the Mumbai Suburban trains is still in the infancy stage. This is alarming, particularly, in the context that the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) had themselves acknowledged that gap between platforms and coach floor would not lead to accident if passengers do not board/de-board the moving train. The Committee, therefore, would like the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) to give adequate priority not only to raise the height of platforms but also to work out modalities to urgently introduce automatic door closure/ automatic foldable stairs in EMU Coaches in the Mumbai Suburban section. The Committee, therefore, once again reiterate the need of more result oriented approach in the matter.

Installation of CCTV cameras at railway stations

19. In response to recommendation of the Committee about finalisation of a scheme for installation of adequate number of CCTV cameras on all the railway stations across the country, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) has submitted that at present, 344 railway stations have been provided with CCTV cameras across Indian Railways (including 94 CCTVs under the Integrated Security System). The Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) has further stated that installation of CCTV cameras over 202 stations has been further approved under Integrated Security System, out of which, 94 stations have already been provided with CCTV surveillance system. Besides , it has been decided to install CCTV cameras at 983 more stations with allocation of budget to the tune of Rs. 500 crore from 'Nirbhaya Fund'. The Committee are of the view that project of installation of CCTV cameras on all the railway stations across the country, which is estimated to be between 8000 to 8500, is moving at a snail's pace in view of the fact that till date, only a meagre 438 railway stations have been provided with CCTV cameras over Indian Railways. The Committee, therefore, desire that the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) should explore ways to implement the provision of installation of CCTV cameras by utilizing the allocation made from 'Nirbhaya Fund' with a pre-determined target date. Any further delay in attainment of this objective should be enquired into at the highest level in the Railway Board.

NEW DELHI;
30 June, 2017
9 Ashadha, 1939 (Saka)

BHAGAT SINGH KOSHYARI
Chairperson,
Committee on Petitions