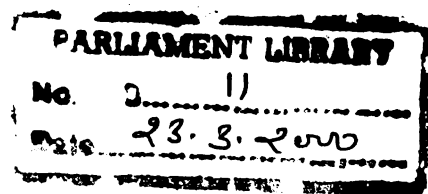


LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)



Fourth Session
(Twelfth Lok Sabha)



सत्यमेव जयते

(Vol. IX contains Nos. 11 to 20)

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT
NEW DELHI

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Saturday, March 13, 1999/Phalgun 22, 1920 (Saka)

*The Lok Sabha met at Two Minutes Past
Eleven of the Clock*

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

[*English*]

MR. SPEAKER : Minister of Parliamentary Affairs, Shri Kumaramanglam, may make a statement.

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI) : Sir, I, on behalf of Shri P.R. Kumaramangalam, inform the House that following Government Business will be taken up for week commencing 15th March, 1999 :-

1. Reply to the Discussion on Motion of Thanks on President's Address. . .(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI NADENDLA BHASKARA RAO (Khammam) : Sir, when the Minister is present, he should not hand it over to him. If he is not there, it is all right. This amounts to disrespect to the House. . .(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : After all, he also should get a chance. . .(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF POWER, MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : Sir, I was in the other House. . .(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI : 2. Discussion on the Statutory Resolution seeking disapproval of the Central Vigilance Commission Ordinance, 1999 and consideration and passing of the Central Vigilance Commission Bill, 1998.

3. General discussion on Budget (General) for the year 1999-2000.

4. Discussion and voting on the following :-
 - (a) Demand for Grants on Account (General) for 1999-2000.
 - (b) Supplementary Demands for Grants (General) for 1998-99.
5. Consideration and Passing of the Merchant Shipping (Second Amendment) Bill, 1998, as passed by Rajya Sabha.
6. The Commodities Board and Development of Authorities (Exemption from Income Tax) Bill, 1998.

(Consideration and Passing)
7. Consideration and Passing of the following Bills :-
 - (a) The Marriage Laws (Amendment) Bill, 1998 as passed by Rajya Sabha.
 - (b) The Indian Majority (Amendment) Bill, 1998 as passed by Rajya Sabha.
 - (c) The Administrators General (Amendment) Bill, 1998 as passed by Rajya Sabha.

SHRI ADITYANATH (Gorakhpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, Gorakhpur is one of the important religious, Cultural and industrial cities of Eastern Uttar Pradesh. This is also one of the main road links to Nepal - the only Hindu nation in the World. Lakhs of tourists from all over the world visit this place every year. Trains and buses are the only means of transport to reach there. Due to unavoidable (reasons operation of air services which were available) till 1991-92, have been suspended for indefinite time.

I, therefore, request you to kindly start air services again for Gorakhpur as this city assumes much significance from tourism point of view.

SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, following items may be included in the next week's agenda of Lok Sabha :-

1. The Sugar industry in the country has suffered a huge loss due to the import of duty free sugar sold at cheaper rates.
2. Discussion on the growing problem of unemployment in rural areas.

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, following items may be included in the next week's agenda of Lok Sabha :-

[Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey]

1. Production of Soabean, Sunflower and groundnut has suffered a serious setback due to the import of some edible oils. Due to the non-payment of adequate supporting prices, growers of these produces are greatly disappointed. There is therefore, the need to formulate an integrated policy for edible oil.
2. Due to the non-availability of Long-awaited air services to Neemuch, Madhya Pradesh in spite of repeated requests and availability of airport, local people and traders are expressing their resentments.

SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Shimla) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, following items may be included in the next week's Agenda of Lok Sabha

1. Financial allocation should be made for revival of closed industries in Himachal Pradesh.
2. Provisions should be made to provide unemployment allowance to the unemployed male-female youths of Himachal Pradesh.

SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, following items may be included in the list of Business of Lok Sabha for the next week :-

Every month dozens of people die every this or that day in road accidents at G.T. road in eastern districts of Uttar Pradesh—Allahabad, Kaushambi, Fatehpur. Following a Allahabad High Court order roadside encroachments were removed due to which people suffered heavy loss of life and property but so far no roads, no pavements and no drainage have been constructed therefore, apart from a by-pass road (ring road) in above three districts, two river bridges, one each on Ganga and Yamuna, should be constructed so that heavy vehicles are allowed to move only through these by-pass roads.

SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilhaur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, following items may be included in the next week's agenda of Lok Sabha :-

1. The main industrial and commercial city of Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh, which exports leather goods, foot wearings, hosiery items, readymade garments, rice and other items to other countries should be linked by air-services and air flights between Delhi-Kanpur, Mumbai-Kanpur and Madras-Kanpur should be started.

2. The closed NTC Cotton Mill and 'TAFCO' factory should be modernised and revived so that lakhs of unemployed labourers can get employment.

[Translation]

(Interruptions)

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, I want to bring a very important issue to your notice. Hon. Minister of Communications has informed to the House that the tax burden levied by 'TRAI' especially on common men would be kept in abeyance. But the 'TRAI' has challenged the authority of the Government of India and the Parliament, it is an extremely unfortunate situation. The dignity of the Parliament is being lowered due to such acts and the sovereignty of the Government is being challenged. It is unfortunate to challenge it even after the question was raised in the House and the Hon. Minister had replied to it, it amounts to challenging the sovereignty of the Parliament. I want the statement of the Government of India on it. I want to say with your permission that it is a blot both on the name of Government and the Parliament. The Government acts daily in such a manner so as to be little the authority of the House and I condemn it and demand the statement of the Government on it

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : We do not have 'Zero Hour' today.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You can raise it on Monday.

11.11 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET – GENERAL DISCUSSION
RESOLUTION RE : APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN SECOND REPORT OF RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE
*DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT – RAILWAYS
*SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS – RAILWAYS
AND
*DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS – RAILWAYS

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : I beg to move :

*Moved with the recommendation of the President.

"That this House approves the recommendations made in Paragraphs 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42 contained in the Second Report of the Railway Convention Committee 1998, appointed to review the rate of dividend payable by the Railway Undertaking to General Revenues etc. which was presented in Lok Sabha on 24.2.1999, with modifications as proposed in the Revised Estimates of 1998-99 to the appropriations to the Depreciation Reserve Fund and Pension Fund, covered by Paragraphs 38 and 39 of the recommendations."

MR. SPEAKER : Motions moved :

"That this House approves the recommendations made in Paragraphs 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42 contained in the Second Report of the Railway Convention Committee 1998, appointed to review the rate of dividend payable by the Railway Undertaking to General Revenues etc. which was presented in Lok Sabha on 24.2.1999, with modifications as proposed in the Revised Estimates of 1998-99 to the appropriations to the Depreciation Reserve Fund and Pension Fund, covered by Paragraphs 38 and 39 of the recommendations."

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India, *on account*, for or towards defraying the charges during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2000, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos.1 to 16."

"That the supplementary sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1999, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the second column thereof."

Demand Nos. 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 16."

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the Presidents of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1997, in respect of the following Demands entered in the second column thereof."

Demands Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 16."

Demands for Grants on Account (Railways) for 1999-2000 submitted to the Vote of the Lok Sabha

| No. | Name of Demand | Amount of Demand for Grants on Account submitted to the Vote of the House |
|-----|--|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | Rs. |
| 1. | Railway Board | 6,57,50,000 |
| 2. | Miscellaneous Expenditure (General) | 32,75,83,000 |
| 3. | General Superintendence and Services on Railways | 237,80,75,000 |
| 4. | Repairs and Maintenance of Permanent Way & Works | 480,96,52,000 |
| 5. | Repairs and Maintenance of Motive Power | 263,36,59,000 |
| 6. | Repairs and Maintenance of Carriages and Wagons | 485,15,51,000 |
| 7. | Repairs and Maintenance of Plant and Equipment | 251,16,49,000 |
| 8. | Operating Expenses—Rolling Stock and Equipment | 427,38,51,000 |
| 9. | Operating Expenses—Traffic | 1725,16,90,000 |
| 10. | Operating Expenses—Fuel | 858,02,02,000 |
| 11. | Staff Welfare and Amenities | 188,53,90,000 |
| 12. | Miscellaneous Working Expenses | 237,85,99,000 |
| 13. | Provident Fund, Pension and other retirement benefits | 552,32,82,000 |
| 14. | Appropriation to Funds | 1016,10,83,000 |
| 15. | Dividend to General Revenues, Repayment of Loans taken from General Revenues and Amortization of Over-Capitalization | 4,24,87,000 |
| 16. | Assets - Acquisition, Construction and Replacement | |
| | Revenue | 7,50,00,000 |
| | Other Expenditure | |
| | Capital | 1981,74,32,000 |
| | Railway Funds | 821,38,83,000 |
| | Total | 9584,08,18,000 |

*Moved with the recommendations of the President.

Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1998-99 submitted to the Vote of the Lok Sabha

| No. of Demand | Name of Demand | Amount of Demand submitted to the Vote of the House |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Rs. | | |
| 2. | Miscellaneous Expenditure (General) | 11,45,79,000 |
| 6. | Repairs and Maintenance of Carriages and Wagons | 72,00,00,000 |
| 8. | Operating Expenses-Rolling Stock and Equipment | 16,00,00,000 |
| 9. | Operating Expenses - Traffic | 37,00,00,000 |
| 12. | Miscellaneous Working Expenses | 35,80,40,000 |
| 13. | Provident Fund, Pension and Other Retirement Benefits | 1528,89,81,000 |
| 16. | Assets-Acquisition, Construction and Replacement | |
| Other Expenditure | | |
| | Railway Funds | 5,000 |
| Total | | 1701,16,05,000 |

Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) 1996-97 submitted to the Vote of the Lok Sabha

| No. of Demand | Name of Demand | Amount of Demand to be submitted to the Vote of the House |
|---------------|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Rs. | | |
| 4. | Repairs and Maintenance of Permanent Way and Works | 14,70,93,606 |
| 6. | Repairs and Maintenance of Carriages and Wagons | 29,11,35,643 |
| 7. | Repairs and Maintenance of Plant and Equipment | 13,03,46,814 |
| 8. | Operating Expenses - Rolling Stock and Equipment | 24,12,72,533 |
| 11. | Staff Welfare and Amenities | 4,50,15,555 |
| 12. | Miscellaneous Working Expenses | 28,48,60,216 |
| 13. | Provident Fund, Pension and Other Retirement Benefits | 23,84,66,708 |

| 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------|---|---------------|
| 16. | Assets- Acquisition, Construction and Replacement | |
| Other Expenditure | | |
| | Railway Funds | 51,37,84,505 |
| Total | | 189,19,75,580 |

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : My hon. friend, Shri Nitish Kumar has presented his second Railway Budget. I do not know whether it is his last Budget or he will make a hat-trick. It will depend on the things to come.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : He is saying so because Mamtaji is vying for that, he means to say . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI MOTILAL VORA (Rajnandgaon) : Mamtaji has been challenged by the Telecom Regulatory Authority. . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Railway is an important public enterprise, in fact the life line of the nation. The country should take stock of the health of the system periodically and also assess its strength and weaknesses. Railway Budget gives an opportunity to all of us to make an appraisal. It is for the Ministry to spell out the tasks ahead and afford solutions to the problems. But I find the Budget presented by Shri Nitish Kumar is populist at some places and trivial at other. It lacks the long term perspective. The targets set by the Minister appear to be unrealistic. It contains a lot of jugglery of words. For the first time, he has also tried to conceal the impact of the freight rates and fare increases by telling that the new fares will be so many times of the second class basic fare and so on, instead of straightaway telling what will be the new fares. It only mentions about a line here or a line there, a survey here or a survey there, an extension of train here or an extension there, some fare increases and so on. If you take any Railway Budget, the pattern is the same. You will always find a repetition of what was said earlier except the change of names. If you see the thrust of the Budget, the time has come for us to think whether it is necessary to have the Railway Budget at all.

When the Railway finances were separated in 1920, the purpose was different because they wanted to give to the Railways freedom to expand, freedom to plan for themselves, unfettered by the impact of the general finances. But we find today that the purpose of this Budget is completely lost. There is the same old rigmarole every

year and the same old *tamasha* of the Minister giving finishing touches to the Budget with the Minister of State sitting by his side and the Members of the Railway Board standing behind. Actually, his own colleague in the Samata Party, Shri George Fernandes, when he was the Railway Minister, said that there was no need for a separate Railway Budget and there is no secrecy in the Railway Budget. So, the Minister need not carry a briefcase with the Budget. There is a lot of difference between the General Budget and the Railway Budget. Even if the Minister increases the fares and freight charges and even if somebody buys a tickets two months ahead he has to pay the difference when the new fares come into operation. Therefore, there is no secrecy at all. If the Minister wants to introduce a new train or if he wants to order a survey, why should he wait for the Railway Budget ? He can do these things throughout the year. So, I think, the time has come to find out whether it is worthwhile to have a separate Railway Budget, because today, the Ministry of Defence has got almost the same budget, the Ministry of Telecommunications is reaching the same level and the Ministry of Power is also having almost the same budget. Therefore, with about Rs. 35,000 crore income and revenue, I do not think the Railways need a separate budget. In fact, a Status Paper each year, probably, will serve the purpose by indicating what the Railways have done.

Sir, this year's Railway Budget does not tackle the basic problems faced by the Railways. What are these basic problems ? The freight traffic is not coming upto the mark which the Minister himself has admitted. There are problems like the growing expenses and the deficits, the mismatch between the economic growth and the rail infrastructure development etc.

MR. SPEAKER : If there is no 'Zero Hour', the House will be in order.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : Then, there are problems like the growing social burdens, backlog in track maintenance, overhaul of coaches, rolling stocks, etc. The Minister has rightly pointed to these problems.

[English]

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER (Tenali) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I want to seek some information from the Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas. There had been a fire in the Mumbai High and since the Minister is present here, why does he not make a statement ? Will he apprise the House as to what had happened there ?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI VAZHAPADY K. RAMAMURTHY) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, I want to share with the House that a major fire took place in one of the

O.N.G.C. gas wells in Mumbai Offshore, not in the Mumbai High Sea. Since it is an uncontrolled gas, the fire could not be brought under control, so far. Four O.N.G.C. ships are under operation for putting out the fire. The fire took place on the 11th of March at 12 Noon and our entire O.N.G.C. team is there. We have also summoned the experts from the American side. Two experts are coming and they may be landing this night. Further, I would like to share that there is no loss of human lives nor is there any environmental problem, because it is a gas field. However, I assure the House that so far the gas supply to our industries in Mumbai and other places is not affected on account of fire. We are trying to increase supply of gas to this area from other gas wells.

Four wells, which are producing gas, have been closed because of the fire. A detailed statement will be made in the House by Monday.

MR. SPEAKER : All right.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : The statement may kindly cover the cause and the loss that would be there to the ONGC or the Government of India.

SHRI VAZHAPADY K. RAMAMURTHY : Yes; the entire thing will be covered.

MR. SPEAKER : On Monday.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : This is an accident to my speech.

MR. SPEAKER : It is not a railway accident.

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad) : You are delayed by your own colleague.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Then, there is no delay . . . (Interruptions)

11.22 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET – GENERAL DISCUSSION
 RESOLUTION RE : APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS MADE IN THE SECOND REPORT OF RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE
 DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON ACCOUNT – RAILWAYS
 DEMANDS FOR SUPPLEMENTARY GRANTS – RAILWAYS
 AND
 DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS – RAILWAYS —contd

[English]

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : Sir, the hon. Minister has rightly pointed out the major problems faced

[Shri P. Upendra]

by the Railways. I have nothing against him personally. He is very intelligent. He has picked up very fast with his experience in the Railway Convention Committee and all that.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER (Tenali) : He is a nice man.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : He is a gentleman. He is receptive to the demands made by the Members. That is why he has tried to please as many Members as possible, including me. But when we discuss the health and efficiency of the Railways, I think, we have to say some harsh words also. I quote from the Minister's speech :

"Freight loading has not been as per our expectations. On the other hand, expenditure has gone up considerably. The reduced demand on core sector commodities, such as, coal, foodgrains, iron and steel, cement and iron-ore, has affected the Railways freight traffic. Against the budgetary forecast of 450 MT, it is expected that the Railways will achieve a loading of around 424 MT in 1998-99, that is, current year. That is about 26 MT less than anticipated."

Similarly, the general goods traffic is decreasing. It is not increasing. The share of the Railways is decreasing. Again he says :

"The freight loading in the current year has been a matter of concern despite various efforts made. Only recently, some signs of recovery have been noticed and we hope that the coming year will be favourable."

I am sorry that I cannot share his optimism. On what basis can he say that in 1998-99, less traffic to the extent of 26 MT has been anticipated ? On what basis can he say that in 1999-2000, it will again be 450 MT. It is only a jugglery of figures because he has to balance the Budget. Unless he shows 450 MT of freight traffic, he will have to increase the fares and freight. To avoid that, he has again put it at 450 MT. He has not mentioned any specific strategies by which he can bring back the traffic which he is losing.

The world over, the Railways are now going to be a profitable business. Though they have lost the traffic through their own myopic policies, they are recovering now. Therefore, this is the time for the Railways to recover the lost traffic also.

They are losing the freight traffic particularly to the roadways for the last few years. For example, in 1950 the economy of India was rail dominated. Today, it is road-dominated. In 1950, the Railways carried 89 per cent of the freight traffic and the roadways carried only 11 per cent. In 1997-98, the Railways carried only 40 per cent as against 60 per cent by the roadways.

Similar is the case with the passenger traffic also. In 1950-51, the Railways carried 80 per cent and 20 per cent was by road. Today, It is just the reverse. Moreover, it is high rated traffic and bulk traffic. What should worry the Railways is the high rated traffic and the bulk traffic which was going earlier only by the Railways, like steel, cement, coal, iron-ore, fertilisers, foodgrains, fuel, etc., and has now switched over to the road.

That is the disturbing development for the Railways. The Railways have to evolve a strategy to win back this traffic. When it comes to the Railway finances, Sir, the Minister says :

"Unlike 1997-98, current Financial Year has not been very favourable so which was apparent."

He also says :

"It is expected that there will be a shortfall of Rs.1056 crore in the earnings as compared to the target for the year despite increase in passenger. and other sundry earnings."

He also says :

"Plan expenditure has also been re-assessed and kept at Rs. 8755 crore as against the Budgeted outlay of Rs. 9500 crore."

So, the Railway Plan has been pruned.

"It is proposed to withdraw Rs. 1313 crore from the Railway fund balances to meet the additional pensionary liabilities."

To sum up, it only shows the bankruptcy of the Railway system. If they have to withdraw money from the Railway funds to meet the additional pensionary liabilities, that shows that the Railway finances are in deep trouble.

He has mentioned a number of steps to increase the revenue but I do not think that they are going to fetch any additional revenue for the Railways. One peculiar thing which we find in this year's Budget is that these increase of freight rate by four per cent covers all commodities. In every Budget, they used to exempt the foodgrains, the fodder, the relief materials etc. from any additional levy but this year, the Minister has said that the commodities are also not exempt and the freight rate increase covers everything. As usual, they will come and say that the increase does not matter much, it will result only in 0.0001 per cent increase in the Price Index and all that. We have been it in the past. It is not going to be correct, and definitely, it will lead to more increase in the prices of general commodities also.

Another point is that there is no rationale or costing while fixing this freight rate increase. They have made an

ad hoc or across the board increase of four per cent. On what basis? Has any costing been done? Why four per cent, why not five per cent or three per cent or three and a half per cent? There is no rationale in the increase. These are all *ad hoc* or random decisions. I think it does not show any expertise on behalf of the Railways in looking after their finances. They should have done some costing, and any increase should have been made based on the costing pattern only.

The Minister also says

"Increase in working expenses and slowing down of growth of freight traffic has resulted in reduced generation of internal resources which are not sufficient to meet the plan requirements."

That is why, he had to withdraw from the funds. It is very clear. The Railways are not able to get their internal resources augmented to meet the additional expenses also. Now, what we have to find is this. This four per cent increase may look very minor but it is counter-productive in the sense that on the one side they are losing traffic to the roadways and they are not able to compete with the roadways, and again they go on increasing the freight rates, then how can they win back the traffic going to the roadways which is definitely counter-productive? Officers of the Railways should realise this also. They are projecting next year's revenue from both passenger and freight traffic as Rs. 32,411 crore. On what basis? These are unrealistic projections. Again, next year, he will come and say – if he continues there – that due to so many other factors which have intervened, they could not achieve the target and there is a shortfall and all that. This is not the way of dealing with the Railway Budget.

One more point which I would like to make is about the operating ratio. The percentage of expenses to the gross earnings has been gradually increasing. Now, he says .

"During 1997-98, it was 91 per cent. In 1998-99, it is 90.9 per cent."

That means, according to him, there is an improvement to the extent of 0.1 per cent.

This is a mere jugglery of words and playing with the figures. Nobody can say that it is 0.1 per cent less or 4.4 per cent more. My information is that this is going to be 94 per cent and something has been hidden. Therefore, it has to be seen that the operating ratio is cut down as far as possible.

Another point is with regard to the support from the General Revenues. The hon. Minister is satisfied with this and he thanked the Finance Minister on the floor of the

House that as against Rs. 2200 crore which they got last year, this year they got Rs. 2,540 crore. He says that it is the highest since 1993-94. But if you see the escalation of prices and the inflationary rates, this is no increase at all. This does not reflect any substantial increase and the support from the General Revenues. We all support, all the sections of the House do support the hon. Railway Minister's claim that the general finances should come to his aid and more general support should come from the General Revenues to the Railways.

Mr. Speaker Sir, the Railways system is not growing as much as needed. That is why I call it a mismatch between the growing traffic and the infrastructural development. In 1950-51, if you take 100 as index, the passenger traffic has increased five times, since the First Plan. Similarly, the freight traffic has increased by seven and-a-half times, if you take 100 as the base, now it is 756. It is going to be much more. Even with the reduced level of increase, still it is going to be a substantial increase by the end of the plan.

But what is happening on Railways infrastructure development side? Sir, you will find that only 22 per cent of the Railway track is electrified and the wagon turn round on the meter gauge has deteriorated. There is a deficiency. Inefficiency is creeping into the system. The speeds of the trains have come down since Independence. Today, the average speed of the Mail and Express Trains is only 47.8 kms. per hour and the average speed of passenger trains is only 30 kms. per hour. It is substantially less than what it was at the time of Independence.

The passenger coaches have not been increased from 1993-94. The number is the same, what they had got in 1993-94 remains the same as far as passenger coaches are concerned. Not one coach has been added. May be replacements are coming for some coaches, but the overall number remains the same. The same thing is with regard to wagons also. The number of wagons in units is less than what it was in 1960-61. What we had 39 years ago, we still have the same number of wagons in terms of units. In spite of the increase in traffic, both in passenger and freight, the rolling stock remains less than what is required.

Worst is the track expansion of the Railway network. In 1950-51 we had 53,596 kms. and after 47 years, now we have 62,495 kms. That is exactly 9,000 kms. more in forty seven years. How can they meet the traffic with only 9,000 kms. having been built in almost 50 years? That means, the system is completely overstretched and saturated and their own estimate says that 12,000 kms. of the route is already completely saturated. They cannot put any additional trains there and no additional wagon. That is, the system is completely overstretched today.

[Shri P. Upendra]

In 1997-98, only 26 kms. of new lines have been opened and doubling of only 160 kms. of track was done.

How can you improve the railway system like this when you can build only 26 kilometres in a year? You yourself have explained that you need Rs. 34,000 crore to complete the on-going developmental works. Where from will you get that amount of Rs. 34,000 crore and when will you finish all these on-going works? You are already committing for more and more works, more and more surveys, more and more new lines, more and more doubling and conversions. You should be frank. You should admit to the House and you should have a plan to complete all the on-going works at a stretch by taking money from the general revenue or by taking loans or whatever it is. You must find the resources to complete these works in five years or ten years and you must have plan to complete these works. This is really necessary. For example, in the unigauge policy, whatever may be the controversy about that, now only 847 kilometres have been converted in the last year, 1997-98. Now, 8,354 kilometres conversion work is in progress.

The main purpose of the conversion work is to remove the bottlenecks; to remove the transshipment points between the broad-gauge and the metre-gauge so that you have a smooth traffic. What is happening to day? You have taken up the metre-gauge conversion; half is completed; one-third is completed; instead of one bottleneck and one transshipment point on a section you have two or three in between. The classic example is Mudked-Bolaram conversion project. There was only one transshipment point before but there are three transshipment points now. You must have a plan to complete them as quickly as possible. The traffic is suffering there. Instead of giving the benefit, this policy is creating new bottlenecks. The railway electrification, about which I have mentioned. Now, only 13,962 kilometres have been electrified.

I would like to bring to your notice about an item which appeared in *The Hindustan Times* on the 8th of March. I do not know whether you have read that or not. On the one hand we are pleading for more and more electrification and more and more money for electrification. It says :

"The railway electrification is a big myth. All the rosy theories about its environmental friendliness, economy, high rate of return, haulage capacity have been debunked. Especially in India, a power-starved country, where the Railway Board now admits one electric locomotive deprives, 1,500 households of their basic electricity needs."

One electric locomotive results in 1,500 households being deprived of electricity. The electric locomotive that

you have purchased is of 6,000 HP. They are saying that in most of the sections, the electric locomotive requires a diesel 'banker' to push it. What for you should buy each locomotive at Rs. 23 crore or Rs. 24 crore if you need a diesel 'banker'? Then, what is the purpose of this electrification? Now you have to make a review as to whether this electrification is serving the purpose or not because the world over, I believe, the Railways are going back. I know there is lobbying in the Railways; there is a conflict between the diesel lobby and the electric lobby. This may be a sponsored item also. I do not deny that but you must have an appraisal whether the electrification is serving the needs or not.

Similar is the case with the surveys. Now you have provided Rs. 10 crore for the surveys. I know that there is a pressure. Many Members of Parliament come and demand new railway lines and you just order for a survey. After four years, again you will say that it requires updating the survey; you will say, 'it is a four-year old survey and let us update the survey.' You can postpone the decision like this. But what has happened to those surveys which have already been completed? You have created a hope among the people by completing the surveys. Now you must do something in this regard. For example, take the Kakinada-Kotipally line survey, about which the hon. Speaker is also interested. The survey has been completed but you have provided Rs. 1,000 in this year's Budget. What can you do with this amount of Rs. 1,000 for a project of Rs. 23 crore?

Therefore, let us not dupe the people; let us not dupe the Parliament; be frank and tell your problems and say, 'I can do this much; I cannot do this much.' There is no point in creating hopes. Therefore, you have to take a decision after taking the Members of Parliament into confidence. . . (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : Have you seen this booklet? . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA : I have seen that also. Mr. Minister, there is one more dangerous thing. I do not want to blame your predecessors who have created problems for you. I know. But you see the number of lines which the Railways have announced or included in the Budget. They have undertaken some lines partially in some places without any clearance from the Planning Commission. You have admitted it in the 'Status of the Railway Projects', the book which you have published. You have shown a number of projects as 'no clearance obtained from the Planning Commission.' Then, who is responsible for that?

You cannot throw the blame only on the Minister. Well, he may be a populist. He might have succumbed to the political pressure. But what is the Railway Board doing? What are the officials who are supposed to point out and resist it, doing? You have an Expanded Railway Board in addition to your Railway Board Members, You have the Finance Secretary and the Planning Commission's Secretary as the Members in the Expanded Railway Board. Why did they not resist? Why did they allow these things to be included in the Budget? What will happen to them today if they are not cleared? They are hanging like a *Trisanku*. I do not think it is a correct policy. Somebody has to own up responsibility for this kind of irresponsibility which they have shown here also.

Now, what should be done? Since it is not a piecemeal development that somebody comes, pressurizes you and you order a survey and give a line and all that, what is your long-term perspective? Where do you want development? Do you want to develop the backward areas? Where should you have the railway line? Where should you have the conversion? Where is the priority for conversion? Where is the priority for doubling which will bring more revenue and more traffic for the Railway? You have to prioritize these things. It should not be on the whims and fancies of the Minister concerned or the Minister of the day. But there should be a pattern in these things.

Today, as per your predilections and preferences, you announce something. Next time, somebody also comes and somebody else does something. It is not correct. What happened to the 15 year corporate plan which the Railways have prepared in the 80s? Nobody is talking about it. Have you got a plan today for the next 10 years, next 15 years what you are going to do? There is no plan at all in the Railways. You have abandoned that corporate plan system. You have not mentioned anything. You have conveniently ignored your predecessor's decision about the new Railway Zones. Are you sticking to that decision or not? Are you going ahead? What is the present position of these six new Railway Zones which your predecessor has announced? Are they still in the book?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Now they have increased it to seven. He has added one more.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : He has started one more. Therefore, I think you should clearly tell us what is going to happen about these six new zones announced by the previous Minister.

Sir, the Minister has said somewhere in regard to the safety. I quote :

"The disastrous and unprecedented accident at Khanna. . . has raised questions regarding several aspects of railway safety. It is imperative that we find early solutions to them."

What is the solution? He has constituted a one-man Commission under the Chairmanship of Justice H.R. Khanna. What happened to the earlier Commissions? What happened to Kunjroo Committee and Wanchoo Committee? What happened to their recommendations? Have they been implemented? Now, again you appoint a one-man Commission to go into the question of safety. Do you know the reason? You have mentioned all the reasons for accidents what is going to be done. You say statistically the number of railway accidents has come down. Statistically, yes it has come down but not factually because the very criterion, the categorization of accident has been changed in between. Previously, parting of a train was a minor accident. They were all being included in the past. Now they have been eliminated. They are not included. Therefore, definitely the number comes down. The number is shown less. But what is the public perception today? Do the people feel safe? Do they feel that the safety has improved? You have to go by the public perception and not by the statistics. Public perception is not what you are speaking.

Moreover, you have said about all the safety measures. It is all right to provide Walkie-talkie system between the driver and the guard. How does it help? It will help only in the case of a train parting. If an engine goes away leaving half the train behind, all right, they can communicate and do something. It will help you at the time of accident. But it is not a solution. This walkie-talkie is not a solution for these things. They started track circuiting. It is many years old. It is nothing new. You have said that there would be intensive checking with the help of ultrasonic flaw detectors which you have secured in 1970.

Then the Railways are purchasing two high speed self-propelled ultrasonic rail testing cars. They are not new. They are already in existence. They are only purchasing new cars.

The hon. Minister mentioned Professional Chairs in the University of Roorkee to provide a new direction to safety and to carry out independent studies. It is not an academic exercise; it is an administrative matter. These things are increasing because the inspection have come down. The General Managers do not go for track inspection nowadays. They used to go on monthly inspections. They do not go at all even if they have got the convenience of the airconditioned saloons. They do not go for inspections nowadays. There used to be a monthly inspection but nowadays even for annual inspections also they do not go.

The track maintenance is in arrears, the overhaul of the coaches and wagons is in arrears. These are the things to be tackled first, not merely having two Professional Chairs to make studies into the railway accidents and all

[Shri P. Upendra]

that. I do not know what Shri H.C. Khanna would do that the Kunjru Committee and the Wanchoo Committee could not do.

The Hon. Minister raised the question of the level crossing accidents. He himself admitted it. There is a conflict in the policy of the Railways. In this House one of the Ministers announced that all the unmanned level crossings would be manned by the Railways which is contrary to the policy of sharing the expenses between the municipalities and the Railways. Once it was flamboyantly announced that the Railways would undertake this work at their own cost. But the hon. Minister is again going back on that. He wants the MPs to come to his help under the MPLADS. How much money is needed for manning the level crossings and how can the MPLADS help him, I do not know.

Similarly, coming to security, a large number of dacoities are taking place in the trains. Most of the important trains are involved and at several times several suggestions have been given. At least the hon. Minister should put some security people on important trains. It has not been done. There is no coordination between the GRP and the RPF. It is said that RPF is not for the protection of the passengers, it is only for the protection of the railway property. And when they see something happening, they do not interfere because there is no immunity for them if they fire. There should be a decision on this. This duality of powers will not do. Either there should be the GRP or the RPF. Or the hon. Minister should take complete control of the security system of the Railways. He cannot say that it is not his responsibility but that it is the responsibility of the State Governments. How can people accept that theory that when they are travelling in the train the security is not of the Railways but of the State Governments? That is not correct and coordination should be there. Even if the hon. Minister takes over the complete security himself coordination is not a problem. The BSF is having coordination with the State Governments, the Army is having coordination with the State Governments and there is no reason at all why do not the Railways have their own force or coordination with the State Governments?

One more important point I want to mention, is about rail-road coordination. The National Transport Policy, 1986 had clearly mentioned that they had determined the intra-modal mix in respect of the traffic handled by the Railways and the roadways. Short distance passenger traffic should go to the roadways and the long distance one to the Railways. But what is happening? The contrary is happening. The hon. Minister is giving concessions to short distance traffic. The policy is to discourage the short

distance traffic and allow the roadways to carry that. Contrary to that, he is giving a concession to the passengers travelling up to 50 km. and less and 100 km and less. How does it go with the National Transport Policy recommendation? That means he is encouraging short distance traffic. It is not correct. It is not good for the Railways.

Similarly, it is so for the suburban traffic. Of course, there is a justification because to relieve congestion in the cities the hon. Minister is encouraging people to stay outside. They have to travel every day to the metropolis to reach offices and all that. But a part of the burden should be shared by the industries also to a certain extent. Many of them are private industries making huge profits. Why can they not bear a part of the burden instead of throwing everything on the Railways? They should do this also.

The production units are not working properly and I feel that they should make them as independent corporates. They should be allowed to function independently.

They are having RITES and IRCON. But there are no new projects being handled by the IRCON now and the profits of the RITES also are coming down. So, they have to go into that also.

I know the industrial relations in the Railways are good. Giving fifty-six per cent bonus is not a joke and the railway employees are happy to a large extent. But their amenities have not gone up. Today, only 45 per cent of the Railway staff are provided with quarters and even these are poorly maintained.

I am happy that they have introduced some new trains also. But my feeling is that some of the work of the Railways can be privatised. Of course, they have partly done it in the case of track maintenance.

I do not know why the Railways are running a hotel. Two hotels they have dispensed with, but they are still running one hotel. It is not their business to run hotels now, in a competitive world. Catering also can be partially given to the private enterprises.

If the Railways cannot manage the water and sanitation projects themselves, they can hand them over to the municipalities and ask them to look after them.

Also, they have got printing presses. They have a number of workshops producing pretty small things at a high cost, whereas these can be got done from the market at a cheaper rate. So, they can dispense with some of these activities.

They have declared the year 1999-2000 as the Year of Passengers, but they have not mentioned about any new

passenger amenities. Most of the stations are old and are in a very dilapidated condition. There are no roofs on the platforms. There are no benches on the platforms. There is no drinking water in the trains. Toilets are in a very bad conditions. All these things require attention by the Railways. They just cannot mention 1999-2000 as the Year of Passengers when they are not doing anything for passenger amenities.

One more thing I would like to mention, though it may be a little controversial, that is, that the Railway Board requires reorganisation. Several times there were suggestions for disbanding the Board, but I think it may not be possible to do that straightaway. I feel, at least the Chairman of the Railway Board should be an expert, not belonging to the Railways. Of course, the other Members of the Board can handle their own departments, such as, technical side and the day to day administration, but, for coordination purposes, my feeling is that the Chairman of the Railway Board should be from outside so that he can have an objective view. I know there are many inter-disciplinary rivalries in the Railway Board, which are hampering the work of the Railways also. To offset that also, at least the Chairman can be an outsider.

The hon. Minister has mentioned about the social obligations and that there is no solution to those. Foreign railways are being compensated by their respective Governments. I do not think this can happen here.

Before I close, I may briefly mention about some of the projects which we think are necessary. Many of the surveys have already been completed. My suggestion is that the Railways should take quick decision on those projects and also allot as much money as possible for the completion of the on going projects. When they decide about any new line, the prospective traffic also they should take into consideration. For example, in the Konaseema area in Andhra Pradesh, which is represented by the hon. Speaker, there is a lot of potential traffic there, which is not covered by the Railways. Therefore, by allowing a small line between Kotipalli and Narsapuram, this gap can be bridged.

Gauge conversion from Rewari to Bikaner also is very essential.

The Bhadrachalam-Kavvur section has already been surveyed and they have again ordered it to be resurveyed. This is an important line for the benefit of the Railways because it will shorten the distance.

Similarly, there is a proposal for a new railway line from Macheria to Raichur. They should kindly consider that also.

Sir, we are on the threshold of a new millennium now. We are going to enter a new millennium. So, the Railways

will have to think about how to rejuvenate the railway system and how to reactivate the sections. There are a number of decisions pending. For example, there are some uneconomical branch lines. I know the State Governments are not agreeing to close some of them.

Still some decisions have to be taken. If he has new perspective for the development of the Railways, then, instead of tinkering with problems here and here and coming before Parliament, giving minor benefits here and there to get some occasional claps here, he thinks ahead about the Railways long-term perspective and the traffic which he is going to handle. That should be his main concern. I am sure that with his wisdom and knowledge and with the good system which is there to support him, he will be able to tackle these problems which require urgent attention.

I have not mentioned many of the other problems because other hon. Members will deal with many specific problems. I only touched the broad aspects of the Railways functioning. I am sure that he will pay due attention to it. Last year, he got away with a general reply, but at least this year he should deal with points which we are raising in the debate.

I wish all success to the Railways. I wish that the lifeline of the nation will be sound and successful. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER : Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan. Before her, the hon. former Prime Minister wants to speak for five minutes. Shri H.D. Davegowda.

SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA (Hassan) : Sir, at the outset, I would like to express my sincere thanks to you for having given me the opportunity to participate in the debate on Railways demands. I do not want to take much time. I have already promised you. With your permission, I am going to raise only one issue.

During U.F. Government, we had taken a decision to sanction six Railway Zones. I shall confine only to that point. I do not want to make any other comment on the Railways Budget. The Government had taken the decision on the basis of an Experts' Committee Report. We had taken a decision to have a Railway Zone in Karnataka at Bangalore purely on the basis of the Experts' Committee Report. Similarly, in Madhya Pradesh, Jabalpur was one of the places which was identified and recommended by the Experts' Committee. It was also accepted.

Sir, during our regime, the present Prime Minister represented to us to shift it from Jabalpur to Bilaspur. The present Chief Minister, who was Chief Minister at that time also, Shri Digvijay Singh also wrote several letters to have Bilaspur as Railway Zonal Headquarters. Since it was the

[Shri H.D. Devegowda]

recommendation of the Experts' Committee, we did not want to deviate. Sir, I do not want to go into details of all other issues. About two years back, this decision was taken and Bangalore was fixed as headquarters based on the recommendation of the Experts' Committee. We have already spent more than Rs. 10 crore.

Now, the Government has taken a decision to shift it to Hubli. I have no objection if they want to give one more Railway Zone to Hubli. I welcome it. There is no question of any controversy on that point. What is the yardstick they have applied to Bilaspur, keeping Jabalpur Zone which was sanctioned by the U.F. Government? They have taken the decision to sanction additional zone to Bilaspur. On the same lines, without disturbing the Bangalore Zone, if they take a decision to give one more additional zone to Hubli, I would wholeheartedly welcome it. This is the submission I would like to make. At that time, we considered all aspects. In my Cabinet, a senior leader, Shri Bommai, who was coming from Hubli, was also there. At that time, the demand of the public, including the elected Members of Lok Sabha as well as Legislative Council, was also for Hubli. The Minister and the Chief Minister also recommended for Hubli.

12.00 hrs.

But we did not want to deviate from the recommendations of the Experts Committee. It was constituted not by our Government but by the previous Congress Government during 1994-95. When the Experts Committee recommendations were being considered, at that time, we took one more decision. The Hubli Railway Workshop, when all the metre gauge railway lines were converted into broad gauge, became almost defunct and was on the verge of closure. All the 3,000 labourers were in doldrums. Then, we took a decision to revive the Workshop by spending Rs. 50 crore. We tried to provide additional facilities like repairs to the goods-wagons, locomotives etc., and to not only absorb those 3,000 labourers but also to expand the existing Workshop by allowing them to increase their total strength to 5,000 labourers. That decision was taken to protect the labourers. That area also should not be neglected. We have already spent Rs. 20 crore on this Workshop. We have decided, during our regime, to revive this Workshop and we have already spent Rs. 20 crore on that. Since we have taken the decision to compensate the feelings of those people, during that period, by reviving this Workshop, let that Workshop Project be completed with all speed by spending Rs. 50 crore and let them also get the new railway zone. As you have decided in the case of Bilaspur, the same yardstick should be applied here also.

SHRI BASWARAJ PATIL SEDAM (Gulbarga) : There is already one railway zonal headquarters in Bangalore and this will be the second headquarters.

SHRI H.D. DEVEGOWDA : I have no objection to it. There is nothing to worry yourself. I am saying that one additional zone should be given and Hubli should have the same benefit. I have no objection to it. But if the railway zone which has been approved and established by spending more than Rs. 10 crore is going to be shifted for political reasons, then I will tell you that there will be a serious law and order problem. I have just cautioned the Government. I welcome the decision to start a new railway zone at Hubli. I have no grouse about it. About three months back, the Civil Aviation Minister has made a statement saying that this railway zone would be shifted to Hubli. When I contacted the senior railway officials, they told me, "the PMO has sent a note suggesting that we can have a separate zone, on the same lines of Bilaspur. We are going to consider a new zone for Hubli and keeping the already established railway zone at Bangalore." This was the news given by the officials. I do not want to take your name.

I would like to make myself clear that I have no objection for a separate railway zone at Hubli. But do not shift the Bangalore one. The Mysore and Bangalore divisions should be attached to Bangalore, which has been established by spending Rs. 10 crore. Do not necessarily create problems of law and order in Karnataka. This is all I would like to say. Otherwise, in this very House, in the next three days, you will have to see the fun of it.

So far as Bangalore is concerned, before giving the reply, please consult your Prime Minister and give an assurance on the decision which has already been taken. Regarding Hubli, you can go ahead with the new zone on the same guidelines or yardstick which you have applied to Bilaspur. On the same lines, let there be one more zone at Hubli. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN (Indore) : Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to thank our hon. Railway Minister and the Minister of State for Railways who have presented a very good Rail budget under a very difficult situation and after inheriting a sick structure which further got worsened during the last 45-50 years. Right now our colleague Shri Upendraji was saying as to how this thing had happened.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Hon. Member, please take your seat. I have an observation to make.

Hon. Members, as already decided, the House has to sit today till the listed items of business are disposed of.

Some hon. Members met me in the morning and requested that since the list of those desirous of participating in the discussion is quite long, Members may be allowed to lay their speeches on the Table of the House. If the House agrees, we may accept this suggestion subject to the following conditions.

- (i) Members should be present in the House;
- (ii) speeches should relate exclusively to the Railway Budget;
- (iii) speeches shall be incorporated in the debates subject to normal scrutiny; and
- (iv) it shall not be treated as a precedent.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS : We agree.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : Sir, Members should be given the option to either lay their speeches or speak on the floor of the House.

MR. SPEAKER : The Members who want to lay their speeches should be present in the House.

SHRI P. UPENDRA : What should be the length of the speech ?

MR. SPEAKER : The speeches will be scrutinised by the Secretariat.

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM (Garhwal) : Sir, the Members who want to lay their speeches should be present at the time of adjournment of the House, not now.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : Hon. Speaker Sir, I was listening to the speech of Shri Upendrajai, I got surprised. The structure of the Railways have got sick due to the same type of policy being following during the last 45-50 years because they too have accepted in their speech that no extension was done of the rail lines one completed. I want to say that their party too is largely responsible for this. Now they are saying that why is this being resorted to, actually this is beyond my understanding.

I want to thank the hon. Minister as he wants to do something for what he has inherited and he is doing so in a proper manner. That is what the Rail Ministry and both the Ministers concerned have studied about the schemes to be run, the economic condition of the Rail Ministry, the status of the projects and its completion. He has briefed us about the actual position of the Rail Ministry by bringing a status paper and the likely situation that one may have to face in near future. First of all I want to thank him for his willingness of being transparent in his work. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : When a lady Member is speaking there should be some order in the House.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh) : Hon. Speaker Sir, I am on a point of order. Shri Deve Gowda is a former Prime Minister of our Country. He should not leave after making his speech, he should listen to us in the same way as we have done.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : A lady Member should not disturb another lady Member.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : She is not disturbing me Sir.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA : I am not disturbing rather telling the truth. There are some rules in the House. Shri Deve Gowdaji is a former Prime Minister, he should be aware of the rules and should have listened to the speech of Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan.

MR. SPEAKER : Please sit down, this is no point of order Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan.

12.10 hrs.

[SHRI V. SATHIAMOORTHY in the Chair]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : Hon. Chairman Sir, I thank the hon. Speaker for his comments but when we come elected in the House it is due to the efforts made by us hence there is no need to treat it as a 'woman' or listen to the speech for its being said by a 'woman'. We never disturb any one at any time.

SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA : When we listen to them peacefully they should also do the same. . . (Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : We work here as colleagues and think over it in the same manner. We too represent our constituency with full responsibility hence there is no need to listen our speech on the pretext of ours being 'women', this is my request when we speak about the Rail Ministry we give equal thought to the problems relating to the Railways in our respective constituencies and put it effectively in the same way as our male colleagues do or otherwise. . . (Interruptions) I do not want pity. I would not beg for mercy. . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Madam, do not react to them. Please address to the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : I want to thank the hon. Minister for many reasons today. Today, we talk only about environment, we lack some where in taking steps that should be well thought in the name of environment. But the hon. Minister has taken a big step and may be today. It is related to the women and they are the worst affected from it.

The ban on the sale of beedi, cigarettes on railway stations is a good step even from environments point of view and I would like to thank the hon. Minister on behalf of the women's community too. Likewise implementation of plantation schemes has been announced, many a times it happens that lands on both the sides of the railway lines are encroached. The respective State Governments do have their own interests so they are not in a position to remove these encroachments so it is good that step has been taken to improve the environment through plantation.

I know that our Bhopal-Delhi train has been declared but that train has not been started as yet. I have been informed that this train has not been started due to the construction of zhuggi-zhonpris in adjoining areas and the Govt. of M.P. is unable to remove there encroachments. This is the factual position which has been told me. My colleague Shri Moti Lal Vora has got this information after he has made contact with C.M. but this is true that this train has not been introduced as yet. . .(Interruptions)

Several times when we talk about public sector undertakings here it seems that these Public Sector Undertakings can never run in profit. In the Railway Budget it has been mentioned that the performance of the Public Sector Undertakings of Railways has been satisfactory. Each one has earned profit whether it is ERCON or container corporation of Railway Finance Corporation. I would like to congratulate the Hon'ble Minister for Railways for this. We always talk about technology and say it needs to be upgraded. There is no need to talk about upgradation of technology. The Chittranjan Locomotive Factory has manufactured an exclusive modern Railway engine. Our production units have also been working remarkably well. I would like to pay my gratitude to Hon'ble Minister for Railways and the Ministry of Railways. . .(Interruptions) Learn has to pay thanks for the good works that have been done and the Ministry of Railways have also contributed a lot in the field of sports. Simultaneously Ministry of Railways have done good work from the promotional point of view of Indian sports. I humbly

requested Shri Ram Naik to include Kho-Kho in the games and he accepted my request. Those sportsmen who have demonstrated good talents in this game, have been included in this sports quota.

Sir, infact the physically handicapped people are neglected but the Hon'ble Minister for Railways has thought over this matter seriously. B.J.P. wishes that each and every person should be given a proper care. Our Hon'ble Shri Deen Dayal was of the view that due care should be given to the poor people. Our Hon'ble Minister for Railways has paid attention to the poorest man of the Railways like Porter. He can take his wife with him in trains. About 12 million passengers travel to and fro daily in trains, 445 million tonne freight is loaded daily in Railways. When such a large number of people travel daily, then there is all likelihood of occuring the accidents. But the graph shows that the number of accidents in Railways have decreased. Even though, security measures have been taken to curb the accidents. Since first time so minutely has been pondered over this matter. Just now my friend Mr. Upendra was mentioning about non-availability of walkie-talkie but I would say that is its use ? If we say for everything. What is its use, I can not understand it . . .(Interruptions) He has said that this was available earlier, if this was available earlier as to why it was not used appropriately ? You had been the Minister of this Ministry for the years together as to why you did not take measures about these things earlier and as to why you did not ponder it. If an Automatic Train Control System was introduced as a security measure, you would say that it was already existing. If the same system was already existed as to why it was not used appropriately ? When we are talking about security measures in detail, it seems that walkie-talkie is essential for the Guard and Driver of the Goods trains and we are providing facilities to them. I have seen the condition of the goods trains many a time. I need not to explain all those measures in detail which have been taken for security purpose, but I would like to pay thanks to the Hon'ble Minister for his analytic approach even on trifling matters. This year is being celebrated as a "Passenger year" and a point regarding providing different kind of facilities to the passengers has been discussed here and I would like to pay him thanks for this also. Simultaneously, I would like request the Hon'ble Minister to provide benches at stations. The waiting halls should be in good condition and passengers should be provided purified drinking water in trains. The food being provided to the passengers in trains should be good and pure and water should be purified and the toilets should be well maintained. All these three things need to be properly cared. The steps you have taken up for providing such facilities, I am grateful to you.

A lot of discussion is being held on the performance of Railway Plans. They are always short of money. Many

a time these plans are not properly funded. This year the Central Government has allocated 26 percent amount the total budgetary support and I would like to pay thanks the Central Government for this. I would like to give some suggestions in this regard too. The huge surplus land is lying with Railways which is not being used. Like wise, Railways can use its air space. If the two floors of Railways of its own building are being used, it would be appropriated if the third floor of its own building can be used as a shopping complex by constructing it on the same floor and in this way it would be able to meet the paucity of the funds. By using the surplus land and air-space of Railways which are available in abundance, we shall be able to meet the paucity of funds.

It has been mentioned to increase the freight rate and also has been mentioned lessening transportation of goods by the Railways. I do not want to repeat it. Railways is incurring a loss of about 1500 crore rupees in this head. Therefore at the sametime I would like to give one suggestion to improve the condition of the goods-train. Today it is costlier to carry the goods by goodstrain rather than by roads. Railways, charges taxes on loading and unloading of goods. Therefore, we have to examine what is the difference in this tax system and how goods can be transported repidly. We can carry the goods in a fast way by a small goods train by reducing the number of coaches. It sometimes happens that none is able to pay the freight of the entire goodstrain, therefore, I would suggest that this work must be entrusted with private agencies. These private agencies will be able to mobilise the resources in different ways and thus by making contact with the industries, they shall be able to give freight charges for the entire train. Likewise, by giving them a small agency, train load can be given to them and the loading of the train can be completed.

The trains run on commercial and social basis. But it seems that our marketing staff take decision on the table. I would like to give suggestion that they shuld establish more and more relations with industries and work out the possibilities to increase the loading in Railways. If we are able to do so we shall be able to increase the income of Railways. Some officers of the Railways should go and conduct survey in the market and prepare the schemes. I feel if we think in this way, we shall be able to nobilise more income resources.

It has also been said that some schemes have been undertaken but they have not been completed. Sometimes survey work has been conducted but we do not know as to what infact should be done. First of all, field work should be done and thereafter, it should be assessed whether the particular scheme is fit to take in hand or not. In this regard a pre-survey should be conducted which is not being done at present.

Therefore, surveys are declared. In the last ten years 371 surveys have been declared. During the span of National Front Govt., 171 surveys were declared in three years. A good number of projects, are accepted through this way but the survey work of those projects is not completed and their reporting work is not completed. The plans are not approved in such a way. There are about 37 new schemes out of these schemes, 21 are related to laying of new lines and the remaining are related to gauge conversion. These schemes have been included in the plans. This has been done to get the name. These projects should be implemented after review.

Just now, it has been mentioned to increase the 4% freight charges and has been said that inflation will increase in this way. The congress member has gone a step forward. He has said that the road transporters would be benefitted by increasing 4% freight charges. I would like to present 1980-81 report. In that report it has been mentioned as to how the railway fares were increased. In 1980-81 Shri Kamla Pati Tripathi was the Minister of Railways. At that time the fare of A.C. first class, A.C chair car was increased from 10-20% and the fare of second class was increased by 5%.

[English]

Five percent on passenger tariff upto 50 kms. is percent on quarterly and monthly tickets. 50 percent surcharge on all freight excepting certain items.

[Translation]

It includes salt etc. He has stated that by increasing freight charges Railways would be able to generate about 204 crore rupees. I would like to state the present position. In 1981-82 the congress government was at the centre. The Minister of Railways belonged to congress party. At that time, the same statement was given. about [English] about 50 percent surcharge on all freight traffic [Translation] In addition to this, the fare of A.C. first class was increased by 10-15 percent and the fare of mail Express trains was increased by 10 percent. Thereafter, I would like to give the figures of 1982-83. . .(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BHUBANESHWAR KALITA (Guwahati) : Sir, it is a comparative statement which she is reading. It can very well be laid.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : I will.

[Translation]

Just go through the facts what the former Ministers of Railways had done.

SHRI BHUBANESHWAR KALITA : The comparative statement is very good. You should have it in order to hand him over to him.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : You need not worry. I will take and give the same to him. When Shri P.C. Sethi was made the Minister of Railways. . . *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon. Members are requested to avoid a unnecessary interventions. Please sit down; I will take care.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aonla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, by doing this they are wasting the time of the House. Shri Upendra of their party kept on speaking for one hour. But we did not object. The first speaker of our party is making a speech and they have started objecting to it. . . *(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shrimati Sumitra Mahajan, you may proceed with you speech. Please do not give any running commentary.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : I would like to mention that those people who are objecting to it today, are commenting that inflation would increase by it and the road transporters would be benefitted. Just have a glimpse at the Rail Budget of their government. Whether be it Shri P.C. Sethi, Minister of Railways, the way he had increased the fare, those figures would be supplied here. In 1989, Shri Bansi Lal was the Minister of Railways and the figures of that time could be presented here. At that time 10 percent supplementary charges were levied and the fare of passenger trains and other trains was increased. We have raised only sleeper and A.C. charges but they had raised each and every item. This practice continued for the years together and stopped nowhere. Whenever their government was formed, their each and every Minister of Railways did this thing. Shri Jafar Sharif went a step ahead. In 1991-92, he raised the freight charges by 10 percent and also raised the fare of second class and A.C. Class in all the remaining mails and ordinary trains. I would like to compliment him for one one thing that when there was an election years, the railway fare was not hiked and it was said that it was an election year and the people should be given some relief. Otherwise, he kept on raising the freight traiff and railways fare. Our government has hike the railway fare by only 4 percent. This was going on till. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan was made the Minister of Railways I would like to ask one thing when a speaker of the

congress party mentions that it would provide benefit to the road transporters, it means that when you keep on hiking the freight charges every year lest there should be hand in gloves with those people. I have some doubt in my mind. We are bearing them, it was a very normal thing for them to raise the freight charges and Rail fare by 10 to 15 percent. Since they have no point to speak about, therefore, they are making criticism. This is for the first time when a status paper has been prepared. It is a beginning for self-examination. This is for the first time when it has been thought as to why a number of projects are taken into hand when they are not completed. Therefore, we will have to think that the earlier projects undertaken should be completed first. Prior to it I would like to tell the Hon'ble Minister of Railways that many a times this has happened that in order to please their well wishers declaration is made to conduct survey and said that the work on projects has been started. I would like to give suggestion that these projects should be reviewed once. There should be viability of these projects. This is a fact that the Railways, is not meant to earn profit but it is associated with social services. This should be dealt with this angle.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, many times it happens so and we stress that more allocation of funds should be made for the backward areas or the allocation of funds should be made to keep the balance among the different regions. Many a time the funds are allocated for a particular project of the backward area and some part of the funds is spent on this project. I would request the Hon'ble Minister to review these projects on which crores of rupees have been spent and the work on this projects has been stopped on. This is also a national wastage.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Dhar and Jhabua are the backward districts on Indore-Dohad railway line where 12 crore rupees were provided for the construction of railway track. Thereafter, five crore rupees were also provided for this project. Still 15-20 crore rupees are required for this project. 15-20 crore rupees have been spent on the construction of Devas-Makasi railway line. If the construction work of this railways line is completed, it will be very useful for the goods train and other trains. Railways will also be benefitted by it. But we do not think like this. The entire region of Indore-Dohad is a backward area. Due to this reason this proejct was taken in hand, but we are not paying any heed in this regard. Only half of the money has been spent. This can also go waste because because earth work will not remain for longer period.

The other point relates to Ratlam Nimach section. Rs. 15-20 crores have been spent on that too and in a way, allocation of funds for guage conversion has been stopped there now. I say that such schemes should be reviewed

where we have spent money. They should be completed at least on priority basis and those schemes should be taken up first which fetch revenues to the Railways, this is my suggestion.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would briefly say something about Madhya Pradesh. If we look at it, Madhya Pradesh is rather a backward state. Today if we see, ordinarily there is 19 Km. railway stretch out of 1000 kms., this is the development status of the railway lines, but Madhya Pradesh is stagnant at 13 kms. You granted the Bilaspur zone in Madhya Pradesh, I express my gratitude for that. You provided Delhi-Rajhara railway line, though its work is still to be completed, as it is to be done in association with the Ministry of Steel or SAIL, yet you sanctioned the project and for this, I thank you. But Khargon, Khandwa, Dhar, Jhabua areas are also there under central India and these are the backward area. If Chhatisgarh is carved out and the rest of Madhya Pradesh is separated then the area that can make this rest of central India rich from the industrial point of view is Indore city and its adjoining area which can sustain the whole of Madhya Pradesh. But today this area only is being neglected. I would like to give a suggestion. As you devised a project for Konkan Railway, we can consider about developing the whole of central India by setting up a corporation or issuing shares for Central India in the same way.

If I mention smaller things, I am unable to understand how this neglect is there that I should demand a train from Indore to Pune which is not available at present. I had suggested that Ahimsa Express from Ahmadabad to Pune runs thrice a week and on rest of the days the track should be given to Indore if it is not busy and Indore to Pune train should be started, but you increased the frequency of Ahimsa Express instead, and I wonder, why the Minister for Railways is not able to pay attention to Indore. Attention would be paid. I am sure, as we have to complete our tenure, he would certainly pay the attention in the years to come. Many of our such demands are left out. I would mention here on account of the whole central India that there are many schemes which are neglected. May be, our Chief Minister does not have time for that as Madhya Pradesh. . .(Interruptions)

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Such a neglect is there that he is not just listening to it.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA MAHAJAN : He is listening to it. Our Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh does not use even that money which comes for the roads. A saying for roads is being evolved in Madhya Pradesh that road means ditches in Madhya Pradesh. The Chief Minister, Madhya Pradesh does not spend the full amount for roads and expects that there should be assistance from the Centre. This is the state of affairs of Madhya Pradesh. We can

not expect that the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh would come here and present some scheme for this, but it is my request to you that the Minister for Railways should pay attention upon two-three things that I have said. Please formulate some schemes with a view to increasing railway freight income and loading of goods. Officers should be directed to visit the field more frequently and do the work there. If you can consider granting smaller agencies for increase the loading then please do that. You have taken safety measures but it is also necessary to improve the status of the goods trains alongwith that. Today our attention is not drawn towards that. Then the third thing is that after spending some amount of money on the projects, if we do not take its full benefit after completing them the money is wasted. Increase in the project cost is also a type of loss only. From this point of view a survey may also be conducted as to which are the projects that have some money spent on them and if they are completed to some extent then what would be the benefit there from. It may also be considered as to how the air space that is there can be utilized more so as to increase the income. A plan may also be prepared for this and neglect of Madhya Pradesh may be taken into account in the years to come. I am sure that you are going to complete your tenure; therefore it is my request that you would pay attention to each state during each year of your tenure. Thank You.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, the Railway Budget presented by Shri Nitish Kumar for the second time has, once again, shown the incompetence of the Government to overcome the crises which the Indian Railway is facing now. These crises in the economy are prevailing for the last two years.

Sir, for the first time, the Railways have reduced their freight target. When last time he presented the Budget, he fixed the freight target at 450 million tonnes. Then subsequently he revised the target to 424 million tonnes which is less than what was achieved during the year 1997-98. During 1997-98, it was 429 million tonnes. So, the target is five million tonnes less than what was achieved during the year 1997-98.

Sir, we have been clamouring in this very House and asking that there should be a change in the approach because the Railways are gradually losing the market share. It has been referred to by the earlier speaker, Shri P. Upendra. Today, the position is just reverse than what it was in the year 1950-51. In the last year's Budget as also in the Status Paper, the Minister referred to it. We were hopeful that the Minister would take some efforts to reverse the trend. But we do not find anything except what he has stated that some innovative measures are being taken.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

Now the Railways are thinking to switch over from the core sector to the other goods. Sir, I suggested this two years back. The production of other goods is not less. But the Railways are carrying very minimum. Its bulk traffic is coal, iron ore, cement and fertilizers. There is a glut and recession in the steel industry. There is an impact of this on the production of coal and iron ore. Thus, there is less loading and still it is continuing. But the Railway is not doing what it should do. The Railways are not switching over to other goods. He has mentioned in this year's Budget that they will have to switch over from core sector to the other goods.

Sir, I am quite doubtful whether the Railways will be able to achieve 450 million tonnes of freight traffic in the next year.

It is not evident and clear in the Budget as there has been an impact in all spheres. There has been an impact in the rolling stock acquisition programme. Last year's allocation in the Budget was Rs. 15,000 crore but it has been reduced to Rs. 11,500 crore this year. It has come down from Rs. 15,000 crore to Rs. 11,500 crore and Railways will acquire less coaches. Our capacity in both the production units of Railways, namely, Kapurthala Coach Factory and Integral Coach Factory, is more than 2500 coaches. But what is the programme of acquisition? It is little over 2000 passenger coaches. Railways will acquire less locomotives. This is not commensurate with the Ninth Plan of the Railways which has been finalised. What is the projection and the plan for acquisition of rolling stock for the Ninth Five Year Plan? It is 865 electric locomotives and 775 diesel locomotives. This year, both the production units of CLW and DLW have manufactured 165 locomotives and 164 locomotives respectively. CLW has manufactured 165 electric locomotives and DLW has manufactured 164 diesel locomotives. What is the programme for the coming year? It has been drastically reduced. It is 135 electric locomotives and less than 130 diesel locomotives. CLW has expanded the workshop. They are even planning to manufacture more than 175 locomotives per year. What will happen to that if Railways plan to acquire 135 locomotives? Sir, the target of 450 million tonnes has been fixed. But there is less allocation for the rolling stock.

What is the position as regards wagons? Last year, the Railway planned to acquire 26,000 four-wheeler units of wagons. The situation was the same. Crisis was there. In spite of the fact that the Budget was presented to the House, the Railway planned to acquire 26,000 four-wheeler wagons. Suddenly, in the month of January, the Railways decided to reduce it to 18,000 wagons. What happened to wagon manufacturing units? Orders were given and they

started manufacturing wagons. Some wagons were manufactured but Railways reduced their order. You will be surprised to know that we have the capacity to manufacture 36,000 four-wheeler units of wagons. In spite of that, it is surprising as to how the Ministry of Railways are giving development order to some of the new units.

If there is a crisis, if there is a demand, and if the production is less than the demand, then the development order can be given. But during three-four years, at least development orders have been given to four or five small units. They have no infrastructure. They have not started manufacturing wagons. In spite of that, development order has been given. What will happen to those units which are there for years together? Most of them are in public sector undertakings. Most of them are located in the State of West Bengal. Traditionally, 80 per cent of the Indian Industry is in West Bengal. What will happen to them? Most of the units will have to be closed down.

This year also, what the Railways are planning to acquire? Again, 18,000. Then, what is the use of the Ninth Five Year Plan? What is the use of the Five Year Plan? In the Ninth Five Year Plan, the acquisition programme for wagon was fixed at 1,36,000. They are reducing their acquisition programme. I am doubtful as to whether the Railways will be able to achieve 450 million tonnes. Sir, there is a scope. If Chinese Railways, having 67,000 kms. of route, can carry 1000 million tonnes of freight, with 62000 or 63000 kms. of target we have, why can we not carry 500 million tonnes?

My friend, Shri Manoranjan Bhakta, was the Chairman of the RCC. He knows this. He has examined it. I have seen his voluminous report, a comprehensive report. He had studied the British Railways, which is the biggest railways. He went to the U.K. to study the functioning of Railways there. I know that.

Sir, the target has been reduced. We have the capacity. But, I do not find that any attempt is being made in that respect. For example, increasing the traffic facility. What is the allocation for doubling? Is it quite sufficient? Regarding doubling, he has stated that he has increased the percentage. He is showing the percentage with Revised Estimates, not with the Budget Estimates. He has reduced the annual plan from Rs. 9700 crore to Rs. 8700 crore. In the next year, the annual plan is Rs. 9700 crore. He has said that it is an increase of more than Rs. 800 crore. Is it so? If we compare with the last year's Budget, it is only an increase of Rs. 200 crore.

The Chinese Railways are planning to construct 10000 kms. of railway line in this five year plan. What is our plan in the Ninth Five Year Plan for Railways for the construction of new lines? It is 861 kms. We are not even achieving that.

What Shri P. Upendra has said ? Two years back, in 1996-97, the Indian Railways could construct only 26 kms. Before that, 41 kms. It is even less than 100 kms. average. What was the recommendation of the Railway Convention Committee ?

The recommendation was that a minimum of 300 kms. of new lines should be constructed every year. But we are not trying to overcome the problems. The Indian Railways is not trying to increase its capacity. What is the projection fixed in the Ninth Five Year Plan for revenue earning traffic ? It is 520 million tonnes. The revised target for this year is 424 million tonnes. I would like to know whether we will be able to achieve another 100 million tonnes in a period of three years. What is the target for traffic output ? It is 350 billion tonne kilometres. Similarly, the target for non-suburban traffic is 1,793 million kilometres and it is 2,989 million kilometres for suburban traffic. These are the projections which are made in the Ninth Five Year Plan. If we have to achieve our target, the Indian Railways should plan for that. But what is the position now ?

Sir, what is the average speed now ? It is 27 kms. for goods train and it is 47 kms. for passenger train. If you compare this figure with the developing countries, it is even less than what they have. If we can increase our speed by 10 per cent, our capacity can be increased to a great extent. But how can we increase our speed ?

Sir, the Minister has stated in his Budget that this year the thrust will be on safety. It is good; safety should be given importance. The Minister has also stated that he is planning to have more ultrasonic machines this year. Now, we have only one ultrasonic machine for each zone to detect rail fractures which is not sufficient. I have with me some figures for the year 1996-97. In 1996-97, there were 2,965 rail fractures, 12,580 cases of engine failures, 37,150 defective wagons and 361 cases of failure of passenger coaches. Then, the norm for break power is 87 per cent, but the drivers are now forced to run the trains with even less than 87 per cent break power. In 1996-97, the number of cases of poor break power was 3,140. The Government should realise the situation.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude quickly.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I have just started.

MR. CHAIRMAN : How much time will you take ?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I will take one hour.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If you take one hour, how is it possible to accommodate all the other Members who want to participate in this debate ?

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, usually I speak for one hour in the debate on the Railway Budget. This is a special privilege for me.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please be brief.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, during 1996-97, there were 169 cases of failure of overhead equipment. The number of failure of signals and other systems was 1,25,259.

13.00 hrs.

Shri Ram Naik, you are talking of modernisation of the system. So far as safety and efficiency of the train operation is concerned, much depends on the signalling system. That is the situation.

We are inducting the most modern 600 HP, three-phase locomotive. We have already spent Rs. 700 crore for import of technology. Now, these are being manufactured in our Workshop. But what is the position of the signalling system ? What is the condition of our track system ? Still 12,000 kms. of track is overaged.

What is the target for track renewal ? The Minister has announced that the coming year is the year of the passenger. It is very good. 'Passenger' means safety, security, improvement in the passenger amenities and improvement in the passenger services. What is the position of track renewal ? What is the target ? Last year, the target was 2,234 kms. A year before, it was '2,374' kms. The thrust on safety has been reduced to 2,100 kms. So, we are having track which is 50 to 60 year old. We have long-welded track to the extent of 11-12 thousand kms. There is no plan to wipe out the entire backlog. After the Ninth Five Year Plan, this backlog will be increased. There will be more and more derailments. Most of the derailments are not reported. That is why, in the booklet circulated, it has been shown that the number of accidents is increasing gradually. But factually, it is not correct. The derailments have increased because of the backlog of track renewal. Still 12,000 kms. of track is overaged. What is the plan to replace the overaged track ? There is no plan for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Basu Deb Acharia, on behalf of your party, the names of seven or eight Members have been given.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I know that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You cannot take other Members' time. You cannot proceed beyond half-an-hour.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I know about my time.
... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have already taken more than 25 minutes. I would request the hon. Member to conclude at least within five minutes.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I know about my party's time. . . .(Interruptions) We are going to sit for the whole day and for the whole night.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is up to you to convince your party Members who will get a chance. You have taken more than 30 minutes. You are talking the time of other Members.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : All right.

He has stated about the track circuiting from fouling mark to fouling mark.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please wait for a moment. It has been decided with the consent of the House that there is no lunch-break today.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : All right. It is very good.

Sir, the Wanchoo Committee, and then the Sikri Committee had recommended for completion of this track-circuiting work. The Sikri Committee gave its Report in 1986. In this very House, the present Railway Minister, who was in the Opposition then, raised the matter regarding Ferozabad train accident. Why did that accident occur ? Whenever an accident occurs due to derailment or some such thing, the reply given here is that the accident took place due to human failure. Why should there be a human failure ? Can human failure not be eliminated or reduced ? I can give one example of Ferozabad accident which occurred as track circuit was not there from fouling mark to fouling mark. For providing track circuit, necessary fund was provided but was not utilised. When the Standing Committee on Railways asked the Chief Safety Commissioner for Railways whether that accident could have been avoided had the track circuit was there, his reply was 'yes'. Then, who was responsible ? Was it *bechara* Bhore Lal, the poor Swithman ? Was it because of his fault, the accident took place ? Had there been a track circuit, the accident would not have occurred.

Now, the hon. Minister has said that by the end of this year, the track circuiting will be completed. He had stated that he will be planning to take a number of measures in order to make the rail journey more safer. As usual, he had passed the burden to the poor passengers. He had said that there will only be a minimum increase in fares, and he had spared the passengers who travel by Second Class whose percentage comes to 90. The earnings from the Sleeper Class trains are Rs. 2496 crore whereas the earnings from the Ordinary Second Class trains are Rs. 2651 crore, which are slightly higher. What is the increase in Second Class Sleeper tier ? The increase in Second Class Sleeper tier is 7 per cent. What is the increase in AC-III tier class ? The increase in AC-III tier class is 13 per cent. Who are the people who travel by Second Class Sleeper tier ? The middle and lower

middle classes who travel by AC-III tiers. So, maximum number of passengers travel by Second Class Sleeper. The Railway Minister had increased the freight rate by 4 per cent. Will that not have any impact in the freight traffic ? Gradually, our market share is also reducing. If the freight charges are increased by 4 per cent, then that will lead to further reduction in our freight traffic. Without increasing the freight rates, without putting burden on the passengers, if the Railways can increase its capacity or if the Railways can carry more traffic, that would be better.

Sir, once I asked this question : "Why should coal from Raniganj and Jharia be carried by road, and why not by rail ?" We are producing 299 million tonnes of coal. What is our bulk traffic ? The bulk traffic is about 100 million tonnes which is being carried by road.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Some representations have been received from hon. Members that they are in urgency to move to their constituencies by train. It has already been announced by the hon. Speaker that those who are having urgency to move to their native places can lay their written speeches on the Table.

According to the order of priority the names of the Members will be called. Only one day is allotted to the Railway Budget. Shri Basudeb Acharia is a very senior hon. Member of this House. He has already taken more than half-an-hour. There are other Members from his party who want to speak on this. He should take this into consideration also.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, 70 per cent of our traffic is being carried on 30 per cent of our network. . . .(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, Members from your own party are objecting.

(Interruptions)

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Badagara) : No, Sir, I am not objecting. I am asking why are they restricting him. . . .(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Everyone wants to speak, so you have to conclude within the time allotted to you.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, what is my time ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have taken more than thirty minutes.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : What is my party's time ? you please tell me.

You are disturbing me everytime. I will not speak. .
(Interruptions) If we sit up to 4 o'clock in the morning what
 will be our party's time ? . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Only 33 minutes.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Today, for the Railway Budget, up
 to 3 p.m. the time allotted to your party is 33 minutes.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : If the House is extended
 up to 4 o'clock in the morning, what will be my party's
 time then ? . . *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Acharia, you have already
 exhausted 33 minutes that have been allotted to your
 party.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, you started
 disturbing me after fifteen minutes of my speaking. . .
(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, please. Do not say like that.

You please conclude, now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am not speaking now,
 Sir . *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH
 KUMAR) : Sir, he is a very knowledgeable Member of
 Parliament, you please allow him to speak. . . *(Interrup-
 tions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, I was referring to
 the saturation that Indian Railways have reached now. 70
 per cent of the traffic is now on 30 per cent of our network.
 That too, in the golden quadrilateral route, that is, Calcutta,
 Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai, etc. Saturation is over
 130 per cent, it is 136 per cent.

[Translation]

SHRI MITRASEN YADAV (Faizabad) : Mr. Chairman,
 I want to submit my suggestion on Railway Budget.

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, unless third or fourth
 line is provided, this problem cannot be solved. The South-
 Eastern Railway is asking for a fourth line from Howrah
 to Panskura and a third line from Panskura to Howrah for
 the last ten years.

Everytime when the Railway Board recommends, there
 is justification. Traffic is increasing and it has reached the
 saturation point. But it is not being sanctioned. There is
 a lot of congestion at Howrah Station.

When Shri Madhav Rao Scindia was the hon. Railway
 Minister, he prepared an ambitious plan to have a third
 terminal at Shalimar where there will be 12 platforms and
 all the trains of South-Eastern Railways will terminate at
 Salima, which will be nearly to second Hoogly Bridge. After
 ten years what is the fate of that project ?

Not a single platform has come up yet. A sum of Rs.
 11 crore has been spent. What has happened to that
 project ? If Mumbai has six terminal points, why is it that
 Calcutta has only two terminal points at Sialdah and
 Howrah. Why can Shalimar, Dum Dum and other terminal
 points not be developed ?

Sir, the Mainline Electrical Multiple Unit is the most
 modern train. It was first introduced in between Asansol
 and Burdwan in 1993. Now, in all the electrified sections,
 the demand is coming for the introduction of the MEMUs.
 Now, these MEMUs are running at a distant place. Sir,
 what is the distance between Asansol and Tatanagar ? It
 is about 280 kilometres. Is it scientific to run a MEMU train
 more than 300 kilometres without toilets and urinals ?

Sir, in the British Railways I have seen that they have
 EMU trains both for the short distance and the long
 distance. The difference is that in the short distance EMU
 train, they do not provide any urinal but in the long
 distance EMU train, they provide toilets and urinals. Why
 can the RDSO not be asked to prepare a design so that
 in the case of long distance also, the MEMU can be
 introduced ?

Sir, from Adra-Howrah, Bankura-Howrah, Bankura-
 Shalimar, Asansol-Howrah, Asansol-Tatanagar and in other
 sections also, the MEMU train will be the feature in the
 electrified section. I request the hon. Railway Minister to
 give a thought over it.

We are introducing the Mainline Electrical Multiple
 Units but we do not have the maintenance facilities. It has
 not been developed. I have been suggesting about it. Adra-
 Midnapore section is being electrified and a number of
 MEMU trains would be introduced. He has already
 inaugurated one train from Bankura to Adra in the month
 of October and that section is being electrified up to
 Midnapore. The entire section is being electrified. A number
 of the MEMU trains would be introduced. Where will the
 maintenance of these MEMU trains take place ? All these
 trains will be taken to Tikiapara. Why should it be at
 Tikiapara and why not at Adra ? I am at a loss to
 understand about this.

[Shri Basu Deb Acharia]

The Railways is setting up the shed, the maintenance depot, shed and the electric shed. They construct this shed and then there would be requirement of quarters and there would be scarcity of water. They are planning to set up the electric shed at Bokaro but water crisis is there and not sufficient quarters are there.

There are abundant steam loco sheds. Why that is not being utilised at Adra It is a divisional headquarters. Sufficient accomodation is there; sufficient water is there. Both the electric shed and maintenance shed of the MEMU trains can be set up at Adra, which is a central place and which is the divisional headquarters.

Sir, two wrong policies have ruined the Railways.

One is uni-gauge project. The Railway Minister will agree with me. When that policy was adopted on the floor of the House, I objected to it. I said that the dream to have a project uni-gauge system will never be achieved. We would continue to have multi-gauge, broad gauge and metre gauge systems. We have got about 30,000 kilometres of metre gauge system which has been neglected for years together. No track renewal system had taken place in metre gauge system. What is the percentage of conversion ? Eleven thousand kilometres have been converted into broad gauge. Still 20,000 kilometres are in the metre gauge system. This year we are planning to convert 600 kilometres. How much time will it take to achieve the dream of uni-gauge project ? Then, why did we not concentrate on renovating or replacing the over-aged rolling-stock, over-aged permanent ways in the metre gauge system ? That is why, the metre gauge system became inefficient. A small Committee was appointed by the Railway Minister in 1994. I got the opportunity to study the suburban system. Shri Ram Naik, the Minister of State for Railways, was also a Member of that Committee. We together went to Chennai. At that time, it was called Madras. We found that metre gauge of Southern Railway was more efficient than broad gauge.

Another policy is the reorganisation of zones. No expert committee as such has recommended for six zones. A Committee of Advisers of Railway Board and RRC recommended it. The Railways Reforms Committee (RRC) under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pandey had recommended for three zones but six zones were created. What is the plan and programme for that ? Two years have already passed. OSDs have been appointed. We do not know what they are doing. They have no work. Some officers have been posted. Our former Prime Minister just now has said that Rs. 10,000 crore has been spent for the South West Zone, Bangalore. Now, suddenly, yesterday or the day before yesterday, the Cabinet took a decision to shift it

to Hubli. What is the rationale behind it ? After creation of six zones, just before Madhya Pradesh elections, Bilaspur Zone was created. I think Shri Motilal Vora will agree with me on that. What is the justification? What is the rationale behind it ?

SHRI BASWARAJ PATIL SEDAM (Gulbarga) : There is a big rationale behind that. If you know it, it is all right.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : This is my view. Zones cannot be created State-wise. Indian Railway is the symbol of unity and integrity.

SHRI BASWARAJ PATIL SEDAM : It has been done for that reason only.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Indian Railway is the symbol of unity and integrity. Do not disturb this unity and integrity. Zones cannot be created State-wise. Then, there will be a demand from Kerala. Why should there not be a Zone for Kerala ? Why not for Haryana ? Why not for Punjab ? . . . (Interruptions) Tamil Nadu has already got it. They have the Southern Zone. I know that.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA (Rajnandgaon) : Shri Baalu is not here.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I know Zones cannot be created. What will be the viability ? Now, there is a dispute. Waltair does not want to remain with East Coast Zone.

Is anybody from Andhra here ? Shri Naidu is not here. There is a dispute. They do not want to merge. Shri Upendra will be able to tell us. They do not want to merge with the East Coast Zone. They want to be with the South Central Zone.

How can Rs. 1200 crore be spent ? We do not have money for expanding the network, we do not have the money for gauge conversion, we do not have the money for increasing the traffic facilities, we do not have the money for network expansion, the rolling stock and we do not have the money for replacement of the overaged coaches.

But the hon. Minister has emphasised on the modernisation of workshop and the maintenance of coaches. What is the position? He has stated it. Very good.

Here is the White Paper or the Status Paper. But I do not know what has happened to it. It must be gathering dust in the Railway Board. . . . (Interruptions)

Do not remind him. I am concluding.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Your own friends are requesting me to give them a chance. Be generous. The others also should be represented. In the Railway Budget every citizen is expecting that his Member should have a say.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am reading from the document.

The plan expenditure on workshop vis-a-vis the rolling stock is given. For the Sixth Plan it is 17.3 per cent. Rolling stock vis-a-vis the percentage of Plan expenditure in workshop, Mr. Minister, during the Seventh Plan is 14.96 per cent. Please see how gradually it is reducing. In 1990-91 it is 11.09 per cent. In 1991-92 it is 4.33 per cent. In the Eighth Plan it is 5.18 per cent and in the Ninth Plan it is only 2.77 per cent. How will the hon. Minister be able to modernise or maintain his coaches with this reduced allocation ?

I will now come to industrial relations. Unless I speak about the workers how can I conclude ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : How can the House be conducted if a Member adamantly wants to speak as he likes ? His party has got only 33 minutes. He has taken nearly 55 minutes.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I congratulate the hon. Minister for restoring the recognition to the RPF Association.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am under compulsion to call another Member. Shri Gopal.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : I am concluding, Sir. I congratulate the Minister of Railways for restoring the recognition to the RPF Association. This was a unanimous demand of the entire House. But I would like to suggest one thing, because an assurance was given by the former Railway Minister, Shri Jaffar Sharief, that he would bring a Bill to amend the RPF Act and to give more legal powers of investigation and prosecution to the RPF. That assurance was given.

I request the hon. Minister to bring such a Bill in this very Session because this demand was also made in this House that there should be some mechanism to give more powers.

Then comes the recognition and restoration of the channel of negotiation for the Railway Employees Confederation. They had the channel for negotiation from 1977 to 1980.

The production units do not have any recognised unions. There is a demand and the General Manager of CLW has also written that there should be recognised unions at Chittranjan Locomotive Works.

When the hon. Minister was at Bankura, he had given an assurance, and also fifty per cent commitment, that at the time of the Budget, he would consider and announce

a fast passenger train from Bankura to Shalimar. He remembers that, I think, so, at the time of giving the reply, I think he will definitely say that a fast passenger train will be introduced.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Since the hon. Member has exceeded his time and is not concluding his speech, now nothing of what Shri Basu Deb Acharia says, will go on record.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : So, Sir, I thank you very much for your patience and for giving me the opportunity to speak.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD (Madhubani) : Sir, I am on a point of order regarding the proceedings of the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN : What is your point of order ?

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : Sir, in the heat of the moment, Shri Basu Deb Acharia, who is a very senior Member of this House, cast some aspersion on the Chair. Twice he used the words "You are disturbing". Sir, the Chair never disturbs, the Chair observes, the Chair rules, the Chair gives rulling. So, it is my request to remove it from the proceedings.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It will be considered.

SHRI C. GOPAL (Arakkonam) : Respected Chairman, Sir, the hon. Railway Minister has presented the Budget Estimates for the year 1999-2000 for the Indian Railways. I shall put my suggestions on behalf of the All India ADMK and also with the greatness of Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi.

In presenting the Budget, he has achieved many of the public's objects. Therefore, I want to appreciate the hon. Minister's efforts. I also want to submit that the hon. Minister has enhanced the passenger carrying capacity of the trains by attaching two or more coaches in 100 popular trains. Thus, by adding 440 additional coaches, this Government has generated the passenger carrying capacity by more than 29,000 passengers per day. That means, they have raised the travel facilities for 29,000 passengers every day, which means this Government is only for the poorer sections and not for others. I want to appreciate the Minister also because in this Budget he has introduced 124 new trains. It is also a great achievement of the Railway authorities that compared to the last fifty years, statistically, the number of accidents have come down during the year 1998-99. Therefore, it has to be appreciated.

With regard to appointments, particularly with regard to the selection of Group-D employees, the procedure has been changed. The selection will now be done through an objective written test of appropriate standard.

[Shri C. Gopal]

Sir, there will be no interview and the selection of the candidates will be done only through examination. On this point, I want to draw to the knowledge of the hon. Minister that examination is only a test of one's knowledge, it cannot indicate the intelligence of the candidate. The candidates who appear in examination held for selection of candidates for appointment to the post come from rural areas as well as urban areas. My humble submission would be that some preference must be given to the candidates coming from the rural areas who appear in the examination because the level of knowledge of candidates from rural areas and urban areas may differ due to the difference in facilities for education given to them. Therefore, some preference must be given. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Candidates belonging to rural areas will be benefitted more by this.

SHRI C. GOPAL : They must be the beneficiaries. I also appreciate that he has proposed to provide 14 new train services. He has already announced last year that broad-gauging of line from Madurai to Rameswaram has been taken up. For the past four months, there is no improvement in the work on this line as no work is going on. Therefore, the broad-gauging work between Madurai and Rameswaram should be taken up immediately and urgently also.

DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD : I am also supporting him.

SHRI C. GOPAL : Thank you.

In the case of Chennai to Trichy section, there had been broadgauge. From Chennai to Rameswaram, all trains are diverted *via* Tanjore and Cuddalore. Because of this diversion, the running time taken is more than 20 hours. Passengers travelling from Chennai to Rameswaram feel it inconvenient because they have to travel for more than 20 hours. So, to avoid this inconvenience, the proposed broad-gauging work from Trichy to Manamadurai must be taken up immediately. Till the work of Trichy to Manamadurai is completed and the trains from Chennai to Rameswaram once again resume in the original route, a special link train must be provided from Rameswaram to Trichy, connecting the Rockfort Express and Pandian Express trains. More reservation facilities must also be provided. That is my humble submission. I hope, the hon. Minister will take note of it.

There is also another obligation. There is already a route from Rameswaram to Trivandrum. It is only 100 kilometres. There will also be a service from Rameswaram to Trivandrum. Now, the route has to be formed from Ramnathapuram to Tuticorin is only 100 kilometres from there.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There is no service from Rameswaram to Tuticorin. The hon. Member may correct it.

SHRI C. GOPAL : I am sorry.

In-between Trivandrum and Tuticorin, there is a broad gauge, line. The distance is only 100 kilometres. The new train route has to be formed from Ramnathapuram to Tuticorin. This is the demand of more than one lakh people.

Sir, Perambalur is a newly created district. The headquarters is in Perambalur. It is not connected with rail route and people of that area have to go to Ariyalur for train journey which is only 30 kilometres from Perambalur.

Therefore, if a new route is laid in between Perambalur and Ariyalur, which is a 30 kilometre distance, the people of that area will be benefitted.

As far as my constituency is concerned, Arakkonam is situated in between pilgrimage centres, particularly, Kancheepuram, Chengleput, Tirupati and Madras. The hon. Minister has started a broad gauge line in between Chengleput and Arakkonam, three months ago. I am also very thankful to the hon. Minister because he has selected Chengleput and Arakkonam line, in the Budget, for the purpose of electrification.

Sir, I want to give some particulars with regard to Arakkonam Junction. This Junction has to be improved more and more. I have already said that it is situated in between Tirupati, Chennai, Chengleput and Kancheepuram. This is also a main junction for proceeding towards Katpadi, Vellore, Karur, Salem and the Southern Region in general.

You have introduced MEMU trains, DMU and rail bus services in four regions. I have given petitions, after getting the signatures of more than 40 MPs, to you. I want that MEMU trains should be allotted to the Chennai Division. I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards Arakkonam-Katpadi, Arakkonam-Tirupati, you know the importance of Tirupati and Chennai, which are all pilgrimage centres. Therefore, with the help of party MPs, I have submitted to you a petition stating that MEMU trains should be allotted to the Chennai Division. You have allotted it to four divisions, but you have neglected the Chennai Division. That is why, my request would be to kindly allot MEMU trains to the Chennai Division.

Sir, I want to appreciate you because you have made great efforts to take care of the 90 per cent of the passengers travelling in the second-class. You have given concession to the 90 per cent of the passengers who travel by second-class; you have not increased the fare. Therefore, all the poorer sections appreciate your activities because you have made great efforts at a time when the

Central Government is facing an economic crisis situation, and you have not raised the fares concerning 90 per cent of the poor people.

I have already given a petition with regard to the stoppage of 2639 and 2640 Brindavan Express, Cheran Express, 6319/6320 Trivandrum Mail and Chennai-Mumbai Express. All these trains should be stopped at Arakkonam.

I would also like to submit that there is already a connecting passenger train between Arakkonam and Katpadi. At Arakkonam, it starts at about 6.50 a.m. and it goes to Katpadi at about 8.05 a.m. From 8.05 a.m. till evening 5.30 p.m., that train is idle. I am not requesting you for any new train. I do not want to give the trouble because you have to allot more trains to new areas. My only request is that, that train which is idle at Katpadi may be run again to Arakkonam and back.

I want to appreciate you because you have given concession to the Press correspondents. So far, no Government has given any concessions to the Press correspondents. But, Media correspondents are given concessions of 25 per cent in first class and 50 per cent in second class for travelling up to 2,500 kilometres in a month. It is an appreciable step. This Budget is meant for the poorer people.

Sir, I request that Dindigul-Coimbatore via Pollachi metre gauge line, be converted to broad gauge. Sathiamangalam-Erode line should be extended to Mettupalayam also. The distance between Valaja railway station and Ranipet Railway station is a mere five kilometres. This line has to be restored and renewed.

As far as catering is concerned, the quality of food supplied in trains is not good. Travelling public have been complaining that they are not properly served and the quality of food is not good enough. Hon. Minister may give his attention to this aspect. As far as the condition of toilets is concerned, it has been the same for the past 100 years. Some renovation must be there.

As far as trains 6721 and 6722 from Kanyakumari are concerned, the railway authorities have informed that these trains are going to be discontinued from 19-4-99. It would be better if you convert the route of this train and run it from Chennai Egmore to Tirunelveli area. I humbly submit that an additional train be run from Chennai to Tirunelveli via Arakkonam, Kathpady, and Karoor. This train, 6721 and 6722, caters to the needs of people belonging to Arakkonam, Vellore, Dharmapuri, Salem and Namakkal Districts. Those people will suffer a lot if these trains are cancelled. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to either continue with these trains or run an additional train as requested by me.

With these words, I appreciate the Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN SINGH (Deoria) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I want to thank the Railway Minister for making an attempt to present the Railway Budget in a balanced manner. Some discrepancies, weaknesses and points of neglect are there and they are to be seen in every Railway budget. Suggestions are given from all quarters about them, but it is unfortunate that some special pressure is exercised on some aspects of Railway facility and extension of the Railways due to political reasons and Governmental influence. Therefore, I have one more solid suggestion that the Lok Sabha constituency of any Prime Minister must be made the Railway zone headquarters and the constituency of Railway Minister must be made the divisional headquarters of the Railways and there should not be any necessity to discuss it or have its justification. . . . (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : And tell something for the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : Such a way should be devised for the Minister of State for Railways that if any other thing can be set up besides zones and divisions, it be set up for him. If the Minister of State for Railways would be clever, he would set up a corporation separately which will be much more bigger than any zone and division, that is another thing. But there should be the basis of some discretion, justification and reasoning while executing these things. I want to say that the Railways are best connected with the common man of India. The poor of the society that don't have a single rupee income are also somehow able to use Railways to reach their destinations. The Railways are the most important part of the Indian Government therefore, if the Railway department has to complain that no budgetary support is there then I think, it is an unfortunate situation. I want to say that any Finance Minister and Government should keep the Railway budgetary support on the forefront while preparing their budget.

Secondly, we have been hearing sermons of making railways self dependent for a long time because gauge conversion is most essential in Railways, new rail lines need to be laid and the modernisation of existing ones is also needed. It should be arranged that the passengers reach their destinations safely. Those rail lines must be electrified so that they can reach there in the least possible time. The dexterity and pragmatism of a Minister of Railways

[Shri Mohan Singh]

presenting the Budget can show that the Railways can manage to provide better facilities and amenities within their would like to mention here that the Regulatory Authority in Electricity Department has been formed, its act has been passed, the ACL regarding the Tele Communication, has also been passed the Budget in this regard is also passed and laws are been framed. As a result of it wherever they increased the rate arbitrarily and the Government have to interfere under public pressure then they oppose it and say that according to law the Government have no right to interfere. If we make such type of arrangement in Railways then I think there will be an anarchy and it is not a good thing. The Railways say that they are also a consumer item. We provide you a service and in lue of that service, we take something. That is why, is not becoming possible to increase railway fare class especially that of sub-urban train due to public pressure. Therefore I want to say that the attempt to fix tariff, to form regulatory body, I think it will not be useful and by doing so it will go beyond your jurisdiction and it will be not be good also.

In addition to it I would like to suggest that in order to make railways self dependent so many declarations have been made. One of those declarations has come this time again, which is being heard by us for last 4-5 Budgets that the Government will procure resources for Railways by using the railway land commercially. We have heard about it several times but what will be its concrete shape its methodology nothing has been clarified when we talk for going into its details then no any form or shape is available here. I want to suggest that in rural areas where trains are running, the people of the local department provide land to people according to their own conveniences. They deals are made under hand according to their will. They get money for it. But one fine morning the R.P.F. personnels and Railway officers come there with Bulldozers and remove all the huts existing there. By doing so neither the Railways nor the existing people are benefited. Therefore, an immediate and quick plan should be chalked out for the utilisation of the remaining land and it should be completed within a time bound programme. This will benefit the Railways and those people also who have erected huts and are earning their livelihood there some how would have a reverse.

Alongwith these suggestions I want to put some questions of Eastern Uttar Pradesh and North Bihar before the hon. Minister because these area are very poor and backward. Taking the poor people there into consideration first of all, in these areas freedom struggle under the leadership of Gandhiji with against the British rule started there. A policy to convert narrow gauge into broad gauge

has been followed. A narrow gauge linked Gujarat with Assam and there was also a very good parallel route but wherever there is political pressure comes, the Government converted it into narrow gauge. By preparing its ambitions plan of within a year. . . (Interruptions) they know it, there is no need to make them listen, the only need there is to give a push. They know and understand these things very well. The railway line connecting Gujarat to Assam is to be completed within two years, As you have set up a corporation to set up a mega-project for establishing the Konkan Railway afresh. We have gone through Newspaper today that the Konkan Railway suffer a deficit upto Rs. 5700 crores of Rupees this year. I am not stressing whether this information is true or not but I am saying on the basis of news which have appeared in the Newspaper. Similarly you have completed the Chhitauni-Bagaha Railway Bridge by spending rupees one hundred and fifty crore It was itself a big problem. But a road bridge was also to be constructed on that for which money had to be given to the water resource department. Three years have passed, the water resource department has handed over Rs. 25 crores to the Railway for constructing road bridge but till date construction of that road bridge has not been started while materials are also being unloaded for last one and half years. When he ask them personally, they say that they are gathering materials. You have awarded contract to a single company which has never constructed any bridge. It is said so by people. Therefore, the hon. Minister of Railways, should take special care of these things minutely. The Government have set up a corporation for Konkan Railway, similarly gauge conversion work of narrow gauge linking Gujarat with Assam should be completed by constituting a corporation because that is the most important line connecting east to west and north-eastern states. Often some provision in every budget has been made for that. Arrangement has been made for last two years to convert loop cord into broad gauge between Godda to Gorakhpur but two years passed and funds are not released for it. Had it be a amount of the plan exceeded Rs. 25 crores you might have to go to the Planning Commission. I want to point it out here that the Planning Commission do nothing regarding your proposed plans except sifting over the files for 6 months or even for a year. The plans of Railways which are referred to the Planning Commission lie pending for years. Therefore the Railways themself should chalk out their plans. The Railways should make arrangements to raise funds from market to meet their financial needs, they may either issue bonds, provide exemption in income tax or whatever is possible so that they need not to knock the door of the Planning Commission for big plans. The Railways must have an arrangement like this: It will avoid delay in sanctioning and implementing the plans and the work will be accomplished easily been pending, will be easy to clear them.

Similarly, I want to say about catering facility. It is being declared for last three years in the budget that the Railways will constitute a corporation for good maintenance of the catering facility but neither such a separate corporation has been set up nor has it been privatised. The private persons or agencies which have been entrusted with the responsibility of providing catering facility, are out of control. The nobody will be in a sound health with the food served by them. Therefore hon. Minister, you should hold a meeting of Railway Board about catering facility. Either he should implement the idea of constituting a corporation expeditiously, or the Railway Department should think over the good maintenance of catering facility.

14.00 hrs.

› [DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY *in the Chair*]

The second thing is the operation of Railways. Most of the modernised trains are for rich people. According to my knowledge the trains like the Shatabdi Express and the Rajdhani Express trains are running in loss and due to these trains the Railway department is accumulating loss.

This is by chance that the most of the Railway Ministers belonged to Bihar he Baboo Jagjiwan Ram and Dr. Ram Subhag Singh or the present hon Minister were from Bihar and moreover, in Delhi, the capital of India. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Mahboobnagar) : You are forgetting our Ram Vilas Paswanji

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : No, he was the last in live and now due to some reasons his developed friendship with him therefore I need not feel to mention him, because his declarations in the beginning, which are without any plan or financial provisions and the stone laid by them . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : All proved fake.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : I do not want to use this word. Hon. Minister will not tell it fake, we and you will call them fake.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Whether the hon. Minister says so or not, he is involved.

SHRI MOHAN SINGH : But there must be financial provisions for the plans which have been formulated. In stead of giving stress on fashionable trains he should stress on the trains coming from Bihar and particularly from Eastern Uttar Pradesh. These is only one good train, Vaishali Express, linking Bihar with Delhi. In that train passengers are packed one upon another. Whenever new

trains are started, some fashionable trains are attached with them. A Superfast trains should be started linking Delhi with North Bihar in which there should be no reserved coaches, no A.C. or first class coach. There should be only general class coaches, This train should enable passengers of North Bihar reach Delhi in the shortest possible time so that the poor people there may think that there is a Railway Minister from Bihar. who care for them.

With these suggestions, I express my thanks to hon. Minister and I do not want to waste the time of other hon. Members by taking more time. Mr. Chairman Sir, I thank you.

[English]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North-West) : Sir, on behalf of my party, Trinamool Congress, I support the Railway Budget and the Demands for Grants (Railways) for the year 1999-2000.

Shri Nitish Kumar may feel a little bit upset because bus riding and bus service are getting more publicity than railway trips. The Prime Minister went to Lahore by bus; again the bus from Lahore is coming back on the 16th; and our Chief Minister is going to Dhaka on the 16th, again by bus. The Indian Airlines is introduced a new air route from Calicut to Dubai and we hear that a huge number of MPs of the privileged sections are travelling to Dubai on the air trip for two or three days. So, why should the hon. Minister of Railways not take a group of MPs to different parts of India to have a look at the railway management, the railway supervision and other things related to the Railways ?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : It is a good suggestion.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : He can take a complete team so that we can make a comprehensive study of the latest developments.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : We may include some journalists also !

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : They will certainly give it a good publicity. . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

There is no train between Dhaka and Calcutta that is a bus. . . (Interruptions)

[English]

The Plan outlay for 1999-2000 has been kept at Rs. 9,700 crore and this provision is an increase of Rs. 945 crore over the Revised Estimates of last year. It is a good attempt but major efforts have to be made for railway safety. In different ways, railway safety matters have been

[Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay]

discussed and we still remember the disastrous and pathetic accident which took place at Khanna. It is unforgettable.

Even till now, apprehensions exist every day. Whenever our friends or relatives board a train to go somewhere or when they come from somewhere, the family members certainly are having some doubts in their minds as to whether the train will reach safely and in time or not.

After the disaster in Khanna, another Commission of Inquiry had been constituted with Shri V.C. Garg, the sitting Judge of the Haryana High Court as its head. Before this Commission, there were three other Commissions, in the year 1962, 1968 and in 1978. What we want to know is the fate of the reports of these Commissions. It appears to us that all the reports of these Commissions are going back to the waste paper basket, as simple bundle of papers.

So far as the safety measures are concerned, what we propose is to have the signal system or the communication system modernised. Even in our arrangement, there is no communication between the driver and the guard. This communication between the driver and the guard is of utmost necessity by which accidents could be avoided. I will request the hon. Railway Minister to look into the matter.

What we propose is that responsibility for accidents should be fixed, track renewals should be done on top priority basis, accountability must be fixed, proper maintenance should be there and the system of punishment should be strengthened. Accidents take place for different reasons: but punishment system should be strengthened. We should find out who are responsible for this because the causes of accidents are many; not only human errors, there are other errors also. Mechanical fault is there, administrative callousness is there, technical fault or error is also there. So, each and every accident should be probed with care and we should take all efforts to see that the present railway operation is made as accident-free and zero-defect. Shri Nitish Kumar is trying to do that. Replying in the Rajya Sabha after a discussion on some railway accident, he said that from morning to night he was following them to see that such accidents do not occur. [Translation] It should be ensured that this zero-defect is materialised. [English] We are all for his success so far as the railway accidents are concerned.

Another important thing is about leakage. If proper care is taken to check leakage in the Railways, Railways can certainly earn more revenue. We know that people will demand for new railway lines and for early completion of ongoing projects. Certainly, the Minister will have to fix his

plan of action on priority basis. People have high expectation from the Railway Ministry. Whoever may be the hon. Member, he will certainly place some demands for new railway lines. But after considering the priority, it has to be done. There is a saying; 'If there is a will, there is a railway; if there is no will, there is only survey.' We also propose to look at your publicity budget.

An amount of Rs. 22 crore is spent on publicity. Why can the Railway Ministry not reduce this expenditure and spend the amount for improving passenger amenities? Passenger amenities should be taken care of; and new coaches should be provided. The hon. Minister has announced some new proposals in his Budget. We appreciate that and whole-heartedly welcome them. The announcements are related to new railway projects, new railway lines and gauge conversion.

The Minister has proposed to expand the IVRS, Interactive Voice Recording System, to 44 stations, introduce the NTES, National Train Enquiry System, introduce the tele booking reservation as it happens in the Indian Railways, introduce pantry cars in eighty more trains. Tatkal scheme is already in existence. The Minister has already announced that 1999-2000 would be the 'Passenger Year'. We wish you all success in implementing these proposals. It is because making announcements is easier and implementing them is difficult because of the paucity of funds. The Minister has explained in this House as to how much money would be required for implementing the pending and on-going projects.

There is a good sign which I would like to bring to your notice. In general, public sector units are suffering losses. Some public sector units are being disinvested and some other public sector units are announcing VR Scheme. But the public sector units under the Ministry of Railways are earning profits and they are showing very good results. IRCON has earned a profit of Rs. 50.3 crore along with a foreign exchange of Rs. 43.40 crore. I request the Minister not to confine the activities of IRCON only to Nepal, Bangladesh and Malaysia. It should be made much more broad-based. This organization should compete for further global tenders because they can earn more foreign exchange through that.

The Container Corporation of India has earned a net profit of Rs. 115 crore; Indian Railway Finance Corporation has earned a net profit of Rs. 167 crore; and RITES earned a net profit of Rs. 14.5 crore. These units have performed well. But it is reported that the Ministry is becoming over confident over the performance of public sector units. I request the Minister that they should remain alert and see that work culture in these units do not get affected in any way. These are to be dealt firmly with all importance. The

Research Design and Standard Organization should be developed on priority basis. It is because if this organization is in good condition, certainly the Indian Railways would progress further.

Now, I would like to demand some projects for my State, West Bengal, which is THE most discussed matter in our country today. I would urge upon the Minister to operate the Uttar Ganga Express for seven days in a week. We expected this announcement in the Budget speech, but it was not made. It may kindly be operated for seven days.

My next demand is, setting up of one divisional office at New Jalpaiguri. I would also request the Minister to explore the possibilities to complete the Balurghat-Eklakhi, Digha-Tamluk project immediately. We have come to know that the West Bengal Government is not extending the required help, that is making the land available, to complete this project. We would like to know from the Minister, is that true. I would like to be on record, and also wish the hon. Railway Minister to clarify, that the Chief Minister of West Bengal did not respond to the letter written by the Minister of Railways in this regard. The Chief Minister did not bother to reply on his own and had asked one of the Junior Ministers in his Cabinet to send the reply. I wish the Minister to make it clear in the House that due to non-cooperation of the West Bengal Government, this could not be done.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Chief Minister has already spoken to the Railway Minister.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : It is a matter of regret that the Chief Minister did not reply to the letter written by the Railway Minister. . .(Interruptions) I would like the Railway Minister to clarify whether it is a fact that a junior Minister had sent the reply. The Chief Minister did not even bother to acknowledge it. This is the attitude of the State Government.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Sir, the Railway Minister should enlighten the House that the Chief Minister has already spoken to him over telephone.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : I am not concerned whether the Chief Minister has spoken to the Railway Minister on phone or not. I would like to know whether the Chief Minister acknowledged the letter written by the Railway Minister or not. The Railway Minister had himself made a complaint that due to non-availability of land he was unable to implement the proposal. . .(Interruptions) I accept it as a challenge. I can produce the letter, if Shri Acharia challenges me.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Yes, I challenge it.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : I can produce the letter on Monday.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : The Chief Minister has already spoken to the Railway Minister.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : Who bothers about the Chief Minister speaking to a number of people. We are concerned whether some correspondence has taken place between the two.

SHRIMATI GEETA MUKHERJEE (Panskura) : Sir, on that issue, the West Bengal Chief Minister has spoken to the Railway Minister a number of times.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : The Chief Minister has enough time to gossip with anybody. He can talk to anybody over a cup of tea but whether he responded to the Railway Minister or not, is the point. The Railway Minister had lodged a serious complaint against the functioning of the State Government. I wish to know about that.

Sir, due to non-cooperation of the State Government, Bengal's Package proposal may be affected. . .(Interruptions) So, do not get trapped by Shri Jyoti Basu's tricks.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Not at all.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : The Minister may proceed on his own and make an all out effort to see that the Bengal Package proposal is implemented. He knows Shri Lalu Yadav better, but we know Shri Jyoti Basu better. Mamata Ji knows Shri Jyoti Basu more than anybody else knows. . .(Interruptions)

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE (Calcutta-South) : Sir, when Shri Basu Deb Acharia was speaking did anybody from our side interrupt him ? Why is he disturbing us ?

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY : According to the Bengal Package proposal, the hon. Railway Minister has agreed to introduce Metro Railway Project from Taliganj to Garia for which the monetary assistance has already been given. Metro Railway is a project of national importance. Calcutta Metro is one of the best railways in the world. So, Calcutta Metro Railway should be given the top priority, not only by the Railway Minister but also by the Government of India. Sufficient money should be provided for its maintenance also. We request not only the Railway Ministry but also the Finance Ministry and the Government of India to allocate more money for the Metro Railway Project considering it as the topmost priority project of the country.

Sir, we have heard Tamil Nadu Member's speech. They were requesting for one or two railway projects which are to be implemented. Yesterday, a few Orissa Members of Parliament – they are our colleagues – were lodging some protest by sitting in front of Parliament. They were telling us that Bengal has taken everything, that is why, they are getting nothing.

[Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay]

Sir, what we want to say is that Bengal is a sufferer of regional imbalance since Independence. Shri Nitish Kumar is also representing the Eastern Zone. The Eastern Zone and the North-Eastern Zone are the victims. So, he should take all out efforts to see that Railway proposals, their communication systems are strengthened. I would also request the hon. Minister to look into the matters which have been raised by the hon. Members of Orissa and Tamil Nadu who have met our leader, Kumari Mamta Banerjee. We also urge upon the hon. Minister to look after the Haryana matters.

Lastly, we would request the Government to see that the on-going projects, pending projects and new lines which have already been announced, should not suffer for paucity of funds. An accident-free Railways, about which I categorically said earlier, is certainly our priority. We give our best wishes to the Railway Minister to see that the Railway operation becomes defect-free.

With these words, I, on behalf of All India Trinamul Congress, support this Railway Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the development of Railways is an important department. This is a good medium of traffic for people. It carries about one crore people and one crore and ten lakh tonnes of goods. In India Bullock cart has been in use for a long time and can you calculate that, it carries more goods than the Railway do even today. You can not say that the capital invested in Bullock cart is less than it has been invested in Railway, but this capital has been invested there by common people. There is more attraction in Railway department. The position of the Hon. Nitish Kumar is precarious I feel so. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY : Nitishji is a good man, what danger do you feel from him ?

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : His position is precarious only because he is a good man. Today there is more danger on good people. Danger is there because I know that there was bribery in the Railway recruitment. Earlier after passing written exam, selection was not possible in the interview without a bribe. Situation became the worst all over the country because of such bribery. To finish bribery, they put an end to interview system. You will be recruited if you pass only the written test. Copy was also used to be exchanged in written examination. Chairman of Recruitment Board and so many other people are caught in this misdeed. The belief of the people that recruitment would be made on the basis of merit and qualifications was lost. The feeling was spreading among

the people that recruitment is made on bribe not on merit. If so much disbelief spreads in the country then his durability is suspected. This will create crisis in the country. He has taken action in this regard. Some Chairmen took bribe by tempting the unemployed youth for recruitment. Would be Chairman were also involved in this. They have deposited money by accepting bribes from unemployed youth. They are in jail now. It will be investigated. The then Chairman had told me that he would make me Chairman. He know every thing about this. This department is in danger due to the ex-Minister.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajanji) : Who was the Minister at that time ? You point out his name please.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Your general knowledge is so weak that you could not learn after after by my revelation. . . (Interruptions) His present is also in danger.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : Please speak clearly. I have no knowledge of general knowledge.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : A word to the those man wise is enough. Those who cannot understand are movece. He is in danger even now.

The Rail department is an important department. Some people say that they will not become Minister. If they at all will be Minister, they will be Railway Minister only. They have danger from 'would be Minister' and 'want to be Minister'.

[English]

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : Sir, I would not like to interrupt since he is a senior Member. But I would only like to say that we do not want any portfolio. You were interested in a particular portfolio and you had got it. Are you happy now ? But we are not interested.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman Sir, I have not mentioned any name.

KUMARI MAMATA BANERJEE : You have said this thing in the House and I am in the House at the moment. Therefore I clarified it.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Bihar has been defamed by the Railway Budget. There have been 6-7 Railway Ministers from Bihar. It is said that the lion's share of the Railway Budget has gone to Bihar. But if you sum up all the things you come to know that Bihar is backward in not only in other matters, but also in Railway in comparison to other states. The length of railway line, the population there and the income of Bihar, suffice that Bihar is backward.

Vaishali has achieved the glory of becoming the largest democracy of the world. Vaishali is that place in Hindustan which has achieved the glory of giving birth to democracy. There was the Lichhavi republic three Thousand years back. I do not know whether the western countries know this or not. The Chinese travellers Fahien and Huentsang had have written in their books. That is land of activities of Lord Budha. Lord Buddha stayed and preached there for months. He has described Vaishali. It is the birth place of Lord Mahavira. Therefore, this is the glorious and historical place of India. In 1904 during the British rule a map was passed to connect Vaishali with Railway. The Hon. Railway Minister had told during the last Railway Budget that the said area will be turned into Buddha circuit.

When there are science students, this will become Budha circuit or the time by which this circuit will be connected with Vaishali ? They say that the trains will be run but I want to ask the time by which this Budha circuit will be created. Now only ! but hon'ble President, other hon'ble Rail Ministers and some other people have also said that the Vaishali should be connected with rail line. There was a proposal to connect Sugoli with Hajipur-Lalganj-Vaishali-Sarria via Parn-Deoria-Sahibganj. A survey was also conducted in this regard and a foundation stone was laid too. The report of that survey has also come but they say it is an expensive project. Will any work be done in second phase to connect Vaishali with railway line ? The cost of Sahibganj-Maheshi will be very less. If it is connected with Maheshi via Hajipur-Lalganj-Sahibganj half of the railway line will be laid survey has been conducted and said that :

[English]

"If there is a will, there is a railway.
If there is no will, there is survey"

[Translation]

Now, in our area only survey is being conducted. I would like to ask you whether you want to do it or not ? Whether it will be included in the budget or not. If not so, why should I pay thanks ? Only then I will be thankful to you when it is connected with Vaishali. I want to ask you whether any train will be run on the glorious place like Vaishali which was made first fit for human habitation by Lord Budha and also made it democratic by himself. Will you create a history ?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Will you remain present here at the time of answers ?

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : I will not go anywhere. I don't remain absent from the House even for a single minute no matter whether how long it may last. A debate was going on railways last year and I will also

remain present in this House today at the time of answer. I must be here to listen to you.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : Mr. Minister, if you speak about Vaishali, he will remain present here ?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : If he sits, he will speak.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : I will not yield. Mr. Chairman, Sir, now I will speak over the topic of common man. Shri Mohan Singh was saying that the General Manager never goes anywhere without saloon. I want to say when General Manager uses saloon as to how a common passenger can use an ordinary class. I want that the hon. Railway Minister at least should travel in an ordinary class along with us, the common people so that he may experience as to how a passenger has to sit on the seat by elbowing and pushing the people and how much difficulty is experienced by them.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : We used to go together four years before

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : When we used to go together in what way we used to talk about and in what way you are talking now-a-days. What is coherence ? We do want that the General Manager should leave his saloon and travel with common people. People from Delhi to Patna.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA : People are used to travelling on the roofs of trains there.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Mr. Chairman, Sir, people keep on travelling on the roofs of the trains in Bihar because except it there is no other way out. When a waiting list in railway reservation gets increased and it gets much more than a bogie, one bogie should be added immediately. Due to lack of this arrangement ordinary man goes from pillar to post for getting reservation. Everyday some people request me for getting two-four letters written for getting reservation. Therefore, I want to say whenever there has been a rush for reservation, one extra bogie should be added to give relief to an ordinary man. The bribery and disorder should be controlled in railway reservation.

I want to say about railway security in brief. The unmanned level crossing is the most dangerous. The possibilities of accidents on unmanned level crossings are very high. There is a report that there are 16 unmanned level crossings out of 32.50, there is a need to deploy a man on every unmanned level crossing. Strict action should be taken against human error. There is a need to pay more attention on railway security. Old railway lines should be renewed. The technology has been developed to correct the mechanical error and priority should be given to security

[Shri Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

therein. Our labour class is exploited in the trains. They return after earning some money from Punjab etc. and some other places. The T.T.E. exploits them in the name of superfast, express etc. It should be stopped and more attention should be paid to it.

The crowd increases in the trains at the time of festivals and fairs. The officers should remain alert at that time. They should just ensure at which time more demand of trains is there and at which time more tickets are being sold. Arrangement of some extra bogies should be made so that people may begin to feel that govt. is fully inclined to their grievances.

The government has declared the year 1999-2000 as Yatri Varsh (passengers' years) If "passengers year" is announced, they should also come to know about it. So, you should do something to impress the passengers so that they may begin to feel that this is Yatri Varsh.

If you visit the area of Rail Minister, you will have to cover one kilometer line in to reach the Gumti (the level crossing) while going towards Fatuha and Barh.

AN. HON. MEMBER : What is this gumti ?

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : A level crossing is called gumti. An over bridge should be constructed on it. It is left on the state government and it is said that the states government does not construct the over bridge and does not pay half of the money or it shows slackness. Whether the Britishers made this law or you made this law or your former Minister made it, it should be changed. This is not the God's made law. An amendment could be made in the constitution. In spite of being non-cooperation of the state government, you should provide necessary things and money for the construction of the overbridge and should say that we will do so. Construct an overbridge on that level crossing where there is no overbridge and in the absence of overbridge there is long queues of one kilometer. There is a Didhi gumti just across the Hajipur. You have to stop at that place atleast 10 to 15 minutes whenever you may go. The crowd of buses, trucks and passenger vehicles is always there. More than one kilometer queues has been there on Didhi and Akara gumti. There are two to four gumties in the way of Hajipur to Muzafferpur and there is a loss of time due to these gumties. So, there are two overbridges should be made on these Dedhi and Akara gumties. State government should take some initiatives in this regard. And if state government don't take any initiative they should do something so that the disorder may be corrected due to gumti. An overbridge should be constructed over Bhagwanpur gumti also which is just beside the city in the

way of Muzafferpur from west. An overbridge should be constructed on Aam Gola Road. This is a densely populated area and trains also pass through this area and the traffic is interrupted.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the Patliputra of Patna is a historical place. But you can see the struggle at Patna station. If you go there. The railway platform is full of crowd all the time, whether it is down or night or any other time not a single inch space is vacant there. There is a distiness and lack of space there. So, I want to say that the Patna railway station should be expended. Some more stations should be established there. Now, the century of development has come, so you should do some thing to reduce the crowd and remove the dirtiness from Patna station. Once the foundation stone was laid there only on papers. There was proposal to connect Pehleza Ghat to Digha rail bridge. Mr. Devegowda was the Prime Minister at that time. . .(Interruptions) the foundation stone was laid but it was removed from there and in order to throw dust in the public eyes it was said that the foundation stone had been laid. Mr. Nitish Kumar says that the water system is being checked now and it is not with the cabinet nor with the committee. The froud which has been made with Bihar in which portion should be made clear. There are lot of apprhension and confusion in the heart of the people of Bihar and they are very distressed. . .(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : You were also a Minister at the time of laying the foundation stone.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : You can not speak the same things which I am talking. You will try to misguide the people. So, I demand that the construction work of Pahleza Ghat-Degha railbridge should be started rapidly at the place of foundation stone. I put it into the historical works. A rail bridge should be constructed even in Munger as soon as possible. It is heard that the work of this bridge is on progress but I don't know the actual position. There was a proposal to start a train from Sitamadi to Muzafferpur, but I don't see anything at that place. I don't know whether the foundation stone was fake or actual one. There was a proposal of four lane from Narkatiaganj to Sitamadi and a rail bridge from Barganiya to Dhang the trains pass over the same bridge near Jhanjharpur and the bridge is used as a road. It would be very fine if the railway department allows movement by constructing level crossings on both sides so that common moter vehicles may be plied through the railway bridge. Bargahiya remains cut off from district Sitamadi.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I agree to this point that there is a financial problem in all these railway projects. But we are ready to stand by you. The finance department should not make any hess and there must be some escalation in budget provision in accordance with the demand of the

public. As the public has demanded of trains one must not have any spirit of dare devil to check the plan of railway department by the Planning Commission. I want to say this categorically on the floor of the House. The rest of the persons being enthused, talk and demand of traffic and development of the region in order to meet the aspirations of the public and the very persons say that that thing was not benefit giving but that thing was loss giving. They say so on the basis of report and survey. I would like to ask whether Indian Airlines etc. run in loss or profit. It is heard that there is loss in all those things. But some people belong to elite class say that they should be run and that is why they are being run. There is not a single man who says that these should be stopped. Why should the aeroplanes be operated in loss? They should be stopped. A common man travels by the trains but when there is a point regarding constructing of railway tracks it is said that they will give us loss. If it is so, the total loss giving railway tracks should be stopped. I am agreed at this point. If any thing to be used by the elite class incurs loss after loss and that loss continues augmenting that thing will not be stopped because it is for them but it is a thing to be used by a poor man and it is a point for the benefit of the poor man and the development of the backward area, a total account for loss and profit considered. This sort of concept is pushing the country backwards.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to attack that ideology and want to say that development for railways should be made in view of public interest, backwardness of the areas and development of backward states and backward people without taking into account some rules and regulations and profit and loss. Only then we will be able to remove regional disparity and only then a country will march ahead.

With these words I would like to say that the questions raised by me in the public interest should be incorporated with it. I would like to pay thanks the Minister of Railways but I would like to keep my thanks reserved and when all these works will be done, the very thanks will be paid. At last I hope that augmentation should be made in the Railway budget and all hopes and aspirations which are expected to be fulfilled by Minister of Railways be fulfilled so that the railways work go ahead rapidly in the country. With these words, I would like to conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI M. SELVARASU (Nagappattinam) : Sir, I want to raise an important matter. The Southern Railway has suddenly stopped the Kamban Express between Chennai and Karaikudi. The people in my constituency are agitated over the issue. More than 2,000 people had gathered at the railway track in Tiruthuraiyandi and stopped the train services. Over 1,000 people were arrested. An MLA was also arrested. Yesterday also, I talked to the Minister. He

has already directed one of his officers to look into the matter. Today, I spoke to the concerned officer. But the needful is yet to be done in the matter. This is an important matter. I would like the feelings expressed by me to be conveyed through you to the Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister is hearing. Now, resume your seat.

SHRI M. SELVARASU : Thousands of people have been arrested.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has noted it.

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajanji) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I raise to speak in the support of estimated railway budget introduced by the Hon. Minister of Railways. The Minister of Railways intends to make gauge conversion, lay new lines, extend regional rail services, make proper arrangements for doubling of lines and spend the money in some other works.

Sir, in this country, in federal India, where there is so much disparity, the railway stands for unity. Here people belonging to different languages, religions, dresses, fooding reside and inspite of all there disparities the railways stands for unity and connects these federal states by the chain of unity. The railway department connects North to South and East to West to this country.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, this country has more than five lakh villages and the population more than 100 crore. The villagers of this country have a hope from the Railways that a railway line will also be laid in their villages. Although, it is very clear from the letters produced by the Railway Minister and from the white paper which has been presented in this House that there are so many financial problems. I had also read it. Although the entire country is in the grip of economic problems but Railway can not remain untouched from these problem. We admit it but even after economic problems, the pace of development has been accelerated. I have therefore no hesitation to praise the Minister for Railways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir. He has increased seats by adding coaches in one hundred trains. Mr. Mohan Singh has mentioned about Delhi bound Vaishali Express a number of passengers travel by sitting on the roof of the train. Hon'ble Minister for Railways has done nothing for that. In this connection I had written a letter to the Hon'ble Minister for Railways to add one or two coaches in that train. I feel that by doing so it may reduce the burden of the passengers. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : We are adding six coaches in that train.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : I am congratulating Shri Nitish Kumar in advance that six coaches are being added to the train as he just now told us.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : The train is now going to be 24 coach train.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : I am praising you for it. Alongwith it every member of the house remains worried about train accidents. Train accidents occur frequently. It should be investigated why these accidents occur ? So far as my information is concerned, a train accident had occurred in Ferozabad. A committee had been constituted at that time. In the report of the Committee very good suggestions had been given how to check train accidents and what action will be taken by the Ministry at the level of the Government but the report of the committee was kept in abeyance. That report was not brought forward till today. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister for Railways that it is good if you have seen committee's report and if not, then send for the report and see what suggestions have been given in the report. Why the suggestions have been kept in abeyance if the suggestions are good. Those suggestion should be considered seriously.

Just now Shri Raghuvansh Babu has rightly said that the train accident occurs due to railway crossing. There are such places across the rail, where there are no railway crossing and where there are railway crossing they are unmanned. In the absence of railway crossing, the people or bus or truck that come there, and they remain unaware whether the train is coming or not. Due to this, train accidents occur there. I had written a letter to the Minister for Railways that there is a crossing near Rasoolpur but no speed breaker is there. As soon as abride groom tried to cross the railway line accompanied by his wedding party, the train came and four to five persons died on the spot. I had requested to make a railway crossing there because this accident is not the first accident. Earlier, two or three accidents have taken place. I want that surveys be done and railway crossing should be constructed wherever these railway crossing are not there and railway employees should be appointed wherever they are not. It may reduce railway accidents.

I would like to request the Minister for Railways to consider these things properly. At the same time I would like to congratulate the Minister for Railways for one thing. I do not want to congratulate him because he is from Bihar, he belongs to our party or he is my friend. What Shri Raghuvansh Prasad has told just now, is not untrue. From the restoration of railway employees in a large number, it appeared that some where a groccer's shop has been opened. That shop was run by silting in hotels in Bihar other places and Delhi's hotels. An appointment letter for

the restoration of A.T.I. and T.T. was given by taking Rs. 1.50 lakh or 2.00 lakh. Hon'ble Railway Minister imposed a check on it and corrected the system by making changes. I have no hesitation to say that one who is able would get service. This arrangement was done by the Minister for Railways. I would like to suggest one thing. In the past political and social activists used to be on these posts but now high ranking officers occupy these posts. We presume that if the political and social activists of today are put to the envil for honesty, whether they are from service employee group or they are on any other posts, I feel that if they are allowed to occupy those posts, they feel suspicion, they are thinking that they are being seen with an eye of suspicion.

I will strongly request the Minister for Railways that if the owner of the house is strong. It is said in the villages that the OX will do will if the stake is strong. You presume that if you have strong will power, the thief would become honest and the day when your will power gets weakened, a honest person too will become dishonest. You want to check disorder and corruption. You have tried for it. I want you to consider a bit over the status of the political and social activists which they enjoyed from older days and give them this status if there is no problem.

A debate has been started about Railway land. There is a lot of land of Railways everywhere but it is being misused. I do not want to deliver a long lecture about it put for instance I would like to tell the Hon'ble Minister for Railways. About 300 acres of Railway land is in Maji of district Chhapra out of which one hundred or one hundred fifty acres of land is being managed in the name of a man for about the last twenty five years. I feel that this information might have not reached your office. The renewal of that land is done in the same way after every two-three years. One man has taken possession over such a big area of land and is using that. I would like to request you to conduct an inquiry into the matters by the department, that one hundred or one hundred and fifty acres of land has been allotted to a man twenty five years back. What is the justification to give the land to one person ? It should be given if it is useful for the railways but if it is not so, then it should be considered seriously.

It has been said in the budget and in you speech that fourteen new trains would be introduced. I saw it very carefully and I want to tell that most of people in Bihar are of the level of farmer and labourer, who earn their livelihood by doing service out of Bihar especially the people North Bihar *i.e.* Chhapra, Siwan, Gopalganj, Motihari, Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Madhubani etc. The people from these districts earliier used to go to Calcutta and Assam but there is some turmoil in Assam, so the people are now moving towards Delhi, especially they are

going in Punjab and Gujarat in a large number. They go in Mumbai also in search of employment. But there is no train for Chhapra to Howrah, Chhapra to Mumbai, Chhapra to Varodara where they are in a large number. I would like to request you introduce train for the people belonging to weaker sections and for labourers who earn their livelihood outside Bihar *i.e.* in Gujarat, Delhi and Calcutta. Three to four trains are essential for the places as Chhapra to Howrah, Chhapra to Mumbai and Chhapra to Varodara. I had requested you and perhaps Shri Chandra Shekhar ji had also said that a passenger train from Chhapra to Varanasi for the local people should be introduced, for this express or Rajdhani train is not needed. Chhapra and Varanasi are commercial markets and the people travel by train for transportation of their goods. The station is nearby. In the midway river Saru flows due to which people have to face problems of commuting. I therefore, request you to introduce a local train there.

The question of security of passengers travelling in the train is always there. Persons travelling in the train never feel themselves to be safe. Raghuvansh Babu is looking at me. He feels that I am again taking about Bihar. But do not worry. I would not name Bihar. The people recite Ramayana and Gita when they reach in Bihar because situation is there very bad but it applies not only to Bihar but there is no guarantee of security of the people in the entire country. So far as the question of security of people between State Government and Union Government is concerned that the responsibility of security is of the State Government but I will say that you should strengthen your force.

15.00 hrs.

You may please strengthen your police force. It may create much confusion if you will depend on the State Governments. The confusion may be there because the State Government with which your relations are not good, that Government will provoke for accidents to defame you. You therefore strengthen your railways police force. Raghuvansh Babu is looking here. I am telling you. You please be careful in Bihar. A conspiracy may be hatched to defame you in Bihar. Robberies may be committed in trains and passengers will be killed in the trains. . .
(Interruptions)

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Everything will be O'K in itself if you take control over the gunda elements of your area.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH* : How can I tell about that. It is upto you to correct it.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Where do your gunda elements live.

I want to know this.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH

MR. CHAIRMAN : Do not talk with each other. You deliver your speech. .

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH : I, therefore, request the Minister for Railways to make arrangements for security of the passengers. If you trust on State Governments the train passengers would feel themselves to be safe. I wanted to tell you this much only.

I would like to especially congratulate the Minister for Railways that he has incorporated in the budget the plan of converting the line from Kaptanganj to Siwan and Siwan to Chhapra into broad gauge. But one line is written that it may be implemented after the approval of the Planning Commission. It is correct what is written there but I would request you to seek the approval of the Planning Commission at the earliest. For it you will have to try from your level.

At the same time in the doubling you have included 10 schemes but an important scheme which you two know has not been included in the doubling, which is Barabanki to Karpurigram, Samastipur while Chhapra to Hajipur has been included in the doubling. If you had included in it from Barabanki to Karpurigram and Samastipur, then this part of North Bihar and this part of Uttar Pradesh, both, would have been connected with Delhi. This route is not very long. You get it surveyed. The expenditure on it will not be very much and the Department of Railways is already extravagant. The railway is running in deficit. So you see it and I would like to request you to make arrangements for the doubling of train from Barabanki to Samastipur.

I am not preparing any background. I am simply telling about one or two problems of Bihar and I will end up with these problems. Many schemes have been included in the survey. Shri Nitish Kumar is smiling upon hearing about the survey. I have requested him and I request him through you also. It's to so far. The distance between Maharajganj and Mathurak is 30-35 Km. You get it surveyed. I would like to not do survey only but lay its foundation stone. I hope so from you and I will request you repeatedly to get the survey done and construct the railway line.

I will like to congratulate you to make the facilities available for the handicapped and media persons in your budget. It is a very good step you have taken.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair.

[Shri Prabhunath Singh]

I would like to tell you one thing more that the railway officers are not providing you a lot of information. I am saying so because I want to narrate one incident of my Gorakhpur division. In Gorakhpur division Sonapur, Samastipur and other three divisions come. The trains which are taken on rent and on these trains magistrates board for checking the tickets. In those trains, in my view indulged in the scams of Rs. 1500/- per day. I would like to tell that the contract for the day was done in 2-3 divisions in Gorakhpur and Uttar Pradesh. In that very Gorakhpur area Samastipur and Sonapur fall. Where charges at the rate of Rs. 1500 per day was paid. An agreement should be reached when the charges were settled but neither anything was done there nor any advertisement was given. A notice regarding this was displayed on the notice Board. An amount more than the market rate was paid. A Member of Parliament from our party who is not present here, had written a letter to the ministry for railways and provided them the information about it. The officers filed a case against it in the High Court and it was said that Rs. 1500/- are not sufficient. It should be raised.

[Translation]

The proposal has either come or is about to come before you. There is bungling of more than Rs. 4 crore. Therefore, please get it enquired and take stringent action against the guilty officers, so that there is no misuse of money in the railways in future.

The hon. Minister for Railways knows about Mahendranath Halt. You also want to get it completed. You assured us and directed your officers likewise but it is kept pending at some level. It is an old halt and hence will incur no expenditure. The contractor, who started work, has left the work inconclusive. So, I request the Government to get it sanctioned. I again request you to take some more care of Bihar. We would also like to get the bridge on Ganga completed as demanded by our colleague Mr. Raghuvansh Prasad. The foundation stone for the survey of the bridge has been laid but it would be praiseworthy, if the construction work is started.

With these words conclude congratulating the Minister for Railways.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA (Rajnandgaon) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to thank the hon. Minister for Railways, participating in the discussion on the Railway Budget. Last year at the time of discussion on Railway budget, I pleaded for Railway Zone at Chhattisgarh in Madhya Pradesh. The population there is around 27.5 million. Shri Vajpayee also advocates for the formation of this zone when you were

in opposition and he was the leader of the opposition. I went through your speech of 1997-98. I invited your attention after that and you stepped in the direction to fulfil that demand. But, you stepped in at the time of elections of Legislative Assembly in our state. There would have been something in his mind about its benefit to some political party but those in power at present certainly thought of benefitting from the setting up of Bilaspur Zone's. I would not go into its details but I congratulate you on starting the work for the establishment of Bilaspur zone. The biggest contribution of Indian Railways is in strengthening the unity of the country. Ninety per cent of the population travel by trains. We need to pay attention to the means of transportation of 90 per cent people since only 7-8 per cent people travel by their own vehicles or aeroplanes. You have mentioned in the budget estimate that the boarding is expected to reach 424 million and you have shown a downfall of Rs. 1056 crore during the year owing to passenger fares and other miscellaneous income. The gross traffic accruals are reduced to Rs. 30416 crore from Rs. 71472 crore as placed in the Budget estimate. You have evaluated the planned expenditure at Rs. 8755 crore as compared to the earlier one of Rs. 9500 crore. You have also mentioned in your budget speech of the loan to be taken from the market. You have increased this loan from Rs. 9500 crore. More trains are needed so you will have to borrow Rs. 3000 crore from the market. There is no two opinions that the hon. Minister has yielded results within a year by these exercises. But, the results are very limited as only 14 new railway lines have been mentioned in such a large country. We expected more from you Mr. Chairman, Sir, probably you might also agree with me since you are also from Madhya Pradesh. Area-wise Madhya Pradesh is the largest state of the country and it was expected that the state will get more railway facilities. But, it is a matter of regret that justice has not been done to the State. I do not talk about states separately but expectations were high in a state which is backward, surrounded by the tribal zones and which contains 17-18 tribal districts. People had a belief that alongwith 14 lines railway facilities would be provided at various places in Madhya Pradesh be it the area of Chhattisgarh or Mahakaushal or Vindhya Pradesh; but unfortunately it has not been taken care of.

We often discuss accidents. you have mentioned in your budget speech a decline in the railways accidents as compared to those during the last years. There is need to replace certain instruments as suggested if any by the Research Design and Standards Organisation. There should be a prescribed time limit to replace the instruments. Enquiry was ordered after the Ferozabad accident. I don't know about its report but it was a major accident. Equally tragic was the Khanna accident. Accidents like this

continue to take place but our Research Design and Standards Organisation.

[English]

"The Research, Design and Standards Organisation, RDSO, in the research and designs wing of the Indian Railways. It functions as the consultant to the Indian Railways in technical matters. They have developed cost effective "Universal Emergency System."

[Translation]

All these things are mentioned in it. Certainly there is decline in accidents. You have the trend of decline should continue in other incidents also talked about Rs. 2558 crore received from Public Sector Undertakings. [English] This is supplement to the plan resources of the Indian Railways. [Translation] I feel that Public Sector Undertakings should be made more active. We should not get complacent over the sustained profit of Rs. 50.30 crore IRCON International Ltd. and profitability of Container Corporation of India Ltd. their optimum capacity has to be utilised. Lack of utilisation of full capacity leads to decline in production. You have mentioned production units that during 1997-98 at Chitaranjan Locomotive Works and Diesel Locomotive Works production of Locomotives has taken place. I would like to ask you whether the optimum rail engine production capacity has been utilised in this production. You have not mentioned the installed capacity vis-a-vis the actual production. Proper attention should be paid to this aspect. You have to take care of the railways which benefit 90 percent of our population.

I congratulate you on naming the year 1999-2000 as Passenger Year. Chhattisgarh is an area in Madhya Pradesh. Chhattisgarh Express, running on alternate days, is an express in name only. This train runs between Bilaspur and New Delhi. I invited the attention of the hon. Minister towards this. I would like to request the Minister to see things for himself since the officers are likely to give him rosy picture of all the arrangements. If you happen to survey on the spot, you would find it in shape of a mobile slum where there is no arrangement of even lavatory. Doors and windows are in a pathetic condition. The blankets and bed sheets being provided there seem to be very old and worn out. The condition of coaches except Second A.C. is so pathetic that they seem to be the most condemned coaches of the country. I am thankful to you for responding to my query in this regard. I request you to direct the officers to of the Ministry of Railways to travel by the Chhattisgarh Express.

Sir, you have perhaps expressed the possibility of opening a D.R.M. office at Raipur. You are going there on 22nd of the month. Bilaspur Division D.R.M. office was in Chhattisgarh till now. There is Rajanandgaon in

Chhattisgarh and Rasmala Station comes before it. Rasmala, Rajnandgaon, Dungargarh and Bortalab Nagpur are near D.R.M. an incident occurred years ago which has caused great harm. Only two second A.C. seats available at Rajnandgaon were also transferred to Nagpur by the autocratic D.R.M. We are writing constantly to the hon. Minister about this injustice. When Mr. D.R.M. was complained of functioning of tube lights and fans at the platforms because only at the time of arrival of any train they are in operation, he mentioned lack of funds and expressed helplessness. Rajnandgaon is the district headquarters. I am grateful to you for restarting the closed railways crossing for which the State Government also gave consent. The rail-road over-bridge over railway crossing was constructed during our regime. But, cycle rickshaws and children below five were unable to use this railway bridge. I praise you for this.

Survey works continue for years but they raise hope among the people of the area that the railway work will start on the basis of its reports. I would like to invite the attention of hon. Minister for Railways to start a train from Rajnandgaon to Jabalpur via Chheragarh, Chaudah Bogla, Mandla and another one in tribal area of Maharashtra from Rajnandgaon to Chandrapur. I have corresponded with hon. Minister and he was responded and also worked in this Direction. Governments have often been changed during last few years and this will continue in a democratic set up. But, the Minister in position owes great responsibility. Mr. Nitish Kumar, we expect much of you. So, I request you to fulfil our expectations, not for the sake of any particular person but for the sake of the country. It has been said that much is done for Bihar. Twenty lakh people visit Dogargarh Railway Station during the Navaratri. Railways charge Rs. 3 per passenger without providing him any facility. Navaratri are again starting from 19th of this month. Last year also I received a reply but no facility was provided. You had mentioned Patna Railway Station, such is the condition of Dogargarh Railway Station. Mata Bimaleshwari Devi temple is there and people over there have common belief of getting desired blessings from this holy place. That place is sufficient for 50 thousand pilgrims, but the platform is as old as 40-50 years. You mentioned about a scheme of Model Railway Stations Drafted at the time of Mr. Madhavrao Scindia. Some Model Railway Stations have been constructed but a few are still lying pending. Rajnandgaon and Dogargarh are two such stations where passengers throng there in large number benefiting the railways. You charge Rs. 3 per passenger. Non-availability of facility despite it is no good thing. Platform should be enlarged. As I have said Rajnandgaon Dogargarh Bortalab and Rasna should be shifted from D.R.M. Nagpur and be placed under D.R.M. Raipur, which you are visiting on 22nd of the month. You have mentioned

[Shri Motilal Vora]

of good relations between you and the employees. Harmonious relations are a must in such a big organisation like Railways.

You have given concessions to the journalists also, they may travel upto 50 thousand kilometer. You have given them coupon concession also. You have mentioned of profits earned by the production units of the railways. . . .(Interruptions) Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would take only one minute more time. There is the Shatabdi Express between Delhi and Bhopal. Electrification work from Nagpur to Raipur has been completed. Delhi-Bhopal Shatabdi Express may be plied upto Raipur. There is no such train between Raipur and Bhopal at present. Last year a train was declared to be introduced between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Habibganj. What happened of this train declared in 1998-99 ?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Due to the encroachment of Habibganj, that train could not be introduced. I have written to the Chief Minister and talked to him as well. A few days back information was received that he was going to remove the encroachment. It is not our fault.

SHRI RAMANAND SINGH (Satna) : You have been the Chief Minister. Please ask the Chief Minister to give a reply to our letters. If he does not write a letter here, how will he get the funds ?

SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU (Mahasamund) : The Chief Minister is busy in fashion show.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Discussion will not be held on the Chief Minister.

SHRI MOTILAL VORA : There were a so many jhuggis in Habibganj when it was made a Division office. I was the Chief Minister that time. I had got these jhuggis removed immediately and spent Rs. 53 lakh on the rehabilitation of the Jhuggi dwellers. I will certainly speak to the Chief Minister on this issue so that he is apprised of your views. This will be help us.

I have made a few suggestions regarding the trains. There is no facility for return reservation for Geetanjali Express for return journey to Howrah. Only yesterday I wrote a letter for stoppage of Azad Hind Express at Rajnandgaon. I hope you will certainly pay attention to it. With these words I support this.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF POWER, MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM) : Mr. Chairman Sir, if I may have

the attention of the Deputy Leader of Opposition Shri Shiv Shanker also, I would like to submit a very simple point. We started at about 11.15 or 11.20 in the morning. Normally, we should be able to complete the debate, if we take the full time that is allotted, by about 7 o'clock. It will be appropriate. But I understand that there are about 25 speakers.

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are more than 25 speakers.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : If there are more than 25 speakers, it means that we are going to go into late night, up to 2 o'clock or 3 o'clock. What I wish to submit is that there are two routes open to us. One is what the Speaker has already announced and it is that we continue the debate up to the time allotted. Then, we have a new method which is being introduced only for the purpose of debate on Railways, if the House is agreeable, and it is that the Members can give their speeches in writing, if possible. . . .(Interruptions) It will be for today only. Therefore, may I request that all of us have a consensus that the Railway Minister would reply at about 6.30 p.m. or so ? . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI BHASKAR RAO PATIL (Nanded) : No, we want to speak. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK (Jajpur) : We will speak here. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI ABUL HASMAT KHAN (Jangipur) : I also want to speak. Why did you not decide it in the morning itself ? . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : Then, how long do you want that the House be extended ? . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI P. SANKARAN (Calicut) : It may be extended for whole night. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : We may extend it till the debate is completed. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : Then, let us have a collective understanding that we will pass it so that people do not have to wait on all sides. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI P. SANKARAN : Each party or each speaker has to limit himself within the time given to him. Then, everything will be all right. But nobody is doing that. . . .(Interruptions)

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : I accept his point. I think, it is relevant that each party must ask its speakers to try and restrain themselves so that the time-limit is not crossed too much. I would appeal to all the leaders.

Let us have an understanding also that if we are going to sit late, then we should not insist on anything because other members would like to leave.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : If the Hon'ble Members co-operate and speak briefly, then I think more Members can be accommodated.

[English]

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : May I ask the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to give us some indication ?

MR. CHAIRMAN : As the hon. Members are aware, hon. Speaker has already announced that "those who are desirous of laying their written speeches on the Table of the House may do so. The written speeches shall form part of the proceedings." I am again announcing this.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : May I request the Deputy Leader of the Opposition just to give us some indication of what he feels should be the time of reply of the Railway Minister so that we can work according to some time schedule; the statutory time will be up by 7 o'clock. . . (Interruptions)

SHRI BHASKAR RAO PATIL : Why did you not make this suggestion in the morning itself ?

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : It was made in the Morning.

SHRI BHASKAR RAO PATIL : All the leaders are speaking as they like.

SHRI P.R. KUMARAMANGALAM : Once again, I am open to anything. All I am saying is that the Chair did make the suggestion in the morning itself that we would complete it according to time and have the reply at the proper time. The hon. Speaker made the suggestion that all those who do not get their chance to speak, could lay their written speeches on the Table.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Mr. Chairman, will it be possible for the hon. Minister to give his reply on Monday ?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : The reply should be today. On Monday, the Prime Minister is going to reply to the Motion of Thanks. So, the reply should be today and, at the outset the hon. Speaker has already announced it.

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER : Then, let us go ahead with the discussion till the time we can. Mean while, we will come back to you.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : You can decide whether we should sit up to nine o'clock or ten o'clock.

[Translation]

SHRI BASWARAJ PATIL SEDAM (Gulbarga) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am on my legs to thank the hon. Minister

of Railways for providing special facilities for the backward areas.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, today as the House began its discussion on the Railway budget in the morning, the hon. Speaker asked the ex-Prime Minister, Shri Deve Gowda to speak. He gave the Minister of Railways, a warning of three days. I felt saddened to hear this. Everyone welcomed the idea of moving Hubli, a railway zone, in Karnataka no one has opposed this. If this is opposed tomorrow, the opposition would be from Shri Deve Gowda, and not from the people of Karnataka. On 16th February, 1996 he wrote :

[English]

"There has been a persistent demand from the people of Karnataka that the Southern Railway Zone should be opened at Hubli."

[Translation]

A large number of reminders and memoranda are being received from the public.

[English]

"I request you to kindly consider this request favourably and pass orders directing the opening up of the Zonal Office of the Southern Railways at Hubli at an early date".

[Translation]

This was written by the ex-Prime Minister, he was then the Chief Minister of Karnataka. Not only this, he wrote this on behalf of the people of Karnataka. And now he is changing his language. Even hon. Shri Bommai's name has also been mentioned Bommai jee is perturbed due to the change in his policy after becoming the Prime Minister of all of a sudden. This has been mentioned in a magazine :

[English]

"Added to this attitude of Mr. Bommai, he reportedly failed to assert himself in the Deve Gowda Government."

[Translation]

This is the reality. Taking the name of Mr. Bommai in a way and when the earlier Government was ruling, then the 27 Members of Parliament did the right thing. . . (Interruptions) I have to say this as it was mentioned here. In this way it was a welcome news for the people of Karnataka. The people of Karnataka have welcomed this step. Not only this, but I want also to quote the Karnataka Chief Minister of the same Party :

[Shri Baswaraj Patil Sedam]

[English]

"In Bangalore, the Chief Minister Shri J.H. Patel expressed happiness saying that it was a long time aspiration of the people of north Karnataka."

[Translation]

This was the genuine demand of the entire Karnataka State i.e., specially of the North Karnataka. Because of this the entire state, and all the Members of Parliament are happy. In such a situation, respected Deve Gowda jee should not have said this in the House. But, I have to say this with a heavy heart. What will happen after three days? By giving the deadline for three days to the Railway Minister is nothing can be done. He tried to mislead the people. As per the agreement a little water has to be released by us to Tamil Nadu. In the 1994 elections he had said that he would rather give his blood but not a drop of water. The same Chief Minister released water to Tamil Nadu. Thus, the Minister of Railway need not fear at all regarding the three day ultimatum. The people of Karnataka are satisfied. I want to repeat it here. Moreover, cutting across party lines 22 Members of Parliament of this House, supported this lines. Alongwith these things I want to bring some important issues to the notice of Shri Nitish Kumar. Seventy per cent work has been done on Bijapur-Gadad line which is on Sholapur-Gadad railway line only 30 per cent work is left. For it about Rs. 100 crore are needed. It has to be completed by 2000 A.D. But you have made a provision of only seven crore rupees, due to which the people are seeting with rage. You give the assurance that the needful would be done. Lakhs of tourists come to visit Gol Gumbuz. It is very essential to complete the broad gauge line for their convenience. Hence my sincere request to you to enhance this amount from as the amount of seven crore is insufficient.

The demand for Gulbarga-Bidar line dates back to the Nizam era. The grant of funds for this in the budget, by you has made the people very happy. Even the people of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are very happy because of this. You have provided two crore rupees to begin work on this. The Prime Minister himself should come to lay its foundation stone. It is my request that more funds be provided quickly, to start the work on this. Another big demand is for a special train for Bangalore via Sholapur and Gulbarga. Either this demand should be made or the Link Express from Bidar be made a separate train.

It would be helpful to lowering the pressure mounted by the passengers if any of the demands, is fulfilled quickest. It gives me a great satisfaction that the train which you have announced runs twice in a week en route from Bangalore to Jaipur. But, at the same time, this very train

should run via Guntakal Vadi – Gulbarga – Sholapur at least once in a week, thus it would be more convenient for the Passengers, coming from those areas as well as other ones, to travel Jaipur and Gujarat. So considering this thing my request is that you should arrange to shift this one day train along the said route. Apart from it, I have a small demand for which I have written to the Government more than twenty times. The demand is not unproper missible, of course.

Mr. Chairman Sir, there is a railway station named Chittapur which comes under South Central Railways and a train named Husain Sagar that runs from Hyderabad to Mumbai via Chittapur. People are demanding its stoppage at Chittapur. Husain Sagar train halts any at stations which are surrounded nearly by a population of five thousand. On the contrary, Chittapur encircles population of 25 thousand and for all these figures the train does not stop at that station. Three years back people having this aim had registered a non-violent protest there and sentenced to imprisonment, and case is still in proceeding against them. I therefore, make a submission to you that instruction may be passed in order to stop Husain Sagar train at Chittapur station with immediate effect and law suits proceeding against the people be withdrawn since the demand is genuine. People will get happy and, then, nobody will be in position to make any interference in this regard.

Mr. Chairman Sir, in Billari district there was a metre gauge railway named Kottur-Harihar where a metre gauge train used to run earlier. Now it has been stopped by announcing that the metre gauge track would be converted into broad gauge. Now the situation is that the train has been terminated but unfortunately the work of gauge conversion is still pending. As is known to all, Billari is a big commercial centre manufacturing and providing steel and iron ores to the country. So I would request you that keeping this thing and the demand in view, rail service may be revived on this route as quickly as possible. On the part of my constituency, there were two demands, pertaining to railways, and both of them were fulfilled shifting South-West Zone to Hubli on one hand and announcing to start Bidar-Gulbarga rail line on the other. With the fulfilment of these two demands the people of Karnataka are very happy and so is Shri S.R. Bommai, who has once been a Chief Minister belonging to Shri. Deve Gowda's Party. He has expressed his gratification on it.

Now, at last I conclude my speech giving you thanks and supporting the rail budget.

[English]

SHRI CHENGARA SURENDRAM (Adoor) : Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Sir. I would like to point out some important

points regarding the present Railway Budget 1999-2000, But firstly, I am opposing this Railway Budget.

Sir, in some States of our country, especially in the South, the Assembly elections are due this year. And this Railway budget has been prepared keeping these elections in view, so that by giving more benefits there, they might get some political mileage.

Sir, the four per cent increase in the freight rate will have a far-reaching effect on the national economy. Since it has an inflationary trend, this Budget will have a cascading effect on all commodities, particularly, the essential commodities. Due to this, the poor people will be effected vary badly.

The rationalisation of passengers fares was in fact a deceptive cover for an actual sharp increase in passenger fares. The additional revenue of Rs. 900 crore – Rs. 700 crore from freight charges and Rs.200 crore from fare hikes – will put a big burden on the common man.

Sir, as per the density of population, our Kerala State stands at Number One position as compared to all other States of our country. If one goes through this year's Railway Budget, one would find that on density of population basis, no due importance has been given to Kerala. And, the people of Kerala will have to face a lot of difficulties in having the train journey from Kerala, especially from the south side towards other States of our country.

Sir, the progress of commercial and industrial lines in Kerala is going to be held up particularly due to the less Budget earmarked for their development.

Sir, since the very beginning of the opening up of the Indian Railways, our State Kerala has been getting the third grade position while the situation in other States of our country is far better. Of course, it is true that the present Railway Budget has earmarked some provisions for our Kerala State this year, and the position will also improve a little bit. But these provisions are not enough. By having these provisions, we will not be able to even solve the problems of 50 per cent of railway passengers in Kerala.

Sir, our Kerala State is a consumer State. Therefore, the people of Kerala cannot bear the hike in fair charges as well as luggage charges.

I would like to bring it to your notice that only one new railway line has been sanctioned to Kerala in this Budget. Kerala people do not travel without railway tickets as people do in some other States of our country and even then, Government is not giving any consideration for the people of Kerala to solve their difficulties.

Out of Rs. 540 crore, only Rs. 5 crore are sanctioned for Sabari railway line. On 14th January this year, pilgrims

died at Sabarimala due to inconvenience of railway journey facilities. So, Government should sanction more money for Sabari railway line.

For Ernakulam-Trivandrum railway line also, very much less amount has been sanctioned.

Regarding Punalur-Erumali new line, only the survey works have been allowed to be undertaken. It should be taken up along with the Sabari railway line simultaneously so that it would be more beneficial to Sabari pilgrims.

For changing the metre gauge line of Kollam-Thirunalveli-Virudunagar into broad gauge line, only very paltry amount has been sanctioned in the Budget.

Moreover, the Thakazhi-Adoor-Punalur new line is still shown as pending in the present Budget.

Lastly, I demand that more trains should be allowed to the Southern parts of our country, especially to Kerala.

I request that the Mangala Express should be extended from Ernakulam to Trivandrum.

I would like to request the hon. Minister kindly to consider my demands and do the needful.

[Translation]

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH (Aurangabad) (Bihar): Mr. Chairman Sir, with your kind permission I would like to put up some public related demands on the part of my State Bihar as well as my constituency Aurangabad. The demands include laying a new rail line on route from Bihta Station of Eastern Railway to Daltonganj via Arval-Aurangabad. My second submission is that the over-bridges be built across Son Nagar-Barwadih rail line at N.H.-2 crossings of Son Nagar and Isti-Bazar. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI MANBENDRA SHAH (Tehri Garhwal) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, the present hon. Minister will always be announcing new constructions and new lines, but none of the hon. Ministers has ever mentioned what has happened to the past assurances given by the previous hon. Ministers. It is important to know what has happened to the past promises given by the previous Ministers.

Members of Parliament are very naive and we will be happy and content with mere announcements and not interested in having these new lines constructed. I will just give the example of the case.

As far back as 18th December, 1995 Shri Suresh Kalmadi, the hon. Minister of State of Railways wrote to me stating that reconnaissance survey for connecting Rishikesh with Dehradun by rail line via Kansarao has

[Shri Manbendra Shah]

been sanctioned by him and would be taken up during that very year. But till today nothing has happened. I have been continuously asking the Ministry about it, but there is no reply. I am reminding them and I have written to the previous Ministers also, but there is no reply.

This is how assurances given to Members of Parliament are being treated by the Ministry of Railways. I would therefore like that the hon. Minister would correct this negligence on the part of the Ministry of Railways wherever MPs requests or assurances given by Ministers in the past have not been carried out.

I would like to further substantiate this by quoting construction figures on the new lines. I will not go into the detailed statistics but I will sum it up by saying that the targets of new lines from 1990 to 1998 to be constructed was 1,427 and the actual construction was only 995. How many of them were carried forward every year is not known. But the figures clearly prove that the achievement is only about fifty per cent. If these figures do not include the spill over, then the actual achievement is far below fifty per cent. Does this not amount to misguiding the House? The House would like to have a clarification. This also indicates that an effective monitoring cell does not exist in the Minister's Office. There may be monitoring cells in the various departments but there has also to be one proper monitoring cell in the Minister's Office. I would suggest that the hon. Minister should have a monitoring cell in his Office.

Another issue on which I would like to speak is rail versus road. It has been conceded by the Ministry of Railways that in relation to roads, the share of railways in the movement of goods and passengers has declined. It is projected that by the year 2000, the decline would be up to 35 per cent. A marketing strategy is being evolved by the hon. Minister has not spelt out what is the strategy that is going to be introduced. This is where the hon. Minister should tackle the financial pinch. The financial pinch to the people cannot be ignored. All the schemes that are introduced will not satisfy the people unless facilities are also commensurately provided. If he wants to satisfy the people, there should not be any financial pinch. I would request the hon. Minister to look into this aspect.

Recently, the Chairman of the Northern Railway held a meeting with the MPs of the constituencies where the Northern Railway trains ply. I had given certain suggestions. I have given certain suggestions separately in writing also. But up to now, in spite of my repeated reminders, no reply has come and nothing has been done. On the

contrary, when I suggested certain things, they have not been considered. I would give only one example of that.

I had suggested that the Dehra Dun Shatabdi Express should not stop at Roorkee. The Shatabdi Express trains are supposed to be fast trains between one Terminal and another. There should not be any halt in between. There was a halt at Saharanpur. They said that this was necessitated because they did not have a "U" turn but a "V" turn at Saharanpur. So, there had to be a 20 minute halt at Saharanpur. Now, they are going to stop the train for two minutes at Roorkee also. The whole concept of Shatabdi is vitiated. The whole concept of having a fast train is vitiated. Instead of trying to resist, they are increasing the halts. If this sort of a thing goes on, the whole purpose of Shatabdi will be vitiated. I have raised an objection to this. It is understood that the halt at Roorkee has been introduced for the convenience of a very senior officer of the Northern Railway. I objected to this but no remedial step has been taken and no reply has been sent to me in spite of reminders. I would like to drive home to the whole Ministry of Railways that these matters should not be allowed to go on like this. There should be a monitoring cell. They should reply to the MPs promptly. They should also take care of the financial pinch to the people.

Unless the fares are reduced, people outside will not be satisfied with the Budget.

I had to cut short by speech for want of time. I would only request that the hon. Minister should apply his mind so far as the fiscal side is concerned and I further request him that whenever we write a letter to him, or Ministry we should get a prompt response.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI BHARTRAHARI MAHTAB (Cuttack) : Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I stand here to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for presenting a progressive Railway Budget. I may remind the House that some 112 years ago in 1887 with the opening of a 230 km. long railway line between Nagpur and Rajnandgaon, the Bengal-Nagpur Railway line came into existence which later on became the South Eastern Railway.

This Railway now boasts of a route length of 7,414 km. spanning six States and these six States are Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. It caters to the needs of a host of industries comprising seven steel plants, more than a dozen cement plants and four aluminium plants and it also caters to the needs of three major ports in Orissa, in West Bengal and in Andhra Pradesh.

The coalfields of Talcher and Ib Valley in Orissa have proven deposits of more than 20,000 million tonnes each. These coalfields are expending in order to meet the requirements of a number of industries and thermal power plants. The additional quantum of coal that will be generated here is proposed to be moved to Southern India by rail or via Paradeep and Vizag ports. A number of new industries have been planned in this mineral-rich region, and they include steel plants in the Daitari-Banaspani area.

Now, I come to the basic thing. In view of the gauge conversion, regional aspirations and increase of traffic movement, seven new Zones have been set up at Allahabad, Bangalore, Bhubaneswar, Bilaspur, Hajipur, Jabalpur and Jaipur. I want to draw the attention of the Railway Minister, through you, Sir, to a fact relating to East Coast Zone situated in Bhubaneswar. This Zone was inaugurated on 8th August 1996. This was a long-felt need of the people of Orissa. But to this date, formal gazette notification has not been published. All official work is still being done from the South Eastern Railway Headquarters. Orissa has already provided 47 acres of land free of cost worth crores of rupees, which is lying unutilised. The allocation for East Coast Zone is around Rs. 40 crore. To this date, an amount of Rs. 8 crore has been spent. We need another Rs. 32 crore for the completion of establishment of this Zone. I am at a loss to understand why only an amount of Rs. 60 lakh has been provided this year, when last year he had provided an amount of Rs. 4.85 crore. Can we conclude that he is going to review the decision of opening of new Zones? Does he want us to understand that he is going to roll back the decision taken by the previous Government?

I am told that establishment of new Zones are facing problems because of the inclusion of certain Divisions. Recently Andhra Pradesh Assembly has passed an unanimous Resolution to include Waltair Division in the South-Central Zone. Waltair Division is under East Coast Zone. I do not know what is the thinking of the present Ministry about it. I want to know the present policy of this Government relating to new zones.

For a long time, Orissa has been neglected by the Railways. It was only during the time of the non-Congress Governments at the Centre, Orissa has got its due attention. Be it during Shri George Fernandes or Prof. Madhu Dandavate or Shri Ram Vilas Paswan or you, Mr. Minister, Orissa has got more, in comparison to the Congress regimes.

[SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

16.00 hrs.

I would like to remind the Congress friends from Orissa who were squatting on the steps in the entrance to

Parliament to search their heart and to think what they had achieved when they were in power in Delhi. Yesterday's incident in front of Parliament was nothing but shedding crocodile tears.

But at the same time I would like to state that if Waltair is being considered to be included in South-Central Zone, then Bandhamunda and Ib area be divested from Bilaspur Zone and a new division be created at Rourkela which is to be a part of East-Coast Zone. Another division be created at Rayagada also. I may remind the House that in the railway network, South-Eastern Railway is the most remunerative Zone. And out of the SER, it is the East-Coast Zone which gives the highest revenue to the Exchequer. This year maximum investment is being done in SER. But if State-wise calculation is to be made, then after Maharashtra and Bihar, Orissa comes third in case of fund allocation. I thank you for that. You should get all accolades.

As far as introduction of new projects is concerned, not a single new project has been included by the Railways for Orissa, nor any new train has been introduced. This has disheartened us. Therefore, I request the Railway Minister to take up at least some steps to ply a new super fast express train from Cuttack to Bombay via Sambalpur. One Shatabdi Express may please be introduced from Bhubaneswar to Howrah to be operated in the morning. One express train from Bhubaneswar to Koraput, in the name of Sabari Express, may please be introduced. Last time, an assurance was given but it has not been honoured.

I may also suggest that thousands of people from Orissa visit Bangalore. A train is now plying from Bangalore to Vizag. This can be extended upto Bhubaneswar. Lakhs of people who visit Puttapurthi may be benefited by this train.

Adequate steps are required to be taken for providing more funds for construction of new lines. I need not go into the details but the second line from Talcher to Paradeep is in need of more funds for speedy completion of the project. I may take this opportunity to request you to visit Orissa and do the *Bhumi puja* for the second bridge on river Mahanadi and Birupa in this financial year.

Puri is one of the holy places of India. Lakhs of pilgrims visit Puri. There is only one single line there. It should have a double line from Khurda Road.

A new railway line between Daitari and Banaspani, after Talcher-Sambalpur, should be constructed on priority. The latest anticipated cost of this project is Rs. 595 crore. Last year, Rs. 49 crore was sanctioned for the line. This year Rs. 32 crore has been proposed. It we take this into

[Shri Bhartrahari Mahtab]

consideration, then another Rs. 367 crore is required to complete the project. In response to Orissa Government's request the Railways had fixed 2003 as the target for completion of Daitari-Banaspani new broad-gauge rail line link project.

Accordingly, the Railways were requested for hiking the allocation to Rs. 150 crore a year so as to ensure completion as per target. This year's allotment of Rs. 32 crore, therefore, is not only less than the last year but also falls short of the proposed allocation, if you have fixed a target to complete the new link line by 2003.

Therefore, I request the Railway Minister to hike the allocation for this line in this year. I am told an Australian company wants to invest money for the completion of this line. A number of steel plants are coming up along this new line. Australia also wants to import iron ore from the mining area through Paradeep port. I may remind the House, some 40 years ago, when the Paradeep Port was not developed a proposal was received from the Japan Government to develop the port and connect the iron ore mines of Sukinda with an express road.

The port was built under the able leadership of Shri Biju Patnaik. The Express Highway was also built without any help or aid from Japan. It was the concerted effort and the sincerity which saw it fructify. But, Orissa had to wait till 1983-84 when Daitari-Bansapani new railway line was approved. Already 14 years have passed and some small amount is provided every year. I am constrained to say that if this attitude continues, I am afraid it may take another 15 years to complete this new rail line. I hope the Railway Minister will enlighten us about the proposal from the Australian company. If the Railway Minister is thinking seriously about the involvement of the Australian company, he may come out with concrete proposals in this regard.

I am of the view that the new rail line should get the utmost priority. If the Railway Minister is unable to provide funds for timely completion of any project so far as Orissa is concerned, money can be arranged from off-shore companies. The Minister should come out with a clear picture as to what programme he has for this project.

*I would request the Railway Minister to introduce the following new trains to Orissa :

1. Superfast train from Bhubaneswar to Bombay via Talcher-Sambalpur.
2. One DMU from Bhubaneswar to Berhampur leaving Bhubaneswar in the morning.

*Laid on the Table.

3. Extension of newly introduced Bangalore-Visak Weekly Express train from Bhubaneswar to Cuttack.
4. One new Express train from Bhubaneswar to Koraput named Sabari Express.
5. The Rajdhani Express from Bhubaneswar to Delhi be plied thrice a week.

The Railway Minister has been conscious enough to include Berhampur-Phulbani via Aska for the survey. So also to survey as to how Talcher can come in Cuttack-Sambalpur rail line. I request the Minister to survey Bargarh to Raipur via Nawapura line. The needs immediate attention.

I must thank the Railway Minister for looking towards the underdeveloped and long neglected area such as Orissa. I must at the same time suggest that steps should be taken to complete the remunerative projects in all priority, especially the Bansapani-Daitari and Sukinda Road-Anugul line.

This year's Railway Budget is passengers friendly. The increase in the rate of traffic was long overdue. I thank the Minister for looking at those areas and groups who have little chance to form pressure groups to fight for their cause. Their case has been looked into.

I, on behalf of Biju Janata Dal, extend my full support to the Railway Budget.

SHRI K. BAPIRAJU (Narsapur) : I thank you very much for giving me opportunity. I would like to confine myself to a few suggestions because time is very short and I do not want to be a hurdle between any other colleague Member of the House here. I would like to make a few suggestions to the hon. Minister and I hope the hon. Minister is paying attention to it. No Minister is attending to it. The Minister is being disturbed here. I request the hon. Minister, through the hon. Chairman, to kindly be attentive.

[Translation]

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Hon'ble Minister may please pay attention.

[English]

SHRI K. BAPIRAJU : I would like to make a few suggestions. First of all, I would like to talk about the maintenance of the train and the railway station. It should be given top priority. If someone feels satisfied with the maintenance, I wonder what kind of knowledge he has. It is very unfortunate to see the condition of the trains. I would not say that all the trains are like this. There are

a number of trains which are well maintained. As Shri Vora has rightly mentioned, it is being ignored. It is known for its bad maintenance. I would like to suggest the Government to identify the areas which require some improvement.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, now-a-days, people are more concerned about the time, unlike the olden days. Earlier, people used to think that express train is used only by some rich people or some business people or by someone who is having some urgent work. But now even a porter does not want to waste time at the Railway Station. He would like to go in the fastest train. He does not mind paying some extra money for it. But he would definitely take the fastest train. That is the mind of the society today. Of course, they have been improving upon it and we should appreciate that. But at the same time, I would like to say that the trains should go in time. People should realise that the trains are going on time because the value of time is very much realised in the society. We should appreciate that.

Now, I come to Railway accidents. In our judicial system, we take care to see that not even a single innocent person should be hanged even if hundreds of criminals go scot free. So, no innocent man should be killed in the accidents. These accidents take place due to some administrative or technical mistake. This should not happen. We cannot afford it. Everybody in the Railway Department should try to see that no accidents take place. More reduction in percentage of accidents is no improvement as we just cannot afford to have accidents.

Now, I would like to say something about my constituency as it is my duty to represent it here. It has the oldest railway track which was laid by the Britishers and not any one of us. It is the oldest station with old skeletons which were erected by the Britishers. Are we not in a position to renovate them? Did you ever think about it? In this context, recently, we represented to the South-Central Railway and they were kind enough to come forward and take up a few stations for renovation. Other stations are also need to be renovated. It is very essential. When we are taking money from the passengers, it is our responsibility to provide minimum facilities at the stations. It is not out of charity that we are doing it. It is the responsibility of the Railway Minister to see that it is totally renovated as per the latest norms of the Railways.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we want our Railway track to be double lined. The Vijayawada to Nidadavole and Bhimavaram to Narsapur are the two oldest tracks. We want it to be double line. We also want that it should be electrified because all other lines around my area are being electrified. It is a very important line. It earns foreign exchange for the country as prawn is being exported through this line. Some fish also goes to Bihar.

[Translation]

Fish will be sent to Bihar and West Bengal from our place. It is very necessary.

[English]

An electrical line is very essential. Simultaneously, Vijayawada electrical line has been shifted to Vishakhapatnam. I do not grudge electrification of that line. But It would request the hon. Minister to see that my lines are also electrified.

Sir, it is our moral responsibility to thank the hon. Minister for whatever good that has been done.

[Translation]

That's OK; but you, should not speak in this way. Give us also opportunity to speak.

[English]

Sir, It was a matter between the Speaker and myself. Hence, the hon. Minister was kind enough to lay the line between Kakinada and Kotipalli. Apart from that, a further proposal had been given which was under consideration. Kotipalli to Narsapur is a very very important line. The hon. Minister may take note of it. It will be a very useful one. Machilipatnam to Tenali is a coastal line which is also an important one which can give maximum revenue. I am not asking this just for my constituency alone. During times of war also, it is necessary that this coastal line would be prepared to meet the situation.

[Translation]

I extend my thanks to you for running D.M.U. train to Vijayawada and Narsapur.

[English]

While concluding I would like to say that the hon. Minister or the Government should not be satisfied with what all they have done. We have to do a lot further. He may meet the Finance Minister and take his help in that regard.

I thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI (Madras North) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the Railway Budget discussion on behalf of my Party, the DMK and on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu.

The Railway Budget presented by my hon. Railway Minister is a routine exercise without much emphasis on the passengers though we are celebrating 1999-2000 as the Passenger Year. Though I appreciate and welcome the Budget for not increasing the fares in season tickets and passenger trains, in the name of rationalisation, he has

[Shri C. Kuppasami]

increased fares in all classes in mail and express trains including the Second Class Sleeper. As the House knows, people who are in the low income bracket travel only in the Second Class Sleeper in long distance trains. The hike in this class is too high which the passengers in that category cannot afford to pay. Therefore, I would urge upon the Railway Minister to please reconsider and reduce the fare structure in respect of Second Class Sleeper.

Sir, the increase in freight charges will lead to further price rise.

Let me now come to the proposals in respect of Tamil Nadu. Conversion of Chennai Beach-Tambaram suburban section was included in the last Budget but no action had been taken during the whole year. Even the State Government of Tamil Nadu, considering the urgent need for conversion of this section, had come forward to meet a part of the cost. Temporary running of a few BG EMUs on this section was also withdrawn last year. More than 75 per cent of the existing MG coaches are over-aged and consequently. There are quite a number of failures leading to confusion in this section. Without loosing any more precious time, I would urge upon the hon. Railway Minister to take necessary action for starting of conversion work on a war footing with electrification. The anticipated cost of Chennai Beach-Tambaram-Chengalpattu gauge conversion is Rs. 376 crore whereas he has allocated only Rs. 12 crore during 1999-2000.

Now I come to the Circular Suburban System. A study made by the Chennai Metropolitan Development Authority revealed that in 1991 the share of public and private transport was 55:45. The share of rail in public transport is 16 per cent while road accounts for 84 per cent. Due to inadequate public transport because of insignificant role played by the Railways, especially in our metropolitan city, the vehicle population by 2000 A.D. - about which this Budget speaks - in Chennai and its suburb will go up by 108 per cent despite the increase in population at 27 per cent. Such an explosion in vehicle population will lead to unmanageable environmental pollution besides choking of roads. The social cost of such pollution will be enormous. The alarming situation can be avoided only if the capacity of Railways in Chennai and its suburb is augmented to meet at least 25 per cent of the daily trips made by public transport.

Moreover, from the British days, suburban services in Chennai Metropolitan City have been provided only radially. Consequently, while there is heavy concentration along the rail corridors leading to multifarious socio-economic problems, the hinterland has not been a

balanced development. I would, therefore, request the hon. Railway Minister to order a survey of circular suburban railway system in Chennai and its suburb on the pattern of the Ring Railway.

Now, I come to the Chennai Central-Gummidipoondi Section. This section is a notified suburban section. But there are only two railway lines. Express and Mail trains as well as freight trains are run on the same two lines along with suburban trains. During the last three decades, there has not been any investment by the Railways in this section though there was a lot of pressure for increase in the frequency of suburban service.

While 34 trains were run on Chennai-Tiruvallur Section, there were only 19 trains run on Chennai-Gummidipoondi Section in 1980-81. Today, the number of trains on Chennai-Tiruvallur has gone up to 92 but the number of trains towards Gummidipoondi is 36 only. On Chennai-Tiruvallur corridor, the increase in train services was about 10 per cent per annum but on Chennai-Gummidipoondi Section, it was only 5 per cent though the demand is going high. Due to capacity constraint on this line, the train services have not been augmented to match the demand.

There is a very urgent need to provide at least one more line between Chennai and Gummidipoondi. Financial burden of the Railways for providing this line is reduced since the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board has agreed to bear 50 per cent cost of the line between Attipattu and Korukkupettai.

Now, I come to the need for a third line between Tiruvallur and Arakkonam. Even through the Railways have declared Chennai-Tiruvallur only as a suburban section, the city has expanded far beyond. Commuter traffic extends between Chennai and Tiruttani which is at a distance of 82 kms. from Chennai Central. To meet the huge volume of commuter traffic, suburban EMUs are run up to Tiruttani. However, there are only two lines beyond Tiruvallur. Both Express and goods trains meant for Kerala and Karnataka have to run on this section.

As on date, a total of about 75 trains are running on this section. The Railways are not able to run more EMUs and long-distance trains to Kerala and Karnataka even though there is full justification for the same. The punctuality of all trains running on this section is also affected and the passengers and daily commuters are put to a lot of inconvenience.

Therefore, I would urge upon the Railway Minister to pay attention to this neglected section and see that immediate action is taken to provide at least a third line between Tiruvallur and Arakkonam.

Next, I come to gauge conversion projects. Despite passage of more than a decade since the announcement of uni-gauge policy by the Railways, the pace of conversion in Tamil Nadu has been very poor. Important routes, where there is heavy movement of passenger and goods train, still remain in metre gauge only. Within the Zone of the Southern Railway itself, Tamil Nadu has been given a raw deal in the matter of gauge conversion. While the increase in Broad Gauge route km'age in Karnataka has been 53 per cent, the increase in Tamil Nadu is only six per cent.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The rest of the speech should be laid on the Table of the House.

SHRI C. KUPPUSAMI : Yes, I may be permitted to lay it on the Table of the House.

*The Tamil Nadu Government has offered to meet 50 per cent cost of converting the Cuddalore-Vriddachalam-Salem section. Conversion of this route should be given top priority in the interest of the Railways itself since setting up of a Refinery near Cuddalore, a major all-weather port, will assure enough freight traffic on this route. It will augment large volume of freight traffic to the Railways when they are losing the share of freight traffic to the road sector.

Moreover, Tamil Nadu is the only State which has come forward to shoulder a portion of the cost of conversion and the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, Dr. Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi had written a letter to the hon. Minister on 6.3.99 thanking him for inclusion of this project.

Thirdly, I come to the gauge conversion between Villupuram and Thanjavur. As the House is aware, Thanjavur is the granary of South India and is also an international tourist centre. But there is no through Broad Gauge train facility from Villupuram to Thanjavur. If there is gauge conversion on this route. It will provide through service to the passengers from Villupuram to Thanjavur and to Chennai. So, it will provide double benefit to the people and also increase the earnings of the Railways. Here, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister to the letter addressed to him by the Chief Minister Dr. Kalaingar M. Karunanidhi indicating that eight major bridges and 96 small bridges have to be built in this section. He has also pointed out the allocation of a meagre one lakh rupees. Therefore, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to order the survey of the project and to include this scheme in the Railway Budget by allocating sufficient funds for the purpose.

Fourthly, I come to the need for a Railway Goods Terminal Yard at Egmore to ease congestion. At present,

*Laid on the Table.

all the goods trains bound towards south of Tamil Nadu from Delhi and other destinations are to pass through the Basin Bridge (near Chennai Central) though this route is heavily saturated. To ease congestion at this point, I would make a proposal to the hon. Railway Minister to consider developing Gopalsamy Nagar Yard at Egmore Station as a terminal so that all the through traffic goods trains would pass through this terminal without touching Chennai Central. At the Egmore Railway Station, there is space for providing five more through platforms and two suburban platforms for Broad Gauge once the MG platform is completely taken out of Egmore. For terminal facilities, it is possible to provide three more pit-lines at Gopalsamy Nagar Yard by providing one more stabling line. These facilities will take care of the congestion of goods trains.

My next point is about the need for a satellite goods terminal for Coimbatore. Coimbatore, the second largest city of Tamil Nadu, is a highly industrialised area. Machinery, textiles and hosiery products manufactured in and around Coimbatore bring in substantial amount of foreign exchange. But the facilities provided by the Railways, both for passenger and freight traffic, are totally inadequate. Consequent on the introduction of the Konkan Railway, adding insult to injury, even some express trains are diverted towards Kerala.

There has not been any significant development on the railway facility in this highly industrialised area. One of the reasons for lack of development is space constraint. Both passenger and goods traffic is handled at Coimbatore Junction and adjacent station. This has resulted in inadequate development on both the fronts.

There is an immediate need for shifting the goods activity from the heart of the city to a peripheral area. Irugur, which is there on the outskirts of Coimbatore, offers an ideal place as a freight terminal.

Development of Irugur as a freight terminal will boost the Railway freight traffic in general and container traffic in particular. Railways have not made any sincere attempt to tap the expanding export/import container traffic of Coimbatore. It is high time that the hon. Railway Ministers, Thiru Nitish Kumar and his colleague, Thiru Ram Naik considered this demand favourably and set up a freight terminal at Irugur before the land is taken up for other developmental activities.

Next I come to Railway safety and preventing accidents due to human failure and mechanical failure. The hon. Minister has said in his Budget speech that 'track circuiting' would be provided at a fast rate to prevent accidents due to human failure. Apart from this. There should be orientation course for drivers/guards on the aspects of railway safety and preventive type of actions.

[Shri C. Kuppusami]

The scope of the proposal of giving walkie-talkie sets to drivers and guards of passenger trains for establishing contact in an emergency should be extended and provided for drivers and guards of all the passenger/express trains to improve rail safety.

The other import point is about the Railway Workers Welfare and Grievance Redressal Machinery. I congratulate more than 16 lakh regular railway workers in the Indian Railways on their successfully running the Asia's second largest train network of 62,495 route kms., despite heavy odds and constraints.

The hon. Railway Minister should bring out a befitting scheme for the welfare of railway staff and workers at the national and zonal levels who are second to none in dedication to service.

I would like to mention about the on-going projects. They are : the MRTS II phase; Saidapet Limited use RUB; the MIT Gate Bridge and the St. Thomas Mount Gate Bridge. For these projects, the hon. Minister has allocated insufficient funds. I request that sufficient funds should be allocated.

Finally, I come to the Golden Rock Workshop and the ICF, Perambur. The Golden Rock Workshop of the Railways is not getting adequate orders though the workers there are professionally trained and skilled. I would urge upon the hon. Railway Minister to please look into the matter and direct the Railway authorities to place adequate orders to this Workshop so that the skills and expertise developed by these workers are utilised optimally. Similarly, at Perambur we have the Integral Coach Factory which is known for its passenger coaches all over the world. It is also carrying out export orders for manufacturing coaches for other countries. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to pay attention to the needs of this Factory.

With these words, I thank you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to participate in the debate on the Railway Budget.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU (Srikakulam) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, by and large the Railway Budget presented by Shri Nitish Kumar, our Railway Minister can be appreciated. It has not put an additional burden on the middle class and the common passengers. On my behalf and on my party's behalf, I express some satisfaction that the hon. Railway Minister has included some important proposals. But there is some dissatisfaction also. The allocations provided for the projects are very very meagre. Eighty-five per cent of the network was inherited from the British. In the last 50

years, we have only added nearly 11000 kms. for the Railway network.

My priority is, the Railways should provide safety, cleanliness, maintenance and punctuality to the rural people. These are priority items. Priority should be given to the backward areas. In India everybody knows by seeing the railway map as to which are the areas that are not covered by the railways. That is known to everybody. With a lot of pressure, some areas are covered by the railway network. We are giving top priority for doubling. When we have a train in one route, we accede to the demand for one more train. The hon. Minister must take stern and necessary steps to expand the railway network in those areas which are not covered in the Indian Railway map.

In Andhra Pradesh, Telengana is an extremist area. There are no railway lines. Recently, some agitations have taken place in those areas. Agitations are not only taking place in Andhra Pradesh, but in the whole country. We have to give priority for expanding the network in those areas which are not covered since independence. The same holds good in the case of gauge conversion and even in the case of new lines.

Previous United Front and Congress Governments have so far sanctioned merely Rs. 35000 crore worth of projects. But this year, for these new lines, we have provided only Rs. 600 crore in the Budget. How do you complete the sanctioned projects worth Rs. 35000 crore with Rs. 600 crore? This is my question to this Government. Out of that, you have to fix the priority items. Every year we are going in for new lines. We add 24 kms., 54 kms., and below 100 kms. in the railway network every year. So, instead of distributing the entire money to each project like Rs. 5 crore, Rs. 3 crore and Rs. 2 crore, provide Rs. 10 crore to a project which require Rs. 10 crore and complete the project. The project will come into operation and the Railways will get the revenue. The hon. Minister should plan in such a manner. He must fix the priority in regard to the sanctioned projects and the on-going projects. He must provide money to those projects so that the same will be completed and would add to the Railway network and revenue.

For example, the gauge conversion of Mudhkhed-Nizamabad-Bolaram project in Andhra Pradesh. An amount of Rs. 20 crore has been allotted in this year's Budget. Whereas the work is estimated at a cost of Rs. 290 crore. With the allotted money, it will take many years to complete this project. That is why this is called the most neglected area since we attained Independence. There was no railway network. By this allotment of Rs. 20 crore, it will take 15 years. We have completed 50 years since we attained Independence. I request the hon.

Minister that he must pump more money for the early completion of the project.

Similar is the case of Katpadi-Pakala project in Rayalaseema district. It is in the backward Chittoor district. Even our Chief Minister also represents this district. My appeal is, enhance the allocation so that the projects are completed in a short time. If you provide Rs. 10 crore for the project. It would be completed within one year. The Railway network will come into operation in that area and the Railways can also earn the revenue.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK) : In this year's Budget, we have provided Rs. 20 crore.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Yes, but it is not sufficient. If you provide Rs. 10 crore more in this year's Budget, this project will be completed. It is in Chittoor district.

As far as construction of new lines is concerned, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to allocate more funds. I would request the hon. Minister to allocate more funds to complete the construction of Peddapalli-Karimnagar line as it is very much essential for the development of the backward Tellegana area. Similarly, more funds should also be allocated to Nandiyal-Yerraguntia line. These are all on-going projects.

Sir, I would request the hon. Minister, though you, to take immediate steps to develop Kakinada-Kotipalli line. It is a very important line and this line should be extended upto Narsapur to meet the requirements of the coastal area. My colleagues, Shri Upendra and Shri Bapiraju are from that area and they have already requested the Minister for the extension of this line. This line is nearer to Visakhapatnam where ONGC operations are going on. This area is the rice bowl of Andhra Pradesh and it is giving 50 per cent of the total quantity of rice procured by the Food Corporation of India. The distance is only about 50 kms. and if this line is extended upto Narsapur, it will be beneficial to the people to reach Visakhapatnam quickly which is on the Howrah-Chennai route. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to give priority to this line. The Ministry of Railways is already on the job. The survey has also been completed. So, I would request the Minister to take up this work this year itself.

With regard to introduction of new trains, while we thank the Minister for introducing a Shatabdi Express between Chennai and Tirupati and some other new trains, we would request him to look into some of the long-pending demands for introduction of new trains between

Visakapatnam and Mumbai and also between Visakapatnam and Borra Caves and introduce them this year itself. Borra Caves is an important tourist place in the State of Andhra Pradesh. But there is no train to that place. The hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has also represented to the hon. Railway Minister several times in this regard. So, I would request that a small train must be introduced between Visakapatnam and Borra Caves immediately.

Sir, there is another long felt demand of the people of Visakapatnam area. The Visakapatnam Railway Division was under the South Eastern Railway earlier, the headquarters of which is situated at Garden Reach, Calcutta. The people of that area were demanding that the Visakapatnam Railway Division should be included in the South Central Railway Zone which is functioning from Secundrabad. The United Front Government had created some new zones and Bhuvaneshwar was one among them. Now, Visakapatnam is attached to Bhuvaneshwar. After that, a lot of agitations has taken place and irrespective of political affiliations, all Members of Parliament from Andhra Pradesh represented about this case, both with the then Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and the present Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar. The hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh has also written to the Minister twice or thrice. So, I would request the hon. Minister to include Visakapatnam Division in the South Central Railway Zone, Secundrabad which is nearer. Otherwise, as you have created a new zone at Bilaspur, one more zone should be created at Visakapatnam. It is a fast growing city in Asia and a lot of infrastructural facilities are available there. There is a sea port and an international airport is also coming up. So, instead of including it in the South Central Railway Zone, if the hon. Minister could create a new zone at Visakapatnam itself, it is well and good. If that is not possible, I would request him to include Visakapatnam in the South Central Railway Zone.

Sir, the hon. Minister has declared this year as 'Passenger Year' in the Budget. But the increase in the amount allocated for maintenance is very meagre. He has enhanced it only by Rs. 130 crore which is not sufficient. I would request the Minister to go and see the condition of platforms and VIP rooms. As far as maintenance of coaches are concerned, I would like to say that the condition of the coaches in many trains including the East Coast Express and Howrah-Secundrabad Mail is very poor and they are very old. There is a lot of complaints from the passengers. So, I would request the Minister to immediately replace these coaches with new ones, particularly in the East Coast Express and Howrah-Secundrabad Mail.

[Shri K. Yerrannaidu]

Then, in the Visakapatnam-Calcutta Section, almost all the trains are invariably delayed by four to five hours. In the Secundrabad-Visakapatnam Section, which is in Andhra Pradesh, all the trains are running punctually. For example, the East Coast Express is running on time in the Secundrabad-Visakapatnam Section, but it is always delayed between Visakapatnam and Calcutta. I am observing this since my childhood and due to the delay, there is a lot of resentment among the local people. So, I would request the Minister to instruct his senior officers to see that this train runs punctually, particularly between Visakapatnam and Calcutta.

MR. CHAIRMAN Please conclude quickly.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Sir, I am the first speaker from my party in this debate. Nobody from our party has spoken so far.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You need not elaborate all the points. You can mention them pointedly.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : Sir, I am mentioning only very important points.

Sir, regarding the late running of the trains in Andhra Pradesh, we, the Members of our party, TDP, have met the Minister as a delegation and requested him to do the needful.

I requested him for stoppage of trains for which he had passed the orders. But these have not been given effect to. I mentioned about the stoppage of Visakha Express at Kotabommali Railway Station and also for stoppage the Howrah-Tirupati Express at Pundi. I gave a letter to the hon. Minister on which he had passed the orders. It is a long-felt demand of the fishermen in that area. Those two stations are located very nearby. No express train stops at those two stations. That is why I requested for stoppage of each of those two trains there.

Like that, many other things have also been mentioned to the hon. Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may lay your speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : It is not necessary.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It would be deemed to be read.

SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU : All right. I am not making any speech. There are some important points. Only small amounts are being spent in that Division A mention has already been made about the East-Coast Express.

Five ROBs have been sanctioned by the Ministry. The most important thing for the hon. Minister is to include ROBs at a few other places. There are still many places

where ROBs are to be taken up, for example, at Nellimarla and Bobbili. The people are suffering a lot. The State Government has also given consent for these two bridges, namely, Nellimarla and Bobbili situated in Vizianagaram district. The local MP had made several representations during the last three years. During the period of the present Lok Sabha also, he has made several representations. These two bridges at Nellimarla and Bobbili are the most important ones. The State Government has also given a consent to bear 50 per cent of the amount. A survey is to be conducted for assessing all these things.

By and large, I am very happy. The hon. Minister has sanctioned a lot of projects. There are three new trains to Andhra Pradesh. But very meagre amounts have been earmarked for the sanctioned projects. So, I request him to make more money available for these new and ongoing projects.

I request for two additional trains. It must be announced at the time of reply by the Minister.

*SHRI RAMEN BARMAN (Balurghat) : Hon'ble Mr. Chairman Sir, I shall speak in Bengali. I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on Railway Budget. On behalf of our party RSP, I oppose whole heartedly the Railway Budget. Sir, the development of civilization depends on railway operation. Keeping in view the all round development of the country, the allocation for railway should have been distributed evenly and proportionately. But the Government and Ministry of Railway have failed to discharge their responsibility. That is why, we are opposing the Railway Budget.

It has been found through some data that 85% of railway operation has been constructed during British regime and only 15% railway lines have been constructed after independence in these 50 years. The importance of railway has not been properly looked into in free India. We know that development of any region depends on proper railway connection. It is a matter of shame and regret that even after 50 years of independence so many areas in the country have not been connected with railway link.

I have come from Balurghat of North Bengal in West Bengal. This is mainly SC/ST dominated area. The Government is just doing lip service by saying that priority will be given and developmental work will be taken up in the areas dominated by SC/ST people. But there is a big gap between promise and practice.

In my district Balurghat, there is no railway line. Survey for Eklakhi Balurghat was conducted in 1984. But it is a

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali.

matter of shame and regret that even after 16 years even 100 metres of railway line has not been constructed.

If the Government is honest enough to take some effective steps for the development of SC/ST dominated area then I demand that adequate allocation must be sanctioned to expedite the long-pending Eklakhi Balurghat project and complete it without delay. I also demand to open computerised ticket counter at Balurghat.

My demand also include electrification for Lalgola Sealdah section in Murshidabad which happens to be a neighbouring area of my constituency Balurghat.

The survey for electrification from Krishna Nagar to Baharampur has already been completed. The work for electrification should immediately start. The proposal for survey for a new railway line from Baharampur to Kandi will meet the long standing demand of the people of this area. But for proper implementation of the project it is necessary to have simultaneous survey from Baharampur via Kandi to Sainthia.

Sealdah to Canning was the second railway line constructed in India. There has been a long standing demand by the people of Sundarban for double line from Sonarpur to Canning of Southern Division of Sealdah Canning line. I also demand to construct double line for this area so that people of this region are benefitted. Moreover, tokenless system should be adapted instead of the prevailing 'Gola system'. This will help the people and Sundarban a beautiful tourist resort will be easily accessible to both tourists from abroad and our own country.

I also demand that the metre gauge line from New Jalpaiguri via Siliguri to New Bongaigaon should be converted by broad gauge.

In the end I would like to mention that hike in passenger fare and freight will result in price escalation of essential commodities causing immense inconvenience to common people. The administration should immediately adopt some strong measures to curb this. The safety and security of the passengers should also be protected. Sir, I thank you once again for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion. I conclude my speech by opposing the Railway Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI SURENDER SINGH BARWALA (Hissar) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I extend my thanks to you on my own part and also on behalf of my party National Lokdal for giving me opportunity to speak in the House. The rail budget, which has been presented by Hon'ble Railways Minister, may be good for some states, may be commendable for

some sections; but it is not so much beneficiary for the common people. In this budget, Haryana State and its people have been totally ignored. I would like to tell you that ever since this country became free no new line has been laid in the State of Haryana. During the last 50 years not a single new rail route has been built to link one city to another.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to tell you that Haryana surrounds Delhi, which is the capital of this country. About 8 to 10 lac commuters including educated officials and businessmen travel from Haryana in over crowded trains to work in Delhi everyday. This gives an impression to me that Ministry of Railways does not pay attention at all to the Haryana State.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, due to such jampacked travelling train accidents have become very common on Haryana-Delhi route. I would request Hon'ble Railways Minister that the rail traffic may be improved along 150 Kilometre enroute from Delhi to Haryana under the master plan, made for National capital territory, Delhi, so that the people travelling by train may not face difficulties. Another aspect of this inconvenience is that pollution in Delhi is unabating. So my request is that single rail track may be doubled and double one be tripled in the distance of 150 kilometres and new compartments be added to the trains passing through Haryana so that the difficulties could be eased in the interests of common people.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to draw your attention to new rail lines which are to be laid in Haryana. Over the last 50 years the people of Haryana have been demanding to link Haryana with Haridwar, the most religious and holy place of this country, where lacs of pilgrims are visiting each year from Haryana. But unfortunately there is no direct rail service available between Haryana and Haridwar. Therefore my demand is that there should be a direct train service from Haryana to Haridwar. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that when Shri Morarji Desai was the Prime Minister of the country, it was decided to make a double rail line from Delhi to Jakhal, but the scheme is still incomplete. Land across 45 kilometre is unused even today for the purpose and no money has been proposed in the budget over the last two years for this proposed rail line. Even in this budget nothing has been mentioned about it. So I want to request the Hon'ble Minister that the money may be earmarked with immediate effect for it. Apart from it, a new line may be laid enroute from Hisar to Sirsa via Fatehabad. In this regard I have already requested the Hon'ble Minister so many times, even in writing, for immediate construction of that rail line to make journey comfortable and convenient for the people of Haryana. At present Hisar is a district. If the rail line is constructed that

[Shri Surender Singh Barwala]

district will get benefitted. There should also be a rail line from Kurukshetra to Jamuna Nagar. There should also be a rail line enroute from Hansi-Karnal to Delhi via Jind and Patiala and Narwana-Jind-Guhana.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to attract the attention of the Hon'ble Minister to the new trains. The people of Haryana State have demanded that the railways should run a new train – Bhatinda-Jind-Ludhiana apart from other ones which could be running from Jind to Amritsar, from Hisar to Amritsar and from Hisar to Jammu respectively so that there could be a direct rail service to the pilgrimage place 'Vaisho Mata', situated at a high place of Jammu, 'Katra', for the people of Haryana. My request is that there should be a new train running from Hisar to Jammu, a Delhi shuttle train be from Sonipat and also a shuttle train be run from Sonipat to Faridabad. Earlier a Haryana Express used to run from Hisar, now, thanks to hon'ble Minister, that train has been stopped. I would request the hon'ble Minister to review that train. At the same time, with your kind permission I would like to tell the House as well as the Minister that there is no express rail service in the morning from Jind to Ludhiana and Bhatinda I demand an Express train to be run from Jind at 11 o'clock in the morning since all the trains are passing along this route at night.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now, please, conclude.

SHRI SURENDER SINGH BARWALA : Mr. Chairman, Sir, with your kind permission I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble Minister to the double gate made at Hisar. Over the last 40 years the people of that town have been demanding that there should be a overbridge at the double gate since the people have to traverse about 5 kilometre distance to go across the level crossing for the double gate just divides the town into two parts. There should also be an over foot bridge at Uchara so that people was go to the village and market across the railway station. I would request the Hon'ble Minister to give place to all these things in this budget in view of the interests of the people of Haryana. Thank you very much as you have given me opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI PRAKASH YASHWANT AMBEDKAR (Akola) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to make some suggestions and appreciate if the Government pays attention to them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, for the last ten years, if you look at the Railway Budget, it is always a case that when the revenue has to be raised, it is the freight and the passenger tariff that is always raised.

The hon. Minister and the officials do not look into the aspect of rationalising the internal resources which has been mismanaged and misused. The Railways have a system known as 'spot buying'. If you look into the spot buying, whatever goes on there, they are purchased at nearly 300 to 400 per cent higher than what normally is there. I would request the Minister that he looks into this aspect. That is one thing.

Secondly, in the most important transport sector—coal, petroleum products and fertilisers—the increase has only been 1.6 per cent but if you look at the general consumption level that is there, the increase is more than six per cent. The Railways could attract only one per cent towards it and in this direction I would like to suggest to the hon. Minister that as far as the transportation of food-grains is concerned, they are using the same wagons which are used for other kinds of transport. Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is now necessary and it has now been established that a huge quantity of foodgrains movement takes place from the North to the South. If this kind of movement has to be made in future, they would require a special kind of wagon which can be loaded immediately and transported to wherever is the destination. In this regard, I would suggest to the hon. Minister that we have over a period of time collected enough data as to where the food material is required to be transported and the quantity to be transported is also known. If we go about liaising between the State Government and the Ministry of Food Supply, I think, Sir, the loss that has been seen in the freight section can be decreased also.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have been raising one issue with the hon. Minister, that is, an alternative route to the southern districts. Today the existing route to the southern districts is via Nagpur or via Manmad. If we look at the reply that has been given in this House by the hon. Railway Ministers, both have Stated that there is a bottleneck either at Nagpur or at Manmad. There is an alternative route which is necessary. On the path of the alternative route, the conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge has started. The alternative route is via Delhi, Jaipur, Kandwa, Akola, Purna, Nanded and Secunderabad. There is another advantage in this alternative route. If we go via the existing route, that is, via Delhi, Bhopal, Nagpur, and Secunderabad, or the other way round, via, Delhi, Bhopal, Manmad, Aurangabad, Nanded and Secunderabad, then, the distance between Delhi and Secunderabad via Nagpur is nearly about 1700 kilometres. The distance between Delhi and Secunderabad via Manmad is near about 1900 kilometres. But if we go through the route of Delhi-Jaipur- Akola-Nanded-Secunderabad, the distance is only 1100 kilometres. It was with this in mind, in the year 1991, the project was started for converting this line from metre gauge to broad gauge. Now, what I find from

the Ministry and the reply given in this House, is that the survey has not been done. May I know one thing from the hon. Minister? When you have already converted from metre gauge to broad gauge the line from Delhi to Alwar and the line from Secunderabad to Purna, only the middle portion is left. When the alternative route is available, when the time saving factor is available, may I also know from the hon. Minister whether he is going to look into this aspect and see that the remaining portion between Purna and Kandwa is converted from metre gauge to broad gauge? Then, the whole problem ends.

I will come to another issue which, I think, is the major issue. In the coming year, the Railway gets rolling-stock as well as the railway track which has been used and it has been kept aside for auction. There are many cities that are coming up. I have been moving from one city to another city. What I find over a period of time is that in every city, the time taken to travel from one place to another place, that is, the first 30 minutes, has now increased to one hour. Therefore, I would like to suggest this to the hon. Minister. Keeping in mind the difference of time, if we utilize this track and rolling-stock which have already been used and kept aside, for running of tram services in the new metropolitan cities that are coming up, the demand that is now made by a small section that there should be an EMU, would be met. It should be increased. I think by doing this, we can overcome this problem. If we can coordinate with the State Government, this track can be utilized in a much better way.

The last issue which I will come to is the city of Mumbai. Both the Minister of Railways and the Minister of State for Railways have been kind enough to look into the long-pending issues of developing the fifth and sixth tracks. But there are some areas where bottlenecks have been created. In the Central Railway, there is one bottleneck at Ghatkopar Station where there is no space to lay down the fifth and the sixth lines. I would like to suggest to the hon. Minister that there are only three buildings which are coming in the way. If you can acquire those three buildings, the necessary space for developing the fifth and the sixth tracks will be created and this work can be completed.

I would like to make another suggestion which is that some of the trains which you have announced newly take a long time to come into operation. If they are started by May, I think, the people will thank the hon. Minister.

17.00 hrs.

[Translation]

Sir, would you allow to lay down even video conference? Is it allowed to lay down video conference in the next conference?

[English]

SHRI B.M. MENSINKAI (Dharward South) : I am happy that you have given me some time to talk about the Railway Budget. First of all, before bringing up my other points I would like to stress that our ex-Chief Minister of Karnataka and the ex-Prime Minister of India, hon. Shri Devegowda already told this House that if the Railway Zonal Office is shifted from Bangalore to Hubli – a sort of threat has been given by him – a law and order problem would arise. But I would like to say in this connection that he had already, when he was the Chief Minister of Karnataka in 1996, sent a letter stating that Hubli should be the headquarters for the Railway Zonal Office. Therefore, I would like to read OUT the letter written to Shri Suresh Kalmadi on 16.2.1996 :

"Dear Shri Suresh Kalmadi,

There has been a persistent demand from the people of Karnataka for the Southern Zonal Office of the Indian Railways to be opened at Hubli, an important commercial centre in Northern Karnataka. You must also have received a number of representations from different people insisting on the establishment of this office at Hubli.

I request you to kindly consider these requests favourably and pass orders directing the opening of the Zonal Office of the Southern Railway at Hubli.

With regards,

Yours sincerely,
(H.D. Devegowda)"

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may lay it on the Table.

SHRI B.M. MENSINKAI : To conclude, again he had also sent another letter by his Personal Assistant. I would like to read it out also. This was written on 8.3.1996 by the Private Secretary to the hon. Minister of State for Railways. It reads as follows :

"Sir, this has reference to Letter No. CM 96/G10/96 dated 16.2.96 of the hon. Chief Minister of Karnataka regarding the opening of the Zonal Office at Hubli. In this regard I am desired to request you to note the following correction in the letter cited above :

"The Southern Office of the Indian Railways may be opened at Hubli may please be read as :

"To have the South Western Railway office opened at Hubli since the Southern Zonal Office already exists at Madras".

[Shri B.M. Mensinkai]

This may please be brought to the notice of the hon. Minister of State for Railways.

Yours faithfully
(B.P. Karie Ram)
Deputy Secretary II to C.M.)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please lay it on the Table.

SHRI B.M. MENSINKAI : I will lay them on the Table.

In this connection I would like to state that when he became the Prime Minister, he changed his attitude and said that it should be opened at Bangalore. So, on that account I would like to oppose his statement of this nature, it is a threat to the Northern part of Karnataka, not only a threat to the Government of India.

Secondly, I would like to say that Kurla Express train is stopping at Haveri. On our request the hon. Minister has permitted it . . . (Interruptions).

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

[English]

SHRI B.M. MENSINKAI : Sir, I have not touched my points. . . (Interruptions) The Lok Shakti is one of the supporting Party of the Government. . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : You may lay rest of your speech on the Table of the House.

[English]

SHRI B.M. MENSINKAI : Sir, later on, I may be permitted to lay my speech on the Table. . . (Interruptions)

*Sir, I support the Railway Budget on behalf of my Lok Shakti Party with some suggestions :

Today our Hon'ble Ex. Chief Minister of Karnatak and Ex. Prime Minister Shri H.D. Devegowda told in the House that is Hubli is made Head Quarter of Zonal Office after cancelling the same at Bangalore, law and order problem was to be faced by the Government. And if Hubli is to be made as an additional Zonal Office along with Bangalore, he has no objection. In this connection I have made statement and read two letters written to the Central Govt. by him and his office as Chief Minister of Karnatak on 16.2.1996 and 8.3.1996 recommending Hubli for the establishment of Zonal Office. But when he became Prime Minister Bangalore is made temporarily Zonal Office which

is nearer to Madras. I feel sorry for his such statement I expected that he would have supported Hubli to keep up his words and letters. Now people of Northern Karnatak felt hurt by his statement made this day in this house.

People of Bangalore never demanded this Zonal Office earlier because Madras office is nearer to Bangalore than Hubli.

Demand for Zonal Office to Hubli is Historical since British Rule. Britisher constructed Zonal Office at Hubli-Dharsad Corporation. But due some reason at that time that proposal swifited to Madras. Therefore, then Govt. made that if office building as Karnatak Govt. College these records are there in the history.

I therefore, urge the Govt. to start the Zonal Office at Hubli without fear. As regards the other point I like to state that on my request in the last budget time for grant of stops of Kurta Express Train No. 1017 and 1018 at Haveri (District Head Quarter) and at Ranebennur (big business city) only Haveri city is granted. But for Ranebennur I was told to wait for 2-3 months. But so far even after lapse of nearly 10 months no action is being taken to stop that train at Ranebennur people are very angry with me and unreasonable propoganda is being made against me. If Ranebennur place was made first than Haveri I would have saved my self to some extent. I, therefore, humbly through you Sir request our Railway Minister to grant a stop of Kurta Express Train No. 1017 and 1018 at Ranebennur urgently.

Secondly, there is a Railway case against the merchants of Ranebennur pending since 1996 for illegally stopping to Kurta train at Ranebennur. There is no loss of property. It is requested to withdraw the case immediately.

My constituency people want one push-pull train between Hubli and Devanage which please be granted.

One train starting from Bangalore runs upto Harihar. It deserves to be extended upto Hubli which is about 100 k.m. from Harihar.

I have been making many requests since last June for permanent repair of under bridge at Haveri railway station constructed by the Railway Dept. at the time of conversion of mater gauge into Broad gauge. It cannot be repaired I suggested overbridge near left side of Haveri station which is economically constructed due to rocky passage. We will make financial contribution I, therefore, request the Govt. to take up this construction urgently before commencement of rainy season from June, 1999.

Haveri and Ranebennur City station require foot bridges to cross over the opposite side of the station for passengers I made many requests. It should be taken up.

Flat forms are to be raised and developed to facilitate the passengers.

For Reservation facility we have to go to Hubli or Harihar I have written many letters to the Railway officials and Hon'ble Minister also. But so far no action is taken. My letters are to be considered favourably and reservation facility at Haveri and at Ranebennur should be provided for all classes including 1st class. Seat reservation at Kundgol, Sausi, Gudigeri and Karajigi stations at 2-4 seats in each station to cater the Rural people deserves to be granted. There are all in my constituency.

Funds are not sufficiently provided in the already granted conversion of lines from meter gauge to broad gauge rails between Gadog and Bijapur. Please provide full estimated funds to this project.

Compared to other States, my State-Karnatak has not provided with sufficient funds for development of Railway system in our state. No new line are proposed. Any how considering all the above demands I wish to Hon'ble Railway Minister will grant the all above-mentioned demands.

I finally conclude my speech with my sincere thanks for giving me time to speak.

[Translation]

SHRI LAL BIHARI TIWARI (East Delhi) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Hon. Railway Minister presented the Railway-Budget on 25th February, 1999, I support it. This is the second Railway-Budget presented by the Government of the Bhartiya Janata Party and its allies. When the first Railway-Budget was presented, our friends in opposition made so many speculations, for instance, they said that the budget would cause price-rise, but that was a budget with distinction hailed by the whole of the country and also by farmers, labourers and tradesmen. Here we have the current Railway-Budget, and, our friends in opposition fail to find words to criticise it. They are opposing it for the sake of opposition only. But, we have also interested that our senior colleagues, like Mr. Vora, have praised the Minister of Railways for his noteworthy performances.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to be brief as the time is limited. First, I take the declaration of the year 1999 as 'Passenger Amenities year, as a welcome step. For this, we ought to vow for the ascertaining seat to every passenger, travelling with general-ticket, also.

As you all are aware of the fact that the population of Delhi, the national capital, has reached a about one crore. The traffic system here is in a beleaguered State. I want to congratulate the Railways Minister for his efforts to initiate the work-programme under Metro-Rail project.

The first phase of this project, that is laying a track from Nangloi to Shahdara costing Rs. 6 thousand crore has been started at this moment. But the work on the track from Tees Hajari to Shahdara only, is undertaken, for now. As published in news-papers and as also quoted by the officials of your Ministry that it is a painstaking job. If work suffers in the project for only one-day, it causes a loss of about two or two and a half crore rupees. The first phase of Metro-Railway is to be completed by 2005 and the work undertaken is to be completed, till 2002. As and when it is completed, it'll add to our success in the fields of pollution and traffic control.

I want to take up a few problems of my constituency. East Delhi, my constituency, has a population of 36 lakhs. People face a lot of difficulties in travelling there. I have demanded for three rail-halts. These halts should be there, in Seelampur-Gandhinagar, Mandawali-Chandra Vihar and Nandnagari. I met the Minister for Railways in this regard. He even ordered the officials in this regard, but I am sorry to say that no action has been taken so far. In my constituency Narela station, has a wholesale market. Everyday thousands of people visit there, yet the platform here is uncemented. Similarly, Azadpur Mandi Railway Station is in a very bad shape. There are slums and jwggis all around there. It does not look like a railway-station. The railway-stations of at least Delhi should be beautified.

The Government of Delhi, the Municipal Corporation of Delhi have decided to make efforts in the direction of beautifying the borders of the city. With these words, I support his budget, with a token of commendation to the Railway Minister.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The Minister will get the written-speech verified from the department and will ensure its implementation. The written speech would be more effective.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY (Buxar) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, that written-speech must be implemented.

[English]

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN (Cannanore): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me this opportunity to take part in the discussion on the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000. The Indian Railways are playing a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of our country and it is a symbol of our national integration. Since the Railways are the single largest public utility service as also a major commercial enterprise, they have to carry out social obligations also.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Railway-Minister, you should pay heed to the words of honourable Members.

[English]

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : It is a sad phenomenon that the Budgetary support to the Indian Railways has been dwindling year after year. This unhealthy trend has to be arrested and reversed. Sir, you may recall that in the initial years of our planned development, there was substantial support from the General Budget to the Railways. Now that support is decreasing year after year. During the last several years, the Railways have had to depend upon the market borrowings for their subsistence. Due to the paucity of adequate funds, the railway system has not kept pace with the general progress of our country. Therefore, my humble submission to this Government is that maximum financial allocation must be given from the General Budget to the Railways. The Planning Commission also should come forward to give substantial assistance to the Railways for the smooth running of the railway system in our country.

Sir, if you look at the Railways, you will realise that 85 per cent of the existing railway system in the country has been inherited by us from the Britishers. During the fifty years of our Independence, we could add only fifteen per cent. Therefore, it is only a fact that the railway network has expanded at a very slow pace since Independence.

The total growth between 1985-86 and 1995-96 was only one per cent. I feel that this is an occasion for us to have a sincere introspection into the various lapses and reasons for the less and for the slow growth of the Indian Railways.

All said and done, the successive Governments did not pay much heed to the development of the Railways and that is the main reason why the railway system has not progressed according to our wishes.

The lopsided and misplaced priorities of the successive Railway Ministers also have contributed to the messy state of affairs in the railway system.

We all know that the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar ji, who happens to be the best friend of all of us, was under pressure while finalising his Budget. The allies and the coalition partners of this Government were pulling the hon. Minister from different directions and he was finding it very difficult to finalise the Budget. If you look at the Budget, you will see that disproportionate huge amount has been allocated to three or four States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Maharashtra.

The leaders of some political parties or outfits are clamouring for packages for their own respective States. In the process, they forget about national interest and a small State like Kerala is left out mercilessly.

However, I am happy that some of the long pending demands of my State have also found expressions in this year's Budget for which, from the core of my heart, I compliment the hon. Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar. Sir, although we have been fighting for our State in the last several years chequered history after independence, as Minister – although he does not belong to my party and is in fact opposed to Indian National Congress – he has given due consideration to a State which has been neglected for the last five decades together. I once again compliment the hon. Minister for the great service he has done to my State.

After introduction of railways in India in the year 1853, the British administration had given topmost priority to lay railway line from Chennai to Mangalore. This route is one of the oldest rail tracks in India. The first mail service was, in fact, run on this route. It is sad that no improvement whatsoever has been done on the sector from Shornur to Mangalore until recently. Over-saturation point had reached on this sector as far back as early '90s.

With the commissioning of the Konkan Railway, a large number of trains bound for Northern India from Kerala, including the prestigious Rajdhani Express, are diverted. Naturally, there is a lot of congestion on this route. I had written to the hon. Minister several times. I have met him personally also in regard to this matter, but unfortunately nothing has been done by the hon. Minister or the Railway administration to decongest this Shornur to Mangalore sector. I bring to the attention of the hon. Minister that a lot of trains are going to the Northern India via Konkan area and therefore, this sector from Shornur to Mangalore has been very congested. I would very humbly request him that something must be done to see that trains are running punctually on this sector.

As you are aware, the State of Kerala also contributed to Konkan Railway project along with Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra. Unless the doubling of track from Mangalore to Shornur is completed on a war-footing, the benefit of Konkan Railway will not reach Kerala. The work on the doubling of this line had commenced even years back, but only 29 kilometres have been completed so far. If the work is moving at this rate, I am afraid that it will take another 50 years to complete this project. Therefore, immediate action should be taken to see that the doubling work is completed on this sector.

I am very happy that the hon. Minister has been kind enough to allot Rs. 100 crore for the doubling work on Mangalore-Calicut sector. I once again sincerely congratulate him for that. But if the benefit of the doubling of it is to reach Kerala, the work has to be expedited and it must be completed in a stipulated time-frame. Moreover, no

amount has been earmarked for the doubling of line from Kuttippuram to Shornur. There should be clear provision for this doubling work also, otherwise it is going to create a bottleneck for the smooth running of trains on this sector. I would request that immediate steps should be taken so that more funds are allocated for the doubling work on Kuttippuram to Shornur sector.

Almost a century ago, the South Indian Railway Company had initiated a survey for Tellicherry-Mysore line. With the outbreak of the First World War, the Britishers abandoned the proposal midway. Later, four surveys were conducted by the same British administration. All these surveys had proved beyond doubt that this railway track is economically viable and this is going to be strategically very important from all points. Unfortunately, nothing has been done by the successive Governments to see that the railway line is laid. The project was strongly recommended by the Madras Presidency as also the erstwhile Mysore State.

The former Railway Ministers, late lamented Lal Bahadur Shastri and Babu Jagjeevan Ram had come over to Tellicherry and attended massive public rallies. At these rallies, they had promised the people of Kerala that if there was any new proposal for laying a new railway line in South India, this railway line would receive their utmost attention. But unfortunately, that has not been done.

Sir, another former Railway Minister, Shri C.M. Poonacha, hailing from Coorg area of Southern India, had completely understood the importance of this railway line. But the successive Governments including my Government did not pay heed to this very important railway line. So, my humble submission to Shri Nitish Kumar, who comes from one of the most backward States of our country, is to pay his kind attention to this long pending demand.

Sir, I myself have been raising this issue, time and again, during the last 15 years, on the floor of this House. But no action has been taken by the Government. To our utter dismay, nothing has been done by the Government.

Thousands of trucks and lorries as well as quite a good number of buses are plying on the road from Tellicherry to the Northern part of India and also to the neighbouring States like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu. A lot of tourists, mostly foreigners, visit these areas, since there is a great potential for tourism in these areas of Karnataka and Kerala.

The cash crops of Coorg, Wyanad, Cannanore and Mysore are very famous and they fetch enormous foreign exchange every year. Since Kerala is a consumer State, all the essential goods come to Kerala from different places. This particular route from Tellicherry to Mysore is going to be one of the important routes, and the freight

on this route will be very brisk. My humble submission, once again, is that this must be given utmost priority.

At the moment, passengers travelling from Tellicherry to Mysore will have to cover an additional 600 kilometres to reach Mysore. So, if the line is laid, hundreds of kilometres could be reduced. If and when a new railway line is thought of for Southern India, this railway line from Tellicherry to Mysore must be given top priority.

Sir, it is laudable that a very long pending demand, that is, construction of nine railway overbridges in the Malabar area, has been favourably considered by the hon. Minister. You will be surprised to know that in a short distance of 80 kilometres from Cannanore to Calicut, there are eight level crossings. Time and again, Members of Parliament from Kerala and myself, have been demanding the construction of these overbridges, but nothing was done. Now, the hon. Minister, who knows the problems of the people from the backward areas, has given priority for this one. A token allocation of Rs. 10 lakh was made . . . (Interruptions)

PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Babagara) : The amount is only Rs. 1,00,000 per overbridge.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : My request is that adequate amount must be given for the construction of these overbridges so that it could be completed in the stipulated period.

Kerala is the only State which does not have a railway undertaking or an installation, whereas Tamil Nadu has five, Andhra Pradesh has two and Karnataka has two. The late lamented Prime Minister, Shrimati India Gandhi, promised to the people of Kerala that she was going to set up one Coach Factory over there. Nothing has been done and that proposal is pending for years together. We, the people of Kerala, where unemployment is a major problem request the hon. Railway Minister and this Government that a railway installation or a public undertaking must be started in the State of Kerala.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude.

SHRI MULLAPALLY RAMACHANDRAN : I may be given some more time because I am the second speaker from my Party.

After the commissioning of the Konkan Railway line, Mangalore-Shornur line has assumed an enormous importance. Both passenger and freight movements are very brisk on this sector. It is a pity that the railway administration has not bothered to electrify a single kilometre along this Malabar route. Therefore, necessary steps may be taken to ensure electrification of the railway line in the Malabar region without further delay.

[Shri Mullapally Ramachandran]

Sir, Indian Railways is making commendable contribution in the field of sports and games. But for promoting and encouraging sports talents, it is necessary to set up a sports complex in Kerala, which has produced a galaxy of outstanding sports talents over the years. I suggest that a sports complex must be set up at Cannanore in Kerala.

Coming to the question of new trains, Kerala has received only one train, that is, the train from Pune to Cochin. Many of our long pending demands have been turned down by the hon. Minister. You must understand that thousands of keralites are living in different cities in the Northern part of India. They are all demanding for new trains, but nothing has been considered. Anyway, I am happy that at least one train has been given.

Sir, Chennai-Mangalore is one of the very busy routes and it is impossible to get reservation on the route from Chennai. For days together, if you go to the booking counter, you will not be able to get the reservation. Therefore, my humble request is that a fast train from Chennai to Mangalore must be started immediately.

Sir, there is an urgent need for starting another fast train from Cochin to Cannanore in the early hours, after the departure of Cannanore Express. In the early morning, there is no train from Cochin to Cannanore for hours together. I hope this proposal will receive the hon. Minister's utmost attention.

All railway stations located along the Malabar coast, that is, from Mangalore to Shoranur, were constructed during the time of the co-called East India Company. All these stations are in a very bad condition. I request the hon. Minister that these stations should be renovated, reconstructed, and given a face lift in a phased manner. For this, Cannanore, Calicut, Tellicherry and Balagara must be given top priority.

Before I conclude, I draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister to a long-pending demand of the people of Kerala for creation of a separate zone. I am not speaking for the people of Kerala on a parochial ground. Five or seven new zones have been created recently on extraneous considerations. Our demand is a genuine one keeping in view the fast development in the area after the opening up of the Konkan Railway and the tremendous potential in passenger and freight transport in the years to come.

I hope my suggestions will receive kind attention of the hon. Minister. Once again I compliment the hon. Minister for the great service done to the State of Kerala which has been neglected for years together. I once again thank you for having given us this opportunity to speak.

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to thank the hon. Railway Minister for presenting such a magnificent budget indeed. Only last year, when Shri Nitish ji assumed the office in Railway-Ministry we hoped him to alter the system of working by transforming the railway-administration into a competent and active one. I am pleased to note that he has given a new direction to the railway-administration in a just one year period. As a result, the Railways have a more competent and creditable administration today.

We are well aware of the importance of Railway's contributions in the Indian Economy. This is a creditable transport system, liked by all. People are getting more and more attracted towards this due to its modernisation. I do not want to scribe figures as to how many passenger or goods trains are there or how many passengers travel everyday. Due to limits of time, I want to come to the point directly.

I want to thank the hon. Minister for Railways to provide the train-facility on metre-gauge line temporarily, until a gauge-conversion takes place on Neemuch-Ratlam route. The hon. Minister has accomplished a praiseworthy deed to make provision of train facility only within one and half months. Hundreds of thousands of people are benefitted by this. He has kept his promise. Still, Madhya Pradesh lacks railways-route at many places. You have really invited commendations by giving railway-zone office status to Bilaspur. If the new railway-station at Bhopal is properly given extension, it would be conveniently possible to start new trains from Bhopal to other stations, ensuring access to many railway-related facilities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have said already and I have made a written-request to the hon. Railway-Minister, the Minister of State for Railways and the Railway-Board that if an amount of 75 crore rupees is provided for the gauge-conversion on Neemuch-Ratlam route, the aforesaid work can be accomplished. I had raised a very important point earlier in this regard that at present, we have Ratlam-Kota line on; if Neemuch-Ratlam track is laid, then we would have a parallel line, that is, Ratlam-Kota line via Neemuch. There is a great frequency of accidents on the Ratlam-Kota section. The track gets obstructed in the rainy-season and the rail-traffic is jammed for hours. This railway-section which is likely to have the gauge conversion, and the work is on very fast, and the hon. Railway-Minister has given it top-priority on my request for which I am thanks to him. It is for this work, I request to allocate more funds so that this could be completed at the earliest. It will pave way to lay another line. This line, very propitiously, has many cement-factories, sugar-mills and other processing-units.

The C.R.P.F. headquarters are also located on this section. Because of all these facilities, employment-opportunities shall be there along with industrial-development. I want to express my anticipatory thanks to you for this.

Increase in rail freight-charges is proposed. This increase is negligible. As there is competitively in road-transportation sector, creditability lies here in transportation of goods through railways. This calls you to accept this 4% freight-charges. This year Railway-Budget witnesses a rational increase in rail-fares. People travelling in ordinary classes have been exempted from this increase. It is so rational as that it seems as if none of the preceding Ministers of Railways could have succeeded to present such a good rail-budget. This is a commendable effort indeed.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, efforts have been made in the status-paper to work upon Railways for providing it a new direction. This is the ground-reality of Railways. Several projects are in still going on since 1982, 1988 and 1998. Misfit and impractical ones among them, have to be abandoned. Those which are good from, the commercial and social points of view, should be undertaken. It is right, that you want to go along a uni-gauge system in the country but so long as the arduous task of gauge-conversion is not completed, travelling from one part of the country to another is almost impossible. It will face some obstructions. It's alright we have artisans, factories where we prepare engines and rail-bogies, but it is also true that whereas the metre-gauge bogies are no longer made those trains are still on the track. Those metre-gauge trains possess bogies in such a worsened state that possibly none would prefer to travel in them. The seats therein are torn-out and are irreparable. So, so long as there are metre-gauge trains on the track, provision should be made to manufacture new bogies and let the arrangements be upgraded. To conclude with I would like to mention a few problems from my own constituency. I know the time is limited and I do not intend to consume it any longer.

I was talking of trains. Most of the trains on the track, are Express and Mail-trains now. Some where 18-19 bogies are attached to them, and some others run along with 20 or 22 bogies too. A 26 bogies are to be adjourned as per the new declaration made recently, but we have no platforms of the similar length. Due to it passengers fall. This length needs to be increased. The number of General-class bogies also has to be increased. It favours only some people if the number of Sleeper-class bogies is increased and only a few are benefitted with the increase of 1st class, 11nd Class A.C. bogies, I request for the increase in General-class bogies so that the common people could be taken care of. Similarly, on while increasing the length of platforms, toilet and drinking water

facilities should also be extended. Otherwise, we see that there is always look of drinking water and other facilities. This point also need to be considered.

At present, there is no fast direct-train between Ratlam and Bhopal. Earlier, there was a train No. 111-112. But it was put to a halt. That resulted us to remain detached from Bhopal, and the districts like Neemuch, Ratlam, Mandsaur, Jhabua were disconnected from Bhopal. Therefore, I request to restart that train.

There was also an other declaration. I am reminding the Railways of their proposed plan of starting a D.M.U. between Mhow and Indore. I request for its implementation. Similarly, a D.M.U. between Ratlam and ? . . . (Not clear)* there should also be introduced. I myself have reiterated my demands for this sake.

The train between Neemuch and Kota should be attached with two bogies for Dehradun and its time should be rationalised so that they are attached in the Kota station itself creating a link-line for the train starting from Neemuch with Delhi and Dehradun as a sequel of it. I also request to provide the similar connections in Avantika Express at Indore-Bhopal, Indore-Bhopal Intercity at Ujjain and Naramada Express at Indore-Nagda and also provide stoppage of August-Kranti Express at Ratlam. Full track loading facility should be provided at Ratlam for loading of goods.

17.37 hrs.

[SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU *in the Chair*]

I have already made a request to the Hon. Minister in connection with over-bridges. Over-bridges should be constructed at Neemuch, Mandsaur, Jawra, Jhabua to avoid hindrances in traffic. Computerised reservation system terminals should be installed at Neemuch and Mandsaur.

I will write to the Hon. Minister about my other demands later with these words, I want to State that the big task of gauge-conversion, will certainly benefit the common people. The funds allocated for this purpose, should be enhanced upto 75 crores rupees. I, once again, thank the Hon'ble Minister.

The Hon. Minister of Railways has also spoken of new railway lines and gauge-conversion and told that the work of gauge conversion would continue despite paucity of resources. Requests to the Planning Commission have also been made. There is a wide area of profitabilities emanating from gauge-conversion or uni-gauge. Priorities have been fixed so that there would be no drawbacks in loading-unloading of goods while on line and they can

[Dr. Laxminarayan Pandey]

be transported conveniently from one place to another. Work under priorities will be done nimbly. The Hon'ble Minister has discussed many innovative measures, practices and new technical systems, along with the paraphernalia with a view to provide safety in railways, and he has also apprised of their implementation. For this, I thank him and pray that may the accidents be averted in future and the promises of safety be kept. The Walkie-Talkie system in goods-trains and other main trains should be streamlined.

The budget also voices interests of personnels. They should be thought of additionally. The education and medical facilities and arrangement for habitation should be made more proper. The refreshment-trolley or stalls facility also need to be checked for conveniences of passengers.

I am once again making a submission that in my constituency, the work of gauge-conversion between Kota and Neemuch has been completed but thereafter the same work between Neemuch and Ratlam is slow. However, It has been given top-priority. Therefore, I request to allocate more funds for this purpose so that the work may be completed in time. It will benefits not only the cement-factories, sugar-mills, oil-mills but also the C.R.P.F. at Neemuch. This will create convenient atmosphere for factories and steel-industry and opportunities to the common people, leading way wards to enhance trade and commerce. This will make ensure availability of employment-opportunities. Also there will be a parallel-rail line. At present, being the Ratlam-Kota line the only line, it causes traffic-jam for hours whenever obstructed due to mishaps- it may be helped doubly by way of Neemuch-Ratlam gauge-conversion waylong upto Kota. Lastly, I request again for the allocation of an amount of Rs. 75 crores more. . . .(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will call everybody. Please wait.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I wanted to make a comprehensive speech, but finally I decided not to annoy my respected friend, Shri Nitish Kumar. I have no papers and no statistics and I am going to give a very brief speech.

First of all, I wish well of Shri Nitish Kumar and I wish railways well because railways bring prestige to this country. We have one of the richest systems of railways in the world and railways promote national integration. I salute this Department with all its shortcomings and ailments, because it is the one single instrument that brings South and North, and East and West, together.

With this sentiment, I now through you want to know today whether railway will go to Kashmir and whether Kashmir will be on the rail map.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please don't make noise.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please do not make any cross talk. Please address the Chair.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : You just try to understand what I am saying. .

We have a very long, passionate plea with the earlier Governments. Shrimati Indira Gandhi was here when I requested that the rail should go to Udhampur. At that time, the late Girdhari Lal Dogra and myself met the Prime Minister and explained why the rail should go to Udhampur. She gave us Rs. 5 crore. For fifty long years, I have heard that the rail will go to Udhampur but it did not. First, there was a plan of Rs. 5 crore, then it was increased to Rs. 10 crore and later we were told that Rs. 17 crore will be required. With price escalation, the rail could not go to Udhampur even with Rs. 70 crore.

When I am urging the hon. Minister of Railways to take the rail to Kashmir, I am worried that the rail is not going to Udhampur. Some strenuous effort will have to be made. Government after Government have made a strong plea that Kashmir should not remain in isolation and that that is a national disadvantage. Finally, when the Devegowda Government was formed, we gave a plan within a matter of Rs. 2500 crore to the Government and that plan was accepted. Shri Devegowda went with us and his colleague the Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan to Kashmir. Dr. Farooq Abdullah was also there. The foundation stone was laid for the line from Udhampur to Qazikund. Then came the Gujral Government. Shri I.K. Gujral, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan and myself went to Baramulla and laid the foundation there and Shri Gujral had at that time said that he wished that this was not just a foundation stone and that the rail would come to Baramulla. The rail has not come to Baramulla. It cannot come unless the hon. Minister of Railways stands up and responds to the statistics that I give now.

Shri C.K. Jaffar Sharief was the first Minister of Railways who responded and gave Rs. 50 crore for the rail to Udhampur and beyond. Before that, the amount was fixed at Rs. 5 crore, Rs. 10 crore and so on. We are living in an era of price escalation. Shri Devegowda laid the foundation for the rail to Udhampur and Shri Gujral laid the foundation for the rail to Baramulla but nothing has happened. This is very disheartening.

I do not say that Shri Nitish Kumar's intentions are bad but something is radically wrong in the figures that his officers quote to him. I take this whole august House into confidence one aspect of figures. This year, initially, Rs. 200 crore was the figure quoted and over a period of three or four months, Rs. 125 crore was slashed off. Then, only Rs. 75 crore remains. I want Shri Nitish Kumar to give a rebuttal to me tomorrow or this night, when he replies, and give the correct figures. If they have spent Rs. 40 crore for 1998-99 up to this time, it is all right but out of Rs. 40 crore what is the amount spent on acquisition of land for the Railways and what is the amount spent on development? If not a penny has gone to development and Rs. 40 crore was spent on acquisition of land, that acquisition is something on which the Chief Minister Dr. Abdullah had given a commitment. The Kashmiris have given their land.

I can give an assurance to the hon. Minister of Railways and to this august House that Kashmiris want to welcome train in Kashmir. Why does he not acquire land? Why does he not give the money for that? If they have spent Rs. 25 crore till now, what amount has been spent on development and what has been spent on acquisition? Acquisition of land is not a problem. Did I not say that out Rs. 200 crore, Rs. 125 crore was cut away and Rs. 75 crore remains? Out of that Rs. 75 crore, how much was spent? If they had spent Rs. 200 crore, even then I would say that it was not sufficient because there has been price escalation. Initially, the project was for Rs. 2,500 crore. If by this time the Railways have spent this amount, the Minister of Railways would say that because of price escalation he now wants Rs. 3,500 crore.

If you spend Rs. 200 crore annually, you will not bring rail in my life time or in the life time of Shri Farooq Abdulla. So, railway construction cannot take place in Kashmir unless it becomes a special project like the one you did in the case of Konkan Railway. I had made a proposal to have it as Kashmir Express Corporation, to give us Rs. 3000 crore or Rs. 4000 crore and to fix a time schedule; and then trains can go there. Otherwise, more eye-wash is not acceptable; I can hold a Press Conference in Srinagar or in New Delhi and say that the Government is not interested in construction of railway in Kashmir. If you want Kashmir to be on the railway map, then, you may make a commitment to this House; you cannot hold a meeting with the Chief Secretary in Jammu and Kashmir State who does not understand as much the rail construction as myself. I have represented the people of the State five times and it pinches me.

So, Shri Nitish Kumar holding a meeting with the Chief Secretary is one thing; the Chairman of the Railway Board will go and say that he shall construct a railway station

for Rs. 6 crore in Srinagar. That is not acceptable to us. If you construct a railway line from Baramulla to Srinagar within the Valley, it is not acceptable to us. We want the rail to go from Jammu to Udhampur via Katra, to Qazigund, then to Srinagar and then to Baramulla.

You cannot create a situation where you will have a *patri* in Kashmir Valley because we have a fair-weather road. That road gets closed during winter; that road gets closed when there are rains; even air flights are not there. We have no alternative communication with Kashmir. So, once you give us the train, you will be promoting emotional integration. This is what some of the officers in the Railway Department do not understand. I do not want a bureaucratic solution to this problem.

Shri Nitish Kumar should rise as a politician - I know, he is a capable person - and he should answer. He cannot say that he shall construct a railway station in Srinagar or in Baramulla or spend Rs. 10 crore for a hospital there. We do not want this. We want a commitment from the Railway Minister that Kashmir will be on the railway map. If they quote figures, Sir, then I will also get figures to quote them. I can give rebuttal far better than anybody. I want a simple fact - how much money are you going to spend, what is the project and what is the life of that project. You may have to fix a time schedule within which you would take trains there. The whole lot of Kashmir will give you credit for this. Whether the credit belongs to this Government or not, I want to give it, the people of Kashmir want to give it.

When hon. Prime Minister took the bus to Lahore, I rose from my seat here and said that this Prime Minister did put a sincere effort to promote harmony and understanding between India and Pakistan. But a far better proposition would be for the Government to promote understanding, harmony and friendship with the people of Kashmir, whom they have left high and dry.

I am not going to speak about other projects this time. But the hon. Railway Minister should rise on his feet, he has to quote figures that will be accepted by me on behalf of the people of Kashmir.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would request hon'ble Member Prof. Saifuddin Soz, through you, to be present in the House at the time of my answer.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would request Hon'ble Railway Minister to let me know the time of his answering, so that I may be present in the House.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am not in a position of telling the time of answering, but Hon'ble

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

Member is requested to be present in the House whenever I answer.

PROF SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to assure Hon'ble Railway Minister that I shall be present in the House at the time of his answer.

[English]

*SHRI K. KRISHNAMOORTHY (Mayiladuthurai) : Hon. Chairman, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Since the time is short, I would try to bring only two or three points to the notice of the hon. Minister, I understand that in the last year's Budget, Rs. 1200 crore was allotted, whereas in this year's Budget it has been reduced to Rs. 600 and odd crore. As to why this reduction has taken place has to be explained to the public and to the country. In terms of railways, the State of Tamil Nadu lags behind in many aspects compared to other parts of the country. The Cauvery river delta, that is Thanjavur-Tiruvarur-Nagapattinam, which is famous historically and religiously and a tourist attraction, is deprived of a broadgauge line. It is also affected by the scarcity of wagons. The granary of South India is having lakhs and lakhs of paddy bags for movement from purchase centres to the godowns. Wagons should be allocated to the centres to move the paddy which is procured by the Government of Tamil Nadu. The so-called mainland remain cut off from other parts of the country because there is no broadgauge line even though we are demanding it for decades.

The ONGC is working in full swing there and Madras Refineries Ltd. is also functioning there. It needs broadgauge line. There is no national highway nor is there any ports. We have to rely upon only railways. The railway is making us wait to for broadgauge conversion. For a project which needs Rs. 223 crore, only Rs. 10 crore has been allocated in this Budget. It is a very very paltry amount. Hence, the people of Cauvery delta request the Railway Minister to see to it and allocates more funds.

I have several other requests of the public with me in the form of memoranda. If may be taken as a part of my speech which I am laying on the Table of the House. These requests may please be fulfilled.

**On behalf of TMC party and its Founder-President, Shri G.K. Moopanar and the people of Tamilnadu. I would like to put forward our party's stand about the Railway Budget and oppose the same on the following grounds :

The Indian Railways is one of the largest industries in the world. The employment opportunity it offered is about

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Bengali.

**Laid on the Table.

1.6 million employees directly and many lakhs of people indirectly but the service rendered by the Railways for 980 million people is not upto the mark. In a welfare State, the Government should not expect or run any of its Department on the profit motive like an individual entrepreneur but Indian Railways is running the trains only for profit and not for service motive. Day by day the quality of service is decreasing but the cost of travelling is going upwards. It is usual in every budget to exceed the previous budgets in every aspect but the present one indicates an reversal instead of going forward especially in gauge conversion. I understand, for gauge conversion, last year's budgetary allocation was about Rs. 1200 crore whereas this year it is only about 600 and odd crore. Why this reduction? Whether the country is going forwarding or going backward?

Sir, in many aspects of Railways, Tamilnadu is a neglected area as compared to other parts of the country. The Cauvery River Delta Area (Thanjavur, Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam Districts) which is historically and religiously famous area with numerous tourist spots and temples which attract more and more tourists every year. It is the granary of the entire South India and called as rice bowl of Tamilnadu. In this area, lakhs and lakhs of paddy bags are kept in the direct purchase Centres of Tamilnadu Civil Supplies Corporation waiting for wagons to move to its destinations. Wagons are not available and causing great hardship and huge loss to the Government of Tamilnadu.

The so-called main line running from Chennai - Villupuram - Mayiladuthurai - Kumbakonam - Thanjavur is main line only by name but in a fact, a neglected one. The gauge conversion proposals from Villupuram - Thanjavur, Thanjavur - Nagore and Villupuram - Pondicherry are only in the books and deprived, of sufficient funds to progress the work, every year. Further, the metre gauge from Chennai to Rameswaram via Mayiladuthure Thiruvarur - Thiruthuraiipoondi - Karaikudi and Rameswaram and also the metre gauge line from Chennai - Mayiladuthurai Thiruvarur - Nagore are waiting for the favour of the Ministry for conversion into Broad gauge. The main line is only kept as an island amongst broad gauge and nobody cares about the region where ONGC is working at its full swing and Madras Refineries is functioning and new refineries are expected to function in the near future. The Nagapattinam and Cuddalore ports are also not yet developed. There is no National Highway to link Thanjavur, Thiruvarur and Nagapattinam districts to the main land whereas there is no broad gauge to link the land of Chola with its State Headquarters, Chennai and National Headquarter, Delhi with broad gauge trains and we are waiting for the light of the day. For a project of Rs. 223 crore proposed gauge conversion between Villupuram - Thanjavur, only a paltry sum of Rs. 10 crore

allotment made in the budget will not serve any purpose which is only about 4% of the present day estimate which may escalate in future. Hence, it should be executed without any further delay by allocating a substantial amount in this year itself.

There are so many unmanned level crossings in my Constituency which needs immediate conversion as manned level crossings. It was told that level crossing called Andakudi Level Crossing near Sundaraperumal Koil is going to be closed permanently. If it is closed thousands of people will suffer and they will be cut off from the main road. Even the agricultural operations and carrying of dead bodies will be stopped permanently causing great inconvenience to the public. Likewise, the long pending request of Kumbakonam people to open the railway gate near the railway station which was closed in the past to enable about 20,000 pedestrians in which around 2,000 are students crossing in that place. Likewise, a road over-bridge is to be constructed near Arasur gate between Sirkazhi and Kollidam station.

Moreover, in the past one year I have written many letters to the Hon'ble Minister for which I used to get only a letter of acknowledgement but not a proper reply. It is the position for a Member of Parliament. Then, what will be common man's fate?

Further, there are some genuine demands for which I would like request the Hon'ble Minister to consider the following immediately :

- (i) The proposed 4% hike in freight rate should be withdrawn immediately;
- (ii) Provision of level crossing between Kangeyampettai and Tirubuvanam immediately as there is heavy traffic in the area and the proposal is pending since long time;
- (iii) Introduction of a general compartment in Train No. 6176 from Karaikudi - Chennai and at Rameshwaram Passenger Train Nos. 107/108;
- (iv) Restoration of new gate leading to Madhanam and Malliyam near Mayiladuthurai;
- (v) Stoppage of Mahal Express Train No. 6710 at Sirkazhi and provision of basic amenities at Sirkazhi station;
- (va) The Karulan Express Train No. 6713, 6714 and Nagore Andavar Express Train No. 6155 and 6156 both express trains should be continued as it is to day and the proposed plan of merging this train should be dropped. The unimaginative attitude of the Southern Railway triggered public agitation. I spoke to the G.M. on 10th March and

three MPs wrote a letter to the Minister already with out any result.

- (vi) Not to go ahead on the proposed withdrawal of Sethu Express running between Chennai and Rameshwaram; via Mayiladuthurai Thiruvapur - Tiruthuraiipoondi - Karaikudi and merge two different trains into one.
- (vii) Need for a day train between Chennai and Tiruchy via main line after 0800 hrs. The existing train which was running years together was withdrawn suddenly without considering the difficulty of the public. It should be started immediately;
- (viii) Need for survey of a new railway line between Nagapattinam and Vellankanni which is roughly about 10 kms. and is also a long pending demand.

With these words I conclude my speech.

SHRI SAI PRATHAP ANNAYAGARI (Rajanpet) : Sir, I seek your permission to lay my speech on the Table of this House. I will read out only the contents of my speech for the kind consideration of the hon. Minister.

Sir, I hail from a backward area, Rayalaseema, in Andhra Pradesh. I would request the hon. Minister to take up the doubling of 164 kilometre line between Guntakal and Ranigunta junction. I have raised this point many times in person as well as through the Standing Committee on Railways. The Howrah Express halts at Tirupathi for more than eighteen hours can be extended up to Cuddapah so that the people of that region can avail this facility and can travel towards coastal Andhra Pradesh. Computer facility should be introduced in my parliamentary constituency headquarters.

I would request the hon. Minister to at least consider these three points which I submitted.

***Note on improvement of Train and Track Facilities in Guntakal Division of South Central Railway.**

With a view to bring the problems of the Guntakal-Ranigunta and Pakala Dharmavaram sectors of the South Central Railway, I have brought out this note to facilitate the Railway Administration to look into the problems and suggested solutions of this sectors which have been neglected over decades. As the number of the Standing Committee on Railways, I had access to the information and statistics with which I have completed this note. Some of the suggestions e.g., Extension of Howrah Express upto Cuddapah will not cost anything for the exchequer. I request you to kindly look into the problems and

* Not recorded.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Sai Prathap Annayagari]

suggestions and make necessary recommendations to the Railway Board and other decision making authorities.

1. Track Facilities :

1.1 Doubling

Gooty-Renigunta :

Chennai-Mumbai line is the trunk line running through, the heart of Rayalaseema laid two centuries ago by the then British rulers. This trunk line has been the subject of negligence over decades both in terms of improvement of trains and truck facilities. This line is the major source of income to the South Central Railway by means of wagons of Iron Ore from Hospet, Barytes from Mangampet. Cement from Yerraguntla and Tirupati, Mines, Mineral and other geological wealth and Horticultural Produce from various parts of Rayalaseema Region.

It is evident from the Survey Statistics presented at page 6 item 2 of the Surveys of the Study Group V of the Standing Committee on Railways Report, this project is having the highest rate of return (ROR) 14.64% of the 29 projects selected for Survey and the status report states that it has been sent to the Railway Board only on 28.6.98.

It is pertinent to question Why such a project was not taken up for survey for such unduly long time. This goes to show how this area has been neglected by the South Central Railway.

Railways should now realise the importance of this line linking two metropolis and should take up the work on a war footing and complete them.

New Lines :

Nellore-Cuddapah-Madanapalle-Bangalore New Line.

Pieces for the Survey as per the Study

Group V Report.

| Route | Length K.M. | Cost in Crores | R.D.R. % | Status | Remarks |
|-------------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1. Nellore-Cuddapah | 180 | 355.37 | -0.47 | Shelved | Item 10 |
| 2. Cuddapah-Bangalore | 220 | 578.69 | -0.49 | Sent to Board | Item 15 |
| Total | 400 | | | | |
| 3. Cuddapah-Madanapalle | 140 | 420.06 | | Survey in Progress | |

We have our own doubts about the Survey.

1. The survey has been conducted in pieces and not in entirety.
2. Krishnapatnam Port (20 K.M. off + Nellore) is being developed as a Major Port to reduce the congestion on the Madras Port and the entire area through which the line passes through is the back land to the Krishnapatnam Port and the State Highways is Planning a Road between Krishnapatnam and Tumkur Industrial area near Bangalore.
3. The Survey did not take into account the income from transport of granite, slabs, soapstone, dolomite and other mine and mineral products and horticultural produce of Rayalaseema and agricultural produce of Nellore and the passenger traffic from Nellore to Bangalore. The line is partly surveyed between Nellore and Cuddapah and the same and this has yielded a low rate of return not justifying the viability norms.
4. This line should be resurveyed taking into account the following factors
 - a. Traffic from Nellore to Bangalore
 - b. Traffic from Tirupati to Bangalore
 - c. Parcel Traffic of Cement from Yerraguntla, Mine, Mineral products, Road Metal from L.R. Palle, Horticultural and Agricultural products from Nellore, Tirupati and Cuddapah to Bangalore and Shipping Loads to and from Krishnapatnam Port in near future to Back land.
 - d. Linking Chennai-Nellore-Mumbai via Cuddapah.
5. The Project per K.M. cost of the Line between Cuddapah-Nellore is Rs. 1.97 Cr. between Cuddapah-Bangalore is Rs. 2.63 and between Cuddapah-Madanapalle it is Rs. 3 Cr. as against Rs. 1.54 Cr. between Kakinada-Pithapuram. This is because of the hilly terrain in the Nellore-Cuddapah-Bangalore route.

The addl. cost is one time investment and public utility should not be blurred in the viability calculations of the economics and after all Railways are also Public Utility Concerns. A significantly better R.O.R. works out if this addl. cost is kept apart.

Nandyal-Yerraguntla :

As against the Project Cost of Rs. 174.33 Cr. 98-99 Budget allocated Rs. 2 Crores which will not be even sufficient to meet the establishment expenses and with this pace, the project takes 87 years for completion by which time the project cost will go up by 5 to 10 times.

Efforts should be made to sincerely complete the project with adequate allocations in the Budget.

Gauge Conversion :**Dharmavaram-Pakala Line :**

With the Conversion of gauge between Secunderabad-Guntakal, the prospects of the Pakala-Dharmavaram have faded away and this line is rendered useless. This 227 K.M. Route sanctioned in 1997-98 is awaiting the clearance of CCEA. This line will bring back the glory of the towns Madanapalle, Vayalpad, Kadiri and will bring them on the main line to connect the same to Mumbai, Hyderabad and West Coast.

Electrification :

Renugunta-Guntakal incl. Yornagal-Ranjithpura Branch Line.

Electrification sanctioned in the year 1992-93 RKM447/IKM775 (Rs. 245 Crores) has been frozen by the Railway Board vide page 46 of the Study Group Report.

No body knows why this project electrification has been frozen.

Train Facilities*New Trains Required**Visakhapatnam-Bangalore Via. Gooty and Renigunta :*

We have been demanding all these days for a new train between Visakhapatnam and Bangalore Via Gooty and Renigunta and the Railways have introduced a weekly train between the said destinations via. Guntur and Guntakal.

We now demand the following train facilities to compensate the loss of the said train :

1. **Extension of the Tirupati-Howrah (No.) upto Cuddapah**
 - a. This train has an idle time of 18 hours at Tirupati.
 - b. This train runs with 10 bogies and another 8 may be added from Cuddapah to be attached/detached at Renigunta.
 - c. The distance between Cuddapah-Vijayawada by road is 430 K.M. and by rail via Renugunta is 505 K.M. and there will be assured patronage.
 - d. Provides link between Cuddapah and 11 other Districts of A.P. and two States Capitals Bhubaneswar and Calcutta.
2. **Attachment of Mysore Bogies to Intercity Passenger**
 - a. Attachment of 2 Sleeper Bogies to intercity Passenger for onward transmission by Tirupati-Mysore Pass. Attachment/detachment at Renigunta.

- b. Provision of addl. Reservations to stations enroute.

These will augment the requirement of train link from Cuddapah to Bangalore and Visakhapattanam.

Diversion of Cochin Hyderabad Express via. Guntakal, Renigunta

The distance between Hyderabad-Cochin will be less via Guntakal and Renigunta than the present route. It will be further lessened with the completion of new line between Gooty and Pendekallu. It is understood that the Vijayawada Division has expressed its inability to take this train after it has been converted into a daily due to track congestion via Nadikudi and Guntur. This train if diverted via Guntakal, Renigunta will serve the needs of the public traveling towards south as well as to Hyderabad. This will facilitate the movement of lime stocks to Cochin which has maximum income yielding capacity on this line.

Introduction of Tirupati Shiridi Express :

A new train between Tirupati Shiridi should be introduced to facilitate the passengers bound to the famous Balaji Temple at Tirupati and Sainath Temple at Shiridi. In the alternative the present Tirupati-Bombay Balaji Express may be routed through Dond and Kopergav to reach Bombay. At present this train is reaching Bombay at the deed of the night and if diverted through Kopergav it will facilitate the passengers to reach Bombay in the morning.

Re introduction of Passengers :

Re introduction of Passengers Trains between Guntakal Tirupati and conversion of Intercity Passenger into Fast Passengers.

The extension of Tirupati-Tadpatri Passenger upto Guntakal had an adverse effect on the passenger trains. Four passenger trains were removed and this is causing lot of inconvenience to the travelling public in this area. These four trains should be reintroduced and the present Tirupati-Guntakal intercity passenger should be converted into a Fast Passenger with stops in Mandal Headquarters enroute.

Reschedulement of Rayalaseema Express timings :

At present the two trains Venkatadri and Rayalaseema are following one another with minimum time gap. To avoid this, Rayalaseema Express should be rescheduled to run in the old timings.

Introduction of I class or I A.C. Bogie to Venkatadri Express.

At present there is no I class or I A.C. to Venkatadri Express. A bogie may be attached with adequate quota at Rajampet and Cuddapah stations.

[Shri Sai Prathap Annayagari]

Stoppage of Chennai at Kodur and Balaji Express at Obulavari Palle and Nandalur :

In view of lesser number of trains on this line additional stopping for Chennai Express be provided at Kodur, which has potential traffic and Stopping at Obulavari Palle and Nandalur for Balaji Express.

Parcel Traffic :

There is good potential for parcel traffic at Kondapuram, Nandalur, Rajampet, Obulavaripalle, Kodur mainly and at other stations moderately. Lime parcels are being diverted to Road. Every train in this line should be provided with a parcel van with adequate room especially at the main stations, Rajampet, Nandalur, Kodur and Kondapuram.

Cochin-Hyderabad express be diverted via Guntakal and Renigunta and Sufficient parcel capacity be provided on this train towards Cochin. At present Jayanti Janata Express is not able to take up this load.

3. Civil Works :

Over bridges and Under bridges

Foot over bridge at Kodur : Level crossing at Kodur is causing lot of inconvenience to the pedestrians especially girl students bound to the degree college situated on the other side of the track in Kodur. Immediate steps should be taken to construct foot over bridge in Kodur Station.

Road Under Bridge at Cuddapah :

Vehicular and Pedestrian traffic comes to a stand still near the LC Gate at Yerramukka Palle. The proposed Road Under bridge be taken up at the earliest to facilitate easy movement of traffic at this point avoiding long duration of waiting nearly frequently and mostly closed LC Gate.

Modern roofing at Rajampet and Nandalur Stations :

Modern high raise shelters be provided in the place of the present veranda type of shelters in Rajampet and Nandalur stations.

4. Carriage and wagon Repair Work Shop at Nandalur :

Nandalur which had earlier fame for its loco shed is fading into oblivion. The sprawling sheds and yards are now the remains of the earlier glory. There are good number of Staff Quarters almost amounting to a major colony which shall be utilised effectively by the Railways by establishing a Carriage and Wagon repair work shop as an ancillary to the C and W Repair Work shop Tirupati.

5. Reservations and Computerisation :

Firm quota reservations are not available on Chennai Express, Jayanti Janata Express at Rajampet, Nandalur and Kodur. There are nearly 20,000 people from Rajampet and Kodur working in the Gulf Countries. It is the duty of the Railways to facilitate the Forex earners with minimum reservation facilities to Chennai and Mumbai by these trains from where they board their flights for onward journey to the Gulf and U.A.E., At present these passengers are getting their reservations from the Tirupati Reservation counter.

Adequate reservations be provided at Rajampet and also the reservation counter at Rajampet be computerised and the Rajampet and Cuddapah Computers be linked to Mumbai, Chennai and Hyderabad.

In conclusion of my note, I hope that the Railway administration at Zonal Level will not spare any effort in the advancement of development of this backward area.

[Translation]

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA (Rajkot) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I have stood up for speaking on the Railway Budget of the year 1998-99. I welcome Hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar ji and Hon'ble State Minister of Railways Shri Ram Naik as Ram-Nitish, so to speak, since the pair of Ram-Krishna has made good endeavours last year and this year too regarding the proposal of metingout justice to the sub-status in the Railway Budget. Having brought the status paper before the budget, he has drawn the attention of all towards the present circumstances and projects of the railway. Last year he made good endeavour at instant reservation scheme, running the trains in the maximum capacity, adding maximum number of coaches. This year he has made good endeavour at giving new dimensions of the Railways in the budget. I welcome him. He has spoken about the prevention of smoking. Railway stations should be no smoking zone and the wagons, should be such where nobody can smoke. Better provisions should be made.

He has given more importance to afforestation for the protection of the environment. Maximum afforestation should be made in the barren land by the side of railway-sides. For this, associating N.G.O.'s is required. I would like to tell you that the work of afforestation has been done by taking N.G.O.s along in the Rajkot area of our Gujrat. Its maintenance has also been paid attention to.

This is the Passenger Year. I would expect of the Railway Minister to provide maximum facilities to the passengers like arrangement of pure drinking water and

cleanliness in the Coaches of the Railways should be taken care of.

The facility of frequent travel is provided in the aeroplanes. Maximum number of people travel by the Railways. I request that they should also be provided the facility like silver or golden card for frequent travel.

As the quota is fixed for the handicapped people and they are given discount, so that special facility and discount should be given to the people suffering from serious ailments like Cancer, Aids, Thalissimia, etc. A person travelling along with such a patient should be provided ticket on concessional rates.

The Railway system is a parallel Government. It has a big commercial business. Corruption has been there for the last so many years. There is much evasion of work. Sometimes, the bureaucrats write away such answers which anybody can understand to be incorrect. I would request the Railway Minister to pay surprise and disguised visits to the railway stations and to check as to what things are happening there. It will make the officers work and the good officers will be inspired to perform better.

The present Defence Minister used to be the Railway Minister earlier. He had got away the first - class coaches during his time. The first - class coaches are still running vacant. They should be converted either into second A.C. or second-class sleeper so that maximum number of people may get maximum facility.

The whole system is required to be revamped. Please mention it clearly in the acknowledgement letter that you give as to how many days it you would take to give a reply on this basis. This should be ensured. It is very essential.

I congratulate the Railway Minister that he has made the maximum provisions for the broad gauge conversion in Gujrat.

18.00 hrs.

Rs. 104 crore have been allocated in comparison to the Rs. 70 crore of the last year. But Gujrat is industrially a developed state. The revenue has very high potential there. All the natural ports of Saurashtra are in the western zone of the Railways and they are developing. A major provision for the goods and traffic can be made from there for the entire north India. The work of broad gauge conversion should definitely be completed with the money which has been allocated. As Mr. Soz has said, no project should run slow. Once a project is started it should be completed within the stipulated time. Such provision should be there. This is my suggestion.

The second point is that till now there was double line from Mumbai to Ahamdabad. Now, you have sanctioned the third line over there. But, the traffic is so heavy there on this line which entails the need of laying another line, there as soon as possible, this is my suggestion. Even otherwise there are two lines from Ahamdabad to Viramgam in Saurashtra. Doubling of single track should be undertaken at the places further from Viramgam to Rajkot, Jamnagar, and Porbandar which is the birthplace of Mahatma Gandhi. The big industries like Reliance, Essar are spreading in entire Saurashtra. So, this double track will benefit much. The provision should be made about it, this is my request to you, Hon'ble Railway Minister.

I would like to make a submission about Saurashtra that when Saurashtra was a separate state, it had a number of trains and now all the trains there have been withdrawn. I am sorry to say that after independence 835 kilometres line have been erased till now. The track is still present in these lines eastern Ghatila, Chagandar, Rajkot, Jasgod, Vittiya, Gotan, etc. One or another railway station can be found in the dilapidated condition. If this land and the land of the Railways is sold and the money collected thereby is invested for the railway conversion, I think we can get crores of rupees and the work of broad gauge conversion of Rajkot Viraval in our Saurashtra can catch speed which is going slow at this time. My suggestion is that a survey should be carried out the entire land in Saurashtra of so as to ascertain to what is being done to the land of 835 kilometres which was erased after independence and how it can be regained.

The second point is that our Ahamdabad-Mumbai Rajdhani Express which was started two year ago, shows sums only thrice in a week. When it ran for the first time, it was promised that it would be commuted everyday throughout the week from the next year. But, there is no such provision in this year's budget. Therefore, It is my request that the Rajdhani Express from Ahamdabad to Delhi should be run daily and it should depart from Ahamdabad in the evening so that the passengers destined to Delhi may reach here by the morning. . . . (Interruptions) I am speaking here for the first time. Give me two minutes, please.

Hon'ble Minister, another point is that only three trains have been plying for the last 27 years from Mumbai to Rajkot. Two years ago when a new Shatabdi Express was about to be started, it was decided that it would go up to Rajkot. But what happened later on ? It was not done so. It is my request that a train should be run to Rajkot or a fresh train be introduced from Rajkot to Saurashtra. Even otherwise, there is daily train to Porbandar, which was started in the centenary and golden Jublee year. It runs once a week from Porbandar to Delhi. Assurance was

[Dr. Vallabhbai Kathiria]

given to run it thrice a week. My submission is that it should be run thrice a week since the track also lies unused. It should be run to Delhi thrice a week. It can further extended to Haridwar and Dehradun. All the passengers who come from Saurashtra . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Mr. Speaker has already given the ruling that if anybody wants to lay his speech, he can do so. Therefore, you can just lay your speech on the Table, if something is still remaining.

[Translation]

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA : In view of our Rajkot division, I lay my speech on the Table and support the budget of the Railway Minister. I thank him for presenting a very good rail budget.

[English]

*I would like to make the following submission :

1. Porbandar - Delhi which is thrice a week may be extended upto Haridwar-Dehradun.
2. Raibareilly-Ajmer - To be extended up to Rajkot.
3. Howrah Express - To be extended up to Rajkot once a week.
4. Ahimsa Express - To be extended up to Rajkot once a week.
5. Rajkot-Bhopal - To be extended up to Jabalpur.
6. Saurashtra Janta (9018-9017) Addition of III tier AC Coach.
7. Saurashtra Mail (9006-9005) Five more sleeper coaches to be added.
8. Rajkot Division - To be kept in proportion to other dir.

[Translation]

*SHRI MITRASEN YADAV (Faizabad) : Sir, my written suggestions may please be incorporated in the budget presented by Hon'ble Railway Minister. They are related to the facilities given to the railway passengers and very essential public conveniences for my Lok Sabha constituency Faizabad, Ayodhya. No improvement is showing up in the conveniences for the second class passengers. Their journey is full of difficulties and painful. They have

to go through excruciating journeys like cattle in the summer seasons.

The facilities of the passengers travelling in the second class should be increased so that the common people may have faith in the Railway Department and it may result in a public welfare work. Safety should be taken of for avoiding accidents. They are increasing day by day. The railway passengers should be protected from thieves, pick-pockets and the plunderers who use Intoxicant.

Sir, Ayodhya, Faizabad is a very important holy place not only of Uttar Pradesh but also of the entire country. There is great lack up public conveniences and passenger trains a this place. My submission is that the modernisation of the Ayodhya Railway Station should be carried out. It should also be included in the year's renovation list for 60 railway stations. Ayodhya, Faizabad should be directly linked with the country's capital Delhi and country's other holy places with the railway service. The construction work of bridge on Ayodhya-Katra Kevi Gaghra should be initiated without delay. Faizabad is a district of division level. There are two universities there. That is the land of Dr. Ram Manohar Lohia and Acharya Narendra Deo. So, it should be directly linked with Mumbai metropolies through the railway service.

*SHRI SHAILENDRA KUMAR (Chail) : Sir, I have stood up for speaking on the general debate of railway budget presented by the hon'ble Railway Minister. In the daily life of a man, a man's intellectual, social and economic development takes place from journey's. The railway has an important place in journeys. This budget is an alluring one. It is clearly the appeasement of the leaders of the allied parties, Mamta Ji and Chandrababu Naidu, supporting the Government. This budget is a burden on the middle class families. This budget will effect the industrial development rate adversely with hike in fare by 4 per cent. This will lead to price rise. The common people will be affected adversely. We are going to celebrate "the Passenger Year" this year. It is a matter of happiness. We shall have to ensure facilities to the passengers. We shall have to make the employees courteous. We shall have to provide better facility of reservation. We shall have to put a check on the touts. There should be provision of information on tourism besides entertainment and knowledge in the railway passenger journal.

As part of forming a station as a model one in each division, Bharvari Junction station should be made a model station. Uttar Pradesh has been badly ignored in the railway budget. Shatabdi Express train should be run from

Allahabad to Delhi. The number of bogies of ordinary class and second class should be increased because the second-class compartments are always jam-packed with passengers. A pantry car should be attached with the Prayagraj Express Train arrival to Delhi in time should be given special attention to. Often, there is delay in reaching the House during session periods due to late arrivals of the trains.

The flyover bridge at Subedarganj at in district Allahabad of U.P. should be constructed immediately. The railway over flybridge should be constructed to link Manauri, Bharwari and Sirayu in district Kaushambi in Uttar Pradesh since the foreign tourists keep on visiting the historical Buddhist spot of Kaushambi for 1-2 months altogether.

The main pathway of Allahabad Civil line side railway station should be opened. Siphoning money from the funds of Members of Parliament is not justified because we have to spend the money, on development of other works in our constituencies. The facility of travelling free of cost in the second class should be provided to the unemployed youth going for the interview. The handicapped people should be provided the facility of travelling free of cost in the second class.

*DR. SHAKEEL AHMED (Madhubani) : Mr. Speaker Sir, the discussion on Rail Budget is going on today in the House. I represent Madhubani Lok Sabha constituency of Bihar. It is a fact that Bihar has given highest number of Rail Ministers but Railway is not in developed stage in the area, which I represent.

Hon. Minister had laid the stone for gauge conversion of Jaynagar-Darbhanga-Narkatiyaganj Rail division on 1 November 1998 but actual work of this project has not started till now. A small amount of 10 crore rupees is made available in the Rail Budget of 1999-2000 I demand Rail Minister to complete the project speedily by making available sufficient fund.

Mr. Speaker Sir, At present we can not go to Delhi or any metropolitan city like Mumbai, Chennai or Calcutta directly from Madhubani. We can reach only to Darbhanga and that only from Delhi or Calcutta not from other metros So, I demand that at least one each train should be provided from Delhi and Calcutta to Darbhanga and direct trains should be introduced from other metros also.

Mr. Speaker Sir, Darbhanga-Patna intercity (Kamla Ganga Express) is a good train but there are so many passengers that even two train are not sufficient. Therefore I demand that either the number of Patha intercity Express.

Train are increased or at least six compartments should be added. While finalising the time tables of trains it should be kept in mind that they reach to small stations in morning no matter at whatever time they depart from Metro cities. Trains for Darbhanga would reach there in the morning at whatever time it departs from Delhi because passengers from far flung areas of Darbhanga travel in it. If they reach to Darbhanga in night they would face difficulties to reach their villages. Therefore the departure timings of trains from other places other than Delhi should be kept in mind.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, some new trains and new rail lines are needed in Mithilanchal region of North Bihar. I demand that a new rail line to Madhawapur, Sitamarhi via Laulcahi, Jaynagar, Basopatti, Umgaon and other rail line Madhubani-Raiha, Bispho-Kamtoul be laid so that residents of this backward region would be benefitted.

Toilets in trains lack sanitation except A.C. and first class. There are not adequate lights. So I request for the betterment of water, electricity, sanitation and catering facilities in the 2nd class compartments of trains. With these words I conclude.

[English]

*SHRI NEPAL CHANDRA DAS (Karimganj) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, during the current one year, the Railway Minister has brought out Status Paper and White Paper. We have no objection for bringing out so many papers except Black and Red during the next one year and increase freight of both the traffics.

Sir, I am pointing out that during the years 1996-97 and 1997-98 Rs. 38 crore was sanctioned for Gauge conversion of Lumding-Silchar railway line but only Rs. 2.06 crore was spent for execution of this line due to sheer negligence of the railways. The Central Government sanctioned Rs. 40 crores in 1998-99 for the same Gauge conversion but we still do not know the progress of the work and how much amount has been spent out of the sanctioned amount of Rs. 40 crores during the current year. I request the Minister to enlighten us about it.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is understood that only Rs. 1 lakh was spent in 1997 on the gauge conversion project of Katakhal-Bhairabi line and in the year 1998-99 for the same purpose only Rs. 10,000/- (Ten thousand) has been sanctioned when the project cost is about Rs. 200 crores. It is sheer mockery. I want to know from the Railway Minister whether any amount has been sanctioned for gauge conversion of Katakhal-Bhairabi line and if so, how much ?

[Shri Nepal Chandra Das]

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the people of Barak Valley of South Assam have been agitating by staging Rasta Ruku and Rail Ruku for setting up a Rail Division at Badarpur Jn. under N.A.F. Railway which is a long-pending demand of the entire Barak Valley people. This Rail Division will cover South Assam, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur of N.E. States. May I request the Railway Minister to consider this very genuine demand for the Rail Division at Badarpur or should we wait till such time when some one from our region is inducted in the Ministry of Railway.

Sir, I suggest certain measures for consideration of the Railway Minister as follows :

1. Provision of employment of atleast one son or daughter of a retired Railway employee in the case there is no one in employment of Government, Semi Government bodies, public sector undertakings etc.
2. Filling up of all backlog of SC/ST posts immediately.
3. Construction of Mini Stadium at Badarpur Railway Higher Secondary School playground.
4. Railway line extension of Baraigram Dullabcherra line upto Mizoram Border.
5. Re-installation of Train Services with Bangladesh through Karimganj-Mahisashan Railway line.
6. To take up gauge conversion project from Badarpur to Agartala immediately and completion of Railway line from Kumarghat to Agartala upto Bangladesh border and to instal train service with Bangladesh.

I conclude my speech with thank to the Chair.

[Translation]

*SHRI CHANDRASHEKHAR SAHU (Mahasamund) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit that the proposal of gauge conversion of Dhamtari-Raipur rail line is under consideration of the Ministry of Railways, which is the most important rail line of my area. This is the only project for gauge conversion of Chattisgarh, the sanction of which is solicited. There is dismay among the people of this region because the decision is not taken on it, where as maximum Lavy is sent from Dhamtari.

It is my earnest request that for gauge conversion of Raipur-Dhamtari rail line. There is a need to extend the

reservation facility at Mahasamund, Bag Bahera, and Dhamtari rail stations. I also demand to make Bondwana Express daily. Similarly Samta Express be made run daily Similarly. It is necessary to add a bogie of A.C.-III tier in the Chattisgarh Express. I request you to consider these demands in public interest with the belief that understanding the importance of Chattisgarh Express Hon. Minister will consider the demands, I support the Rail Budget.

*SHRI RAMA NAND SINGH (Satna) : I support the demands of the Rail Budget presented by Hon. Rail Minister and congratulate Hon. Rail Minister and Minister of State of Railways for presenting a good Rail Budget despite of financial constraints.

Sir, the whole country has been kept in mind in this budget. Provisions have been made for all regions - East-West - North - South - Central . Regional imbalances have been created by the provisions of earlier budgets. Speaker Sir, Madhya Pradesh comes under that area of the country where rail traffic is very less after 50 years of independence. Sir, After the reorganisation of Madhya Pradesh, States Reorganisation Commission had said in its report that 'Madhya Pradesh has been made such a large State that for its proper development special provisions would be needed in plans so that it could be connected by Rail and Road transport. But it is sad that attention was not paid in last 42 years towards the recommendations of States Reorganisation Commission. I would congratulate Rail Minister for his approval of Lalitpur-Singrouli rail line for which survey was conducted in 1978 during Janta Party's rule. He got the foundation laid by Hon. Prime Minister on 20th October 98 and had the provision of this Project in the current budget.

Sir, Lalitpur-Singrouli Rail line will connect Vaghel division and Bundhelkhand in old Vindhya division and Vindhya would develop. Similarly to give impetus for development of Chattisgarh and Bastar he made budgetary provision from Delhi Rajhara route.

The overbridge of Maihar Nagar had to be completed in Jabalpur Rail division but, it is unfortunate that the construction of this overbridge could not be started due to the non-cooperation of Madhya Pradesh Government. Similarly the construction work of Under bridge on Dhawari turn in Satna Nagar did not start. I request the Rail Minister to ensure the completion of construction work of these bridges in this financial year.

Directions be issued to bring in operation the third platform at Satna Nagar in this financial year. To connect Reeva, capital of Vindhya Pradesh to New Delhi Prayag Raj Express should be made to run upto Reeva and some

extra bogies would be linked to it or a new train should be introduced for Reeva.

Mahakaushal, Sarnath, Ganga Kaveri and Lucknow Express should be provided a stoppages at Uchehara, Majhgawan and Amhara of Jabalpur Division. Uchehara is the commercial centre for copper Utensils and Majhgawan is the entry gate of Chetrakort besides being the headquarters of Block development and Police station.

Utkal Express should run thrice a week via Jhansi, Manikpur-Satna-Katni and Surat Express may be extended upto Ahmedabad.

I request the Hon. Rail Minister to ensure the setting up of Railway level crossing in Village. Khurha, Gorsari and Goukaon Khurd under my Parliamentary constituency as people have organised agitations for it and have gone jails.

The reservation quota for Satna should be increased in Durg bound Sarnath Express. Similarly the reservation quota of Satna should be increased in Mahakaushal Express, Bombay. Howrah Mail and Varansi Express.

The farmers of Village Satari and Jamuna be given compensation for Satna-Reeva Rail line.

Sir, I conclude my speech congratulating Hon. Rail Minister for fair selection by Railway Recruitment board this time and support the demands of the Rail Budget.

*SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR (Sagar) : I would like to draw your attention to some main rail problems relating to Railways of my constituency, Sagar. Sagar town station is the headquarter of the district and the division. At this station, Kusia Banaras Train arrives at 6.10 A.M., Tota Damoh Shuttle arrives around 10.30 A.M. and Bhopal Bilaspur train arrives around 12 o'clock. After that no train comes from Biha at Sagar station the whole day. Biha Itarasi Express train comes 12.00 in the night. Mahamaya Express follows it 30 minutes later and Utkal Express comes after nearly 20 minutes. Afterwards, there is no train till morning. So the passengers from the stations between Katni and Bina suffers great inconvenience. A lot of inconvenience has to be faced at the stations between Damoh and Bina. So an E.M.U. train should be run in between these stations.

Damoh Kota Shuttle train runs from Sagar to Bina and arrives at Sagar station around 6.20 P.M. usually arrives late and it remain stationed at Baghora Station for three hours before reaching Bina Station. This train arrives at Bina Station around 12 in the night passengers of this train who have to undertake onward journey feels lot of

inconvenience. Whereas the passenger train journey between Sagar and Bina takes two hours at the maximum. So, instructions should be issued for timely arrival of Damoh Kota Shuttle at the platform.

Construction of proposed over bridge near Rahatgarh railway crossing at Sagar should start immediately. So much inconvenience is faced by the traffic at that place and vehicles have to wait for long time for the gate to be opened at the railway crossing Jabalpur Nijamuddin train should be run as a full-fledged independent train. The passengers are deprived of travel by the train due to lack of space and large number of passengers in between Katni and Bina. So there should be complete twenty two compartments in Mahamaya Express from Jabalpur itself Hirkund Sambalpur Nijamuddin Express and Indore Howaraha trains are always over crowded and the citizens have been demanding since long to make there trains services daily. So these trains should run all the seven days of week.

Proposed Jabalpur Raykot Express train should run. On Jabalpur, Katni, Sagar, Bina, Bhopal, Raykot route, so that citizens and businessmen of this areas could reach Gujarat directly.

Khurai is the most important market of food grains and agricultural implements in Sagar district. A large number of businessmen come here from all over the country. So Kurla Varanasi Express and Hirkund Sambalpur Express must stop at this station and the citizens of this area have been making the demand for a long time.

Bina junction is an important station and still there is no stoppage of Goa Express, Kamataka Express, Pushpak and Tamilnadu Express at this station whereas the passenger from this district change train from Bina only so stoppage of these trains at this station is essential for travelling to these places. Some of these trains stop during the Ahanandpur festivals but Pushpak Express does not stop at Bina station but it stops at Lalitpur. There will be direct link for going to Lucknow by providing stoppage to this train here. So this suggestion should be taken into consideration, seriously.

Due to lesser number of platforms and the higher number of trains passing through the Bina Station, departure of trains from the station get delayed. So one or two new platforms should be constructed immediately and there is a lot of space at Bina junction for this purpose. Bina Itarasi Express had been start from Bina Station at 8:45 p.m. now its departure time is at 10:20 p.m. Its departure time from Bina should be changed to 7 p.m. by reducing its time so that the passengers coming from Delhi and Mumbai side could get the train for going to Sagar and Damoh.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Virendra Kumar]

The length of sheds of platform number three at Bina junction should be increases, so that passengers could protect themselves from sun and rain.

Mandi Baneora is an important station. Demand have been pending for a long time for the stoppage of Sadan (South) Express at this station and that train runs daily from Bina taking an interval of 30 minutes. So the stoppage of two minutes can be given easily at Mandi Baneora Station. The Revanchal Express running from Bhopal to Rewa can be conveniently given stoppage at Mandi Baneora. It is the train running in Madhya Pradesh and it has sufficient time. There was stoppage of the Pathankot Train at Karaunda Station which is ahead of Bina but now its stoppage has discontinued. So stoppage of the Pathankot train should be restored at Karaunda Station.

Utkal Express had been stopping at Ganeshganj (Shahpur) station and later on its stoppage was discontinued. So stoppage of Utkal Express should be again provided there and an overbridge should be constructed there, so that passengers could conveniently cross from one platform to another platform. Due to lack of railway crossing, accidents have been occurring while crossing railway line at Shahpur village. So railway crossing must be constructed.

*SHRI LARANG SAI (Sarguja) : Sir, with your permission, I want to lay my written speech on the table of the House on Railway budget general discussion.

1. A fast train between Vishrampur to Delhi via Bhopal should be introduced.
2. The V.V.M. train between Vishrampur to Mahendragarh should be extended upto Anoopur.
3. Two Coaches should be attached, one for Delhi and another for Bhopal, in the V.V.M. train leaving Vishrampur in the evening. The Delhi Coach should be attached in Sambalpur Express at Anoopur and the Bhopal Coach should be attached at Amarkantak, Anoopur.
4. Reservation facility should be provided for all the trains at Vishrampur.
5. 5 bearths each should be provided for Sarguja in all the trains running through Bilaspur.

Reservation facility should be provided in all the trains leaving for Gujarat, Mumbai Southern India and Calcutta.

* Laid on the Table.

*SHRIMATI BHAVNA DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh) : Sir, I want to lay my written speech on Railway Budget on the table of the Lok Sabha. I support the Railway Budget.

Junagarh is my parliamentary constituency. Work is going on the Rajkot-Verapal broad gauge project but only Rs. three crore have been earmarked in the budget which is very scanty. You (the Hon. Railway Minister) have assured that there would be no hindrance in the work of converting the Rajkot - Verawal metre gauge line into broad gauge line due to shortage of funds. I am very grateful to you for this.

Second class A.C. Coaches should be attached with the 'Somnath' train. Another second class A.C. Coach should also be attached in Girnar Express. There is a need of providing proper maintenance in the trains running between Ahmedabad and Verawal.

The hon. Railway Minister is going to ban the sale of tobacco, cigarette at Railway platforms since the Environment Day, that is the 5th of June, he has also talked of providing facilities of the handicapped people. We thank you for announcing certain other facilities which have been provided keeping in mind the common people, especially by not increasing the railway fare of the second class. I thank you for this.

There is a need to give attention on the cleanliness of the railway platforms and toilets. The Safai-Karmcharis should be given clear directions about the cleanliness of the toilets.

I support the Railway Budget presented by you keeping in view about the facilities of the passengers as the year has been declared as passengers year.

*SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT (Agra) : Sir, I welcome the provisions made in the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000. I congratulate the Railway Minister for his efforts to expedite such works that would leave comprehensive effects on the economy of Western Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and on tourism related activities. The economy will gain vigour.

It was decided to convert the metre gauge line of Agra Fort - Bandikui railway line into broad gauge during the tenth Lok Sabha. This project was ignored due to the changing political scenario and the then Railway Ministers' Keeness regarding their respective constituencies. The result was that the railway line which runs from Agra Fort to Badikui (Rajasthan) via Achnera and other parts of Uttar Pradesh have become economically weak. The railway project formulated of the cost of several crores is becoming

* Laid on the Table.

useless due to lack of its use at the historical railway station of Achnera. The staff is either not getting the work or they are being removed from there whereas the economy of the Achnera town was linked inseparably to the railway station since the days of the British period. Thousands of people of Agra, and Achnera region supply milk, vegetables and other items of daily use to Agra and Delhi everyday but farmers have been adversely affected due to closure of most of the train in the name of gauge conversion, and those who were supplying these items daily to Agra and Delhi have become unemployed. Not only that, thousands of people used to visit Agra in search of employment or doing business they too have been greatly affected and are in distress. It has affected the tourism business because it was the only direct route between Agra to Jaipur. Other routes are too long and expensive and take much more time, tourists are therefore avoiding visiting Jaipur from Agra and vice-versa.

The Hon. Railway Minister has shown his willpower and resolution for implementing the pending projects by providing rupees 10 crore for gauge conversion of Agra-Bandikui rail line. I hope that the Hon. Minister would complete the Agra-Badikui Railway line gauge conversion work at war footing and gift it to the nation in the new financial year after the budget is passed. By doing so he would boost the speedy defence related supply at India - Pakistan border coming from South India for our armed forces.

The Hon. Railway Minister has created history by providing two crore rupees for the creation of Divisional Railway Office at Agra because the Railway Ministry had accepted the recommendations of the expert committee for the creation of few new railway zones and Divisions throughout the country for ensuring the working of the Railways effectively during the tenth Lok Sabha in the House but most of these could not be set up due to lack of will power and even if the established ones lacked proper economic resources and other establishment related arrangements. But by making a provision of rupees two crore for the construction of Railway Divisional Office at Agra in the budget the Government have proved peoples doubts wrong that it is not taking the implementation of the work plan for the creation of new Zones and Divisions seriously. The efficiency of the Railways would increase with the creation of new Zones and Divisions.

At a place like Agra which is the meeting point of so many zones and divisions, the Railway operation system has been getting entangled in the spider net prepared by various authorities. It has been creating complexities in place of facilitating Railway operation and it has been getting neglect from all quarters. A tourist place of international importance like Agra will be able to

experience the extension of operation of Railways and also efficiency after the establishment of the divisional office. Passenger facilities will increase. Stoppage of train will increase as per the requirement. New trains will be started. This is what I believe. Problems of the Railway employees and customers will be solved promptly.

With the commencement of the proposed Rs. 34 crore gauge conversion project for Mathura, Kasganj, Kanpur Railway track, the work of these projects of several crore rupees will also be started. This will ultimately start a new era of economic prosperity in the whole area upto Agra, Mathura, Kasganj, Kanpur Railway track.

The proposed Agra-Etawah Railway line estimated cost of Rs. 118 crore used to provide railway services from Agra to Etawah in the olden times but when the freedom struggle was on full swing the British Government, terrorized by the iron men of Chambal of Agra, Fatahabad, Bah and the commencement of revolutionary activities, abandoned this railway line; that's why this Railway line is a symbol of pride of the residents of Agra and Etawah area.

I would like to congratulate the Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Vajpayee ji and bid him welcome that a lot of development prospects are there because of the Railway line project of Bateshwar bridge across the Yamuna river. This area used to give birth either to decoits due to starvation in the ravines of Chambal or there used to be revolutionaries over there, and those self respecting and hardworking persons were forced to go out of Bateshwar and Bah for the purpose of earning their livelihood. But now the ravine of Chambal will become a symbol of development and prosperity instead of horror and backwardness. I would like to congratulate Shri Vajpayee ji again and again that under his leadership and guidance the very busy railway operation system from Agra to Etawah has got an alternative route as well. The new generation will be freed from the curse of British slavery and will be able to get the development opportunities. A provision for Rs. 2 crores was made in the budget for the implementation of this project. I am sure the Hon'ble Minister for Railways will get the work of this project started without any delay.

Railway operation facilities will also be increased with the construction of a new Railway bridge across the Yamuna river between Tundla and Agra. They have made the provision of funds for this purpose also. Besides, the Hon'ble Railway Minister has taken a commendable step towards safe railway journey by starting the latest signal system of Railway operations from Delhi to Mathura. Uttar Pradesh and the country have not yet forgotten the most disastrous tragedy of this century i.e. Firozabad railway

[Shri Bhagwan Shankar Rawat]

accident, and the tragedies that took place on the Agra-Mathura - Delhi railway route. My submission is that this system be developed on the Mathura - Agra route also alongwith Delhi - Mathura route.

During the British period there was a direct railway line from Rajamandi Railway Station to Idgah Railway Station but it was discontinued later. A raised mound is still there. After the discontinuance of this route the longer route via Agra Cantt. Station has to be taken while travelling from Rajamandi Station to Idgah Railway Station. The engine has to change the direction, as there is no straight route from Agra Cantt. Station. Consequently, most of the trains about 50 minutes to one hour from Rajamandi Station to Idgah Station and vice-versa whereas direct route is Barely of five minutes. Therefore, I request the Hon'ble Minister for Railways to get this smaller work also completed alongwith the bigger ones, it will provide great relief there. At present Toofan Express, Jodhpur-Varanasi Express and other trains take more time because of this only. Besides, new trains from New Delhi to Eastern India via Agra and Tundla are not operated because of this delay. With the connection of Bah Railway Station and Mathura Refinery to Eastern India the goods can be sent conveniently and within less time span.

A two way platform was sanctioned at Agra Cantt. Station, keeping in view the lack of facilities and number of trains there. It is now under construction. The speed of work needs to be increased to have its benefits.

I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister for Railway when the narrow gauge line from Agra to Achhnera is converted into broad gauge line under Agra Badikui gauge conversion scheme, the narrow gauge line of only Achhnera and Mathura for about thirty kms. will be left for gauge conversion between Agra and Mathura. As per my knowledge, this work has also been given approval by the Planning Commission. The total benefit of Kanpur, Kasganj, Mathura gauge conversion will be available between Mathura and Achhnera, when this route from Agra to Kanpur is converted into broad gauge line. Otherwise also, there is heavy passenger and freight traffic between Agra and Mathura. Mathura Refinery products can be sent to Eastern India via Agra conveniently, easily, economically and within less time span. Therefore, the work of gauge conversion between Achhnera and Mathura, should also be sanctioned without any delay.

Construction of flyover at any suitable place and Idgah Railway Station in Agra and on Agra Fatehpur Sikri highway is very essential. Railway crossing construction at Rui Ki Mandi has to be crossed by those who want to go towards Jagner Court Marg in Agra from Rui Ki Mandi

and because of which there is always a lot of crowd over there. The tourists also have to face problems. Jagner Tatpur Court bypass in Agra is near Kheria Aerodrome. Agra Development Authority has undertaken the construction project of link road between Agra Fatehpur Sikri highway and the area near Kheria Aerodrome. Construction of a flyover at that place or at any other suitable place there from technical point of view, is very essential. I believe that necessary cooperation of Uttar Pradesh Government will be available for this work, or it can be done with the amount of petroleum surcharge.

Need for construction of a path of go across the Railway line near East Bank Railway Station in Agra is also being felt. Its construction and formal approval are also essential.

Stoppage of trains.

Stoppage of all fast passenger train passing through Agra is essential there as Agra is an international tourist centre, Army cantonment, Air Force base and an important centre for small industries. Former Railway Minister Shri Ram Vilas Paswan did not implement it even after being agreeable to it during the half-an-hour discussion held about the measures to promote tourism in the Taj city, Agra. All Rajdhani Express trains from Delhi to South India, and Tamilnadu Express to Chennai do not stop at Agra and the tourists from South India have to come back to Agra from Delhi thus their time is wasted. Army personnel and other passengers also have to suffer.

Likewise, Delhi-Lucknow Shatabdi Express, and other Shatabdi and Rajdhani Express trains to Eastern India should be stopped at Tundla so that not only Firozabad district but all districts of Agra division are benefited by it.

Prayagraj Express has been given a stoppage at Tundla but there is less reservation quota for Agra in it, that should be increased as the timings of this train are suitable. The time table of Jodhpur - Howra Express be changed so that it may arrive at Allahabad in the morning after its departure from Agra at night. This will save both day and night time while travelling from Agra to Allahabad.

Suggestions for new trains :

An Inter City Express passenger train for Lucknow should be started from Agra in the morning. The route of Avadh Express passenger train running earlier from Agra to Lucknow has been extended and another long distance train, Marudhar Express in place of Yamuna Link (Ganga-Yamuna Express) has been introduced. But both these trains, usually run behind schedule. There was a proposal in the last Railway Budget to start an EMU train between Kanpur and Tundla. If that train is scheduled to run between Agra and Lucknow in the morning then also the requirement can be met there.

A fast train of this type be started from Agra to Allahabad also which can reach Allahabad in the morning after its departure from Agra at night and return in the same manner.

Some Other Suggestions

An AC II Sleeper and two second class sleepers be attached to Marudhar Express and adequate reservation quota, for seats and berths be provided for Agra.

A second class sleeper to attached to Avadh Express also and the reservation quota for seats and berths be increased in it. For the convenience of tourists and promotion of tourism in Agra, Dehradun-bound Shatabdi Express be run from Agra via Delhi instead of running it from Delhi.

A passenger train like the Taj Express be run from Agra to Delhi in the morning for the convenience of the middle class passengers and the Taj Express to run upto New Delhi instead of Nizamuddin.

EMU trains be run on Agra, Mathura, Agra-Fatehpur Sikri, Agra-Aligarh, Agra-Firozabad-Shikohabad, Agra-Dhaulpur routes to keep the Taj conservation area, including Agra, pollution free.

Funds should be provided for the doubling of the rail line from Tundla to Yamuna bridge, (East Bank) railway station and work should be completed. This project is lying incomplete. After its completion, travelling time would be reduced from Rajasthan to East India via Agra.

[English]

*SHRI RAJU RANA (Bhavnagar) : Respected Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me opportunity to express my views on Railway Budget 1999-2000.

First of all I would like to congratulate both the Ministers in the Ministry of Railways for starting to take bold and landmark steps to reshape the Indian Railways. The BJP-led Government has got into its hand everything in its worst condition in almost all spheres of governance. Thanks to the Congress-led Governments which had just paid lip service to the issue of development and could do negligible to things in all walks of life. Railways is one such field where a huge amount of money was spent every year for the last fifty years but nothing great could be achieved during this period. By spending this much of money on railways, one could bring it to number one position in the world by modernising Indian Railways but nothing of that sort could be done.

If the so-called visionaries had concentrated only on Railways as a part of infrastructure development, the situation would have been altogether different now. Infrastructure is the basic requirement for overall development of a country. In a country like India, railways play a very important role. Railway line is the life line for development. I congratulate the Railway Minister for thinking on these lines and translating his thoughts into action.

A remarkable step taken by the Ministers is to establish a system which is free from corruption and nepotism. The changes made in the system of recruitment in Railways is a notable step taken by the Ministers. It makes the whole system transparent and removes all doubts from the minds of people. The system of railways which was set up 50 years and 100 years ago has not much relevance today. What the country needs is a system which is suitable for the needs of this country. A country which wants to develop needs to review its systems from time to time. The Ministers have successfully tried to set right the system of recruitment to root out corruption and nepotism. They must be congratulated for taking this unique step.

Safety measures, passenger care, availability of basic utilities inside the trains as well as on the stations, etc., are the issues on which the Ministry has concentrated. I am sure this emphasis will lead the Indian Railways in to speedy development. The hike in the higher class fares is logically right. If a person who can spend more money wants more comfort, he must pay extra for it. The common man is not adversely affected by the budget proposals.

In his Budget speech, hon. Minister Shri Nitish Kumar has pointed out that the quantum of freight carried by Railways is declining at an alarming rate. I would like to suggest something in the context of measures being taken by the Ministry. A change of attitude and behaviour towards the client is a must for railway staff from top to bottom. If the railway staff understand and cultivate the concepts of service oriented approach and professional thinking, the scenario in the Railways can be changed rapidly. This is the era of competition. If the Railways wants to survive, it must make itself sufficiently competitive particularly in the field of marketing. If the marketing wing of the Railways becomes professional in its approach and service oriented, ways to improve the present condition can easily be found. The concept of railway staff owning the railway organisation can make miracles in a very short time. Continuous result-oriented training programmes are very useful for this.

I would like to make a few points in regard to my State and my constituency. The total allocation made to the State of Gujarat is Rs. 100 crore plus. Geographically, Gujarat

[Shri Raju Rana]

is identified in three zones - (1) North Gujarat, (2) South Gujarat, and (3) Saurashtra. The first two zones are fortunate enough to have a satisfactory railway network which has resulted in overall development of those zones. It pinches the people of Saurashtra that nothing exists there in the name of infrastructure as a result of which the rate of development has been very slow in the area. Even in the present Budget, very little amount is allotted to Saurashtra region. The gauge conversion project of Bhavnagar-Surendranagar is pending for the last fifty years. Gauge conversion of Rajkot-Veraval line is also a long-pending project.

I represent Bhavnagar constituency. While almost all the big cities of Saurashtra region are connected by broad gauge line, the only city which is connected by a metre gauge line is Bhavnagar. Why should it be so? Bhavnagar-Surendranagar broad gauge line is life line for the overall development of Bhavnagar District. While this project is important for Bhavnagar, Amreli and Surendranagar Districts are also getting the fruits of this broad gauge line. The hon. Minister had allotted Rs. 30 crore for this line last year. Do you know how much money was actually utilised by the Railways? It was only Rs. 1 crore. The balance amount of the last year had lapsed. This year also an amount of Rs. 30 crore is allotted. I would like to ask a question who is responsible for leaving this amount unutilised? Is it the the railway officials or the Members of Parliament of that constituency? If the Government keeps allotting Rs. 30 crore every year for Bhavnagar-Surendranagar broad gauge project and a major part of it is left unutilised every year, how long will it take for the project to be completed? I doubt if it will ever be completed. I would suggest that a system be evolved by the Ministry in which it will be ensured that the funds allotted to a project are utilised fully and properly in the given time.

I thank both the Ministers for giving their consent to take part in the foundation stone laying ceremony to be laid for this project at Bhavnagar in April, 1999. I would like to draw the attention of the Government to a unique episode from our history. Late Maharaja of Bhavnagar, Shri Krishna Kumar Sinhji, was the first ever king of a State to offer his kingship to Sardar Patel at the time of Independence. He was the first king to have established a State railway also. We the people of Bhavnagar in general and the Government in particular owe this obligation to Maharaja of Bhavnagar.

Speedy work on this line is essential for all round development of the area. Alang ship-breaking industry, one of the biggest in Asia, is flourishing in Bhavnagar.

Pipaval Port development is keen to have this broad gauge line very soon. Next to Surat, diamond business is concentrated at Bhavnagar. We were told that Bhavnagar-Surendranagar project is accorded priority 'A' by the Railway Ministry, I request that this project be completed at the earliest.

I am very much thankful to you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to put forward my views on Railway Budget.

*SHRI MADHAB RAJBANSHI (Mangaldai) : Sir, I take this opportunity to make my submissions in short in respect of the Budget proposals of the Hon'ble Minister for Indian Railways with my primary reaction that it is not an all Indian provision in the Budget which he has presented to this august House. Before delivering my speech I want to give thanks to the Hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Ji for finalising the jurisdiction of Rangia Division.

The Indian Railways are the second largest network of surface transportation of the world. Since our country is the largest democracy we take pride that India is the second largest in Railway transportation after the first ever train ran from Mumbai to Thane, 34 kilometres a track carrying 400 Joy riders in 76 minutes, only in 1853. Today we take pride is being able to run 63,915 route kilometres touching 7,068 stations, and carrying lakhs of passengers and, over a crore metric tonnes of cargo by nearly 3 lakh wagons, and about 40 thousand passenger coaches of all types. The country is proud to have over 80 thousand kilometres on Broad Gauge with an ambition to unigauge 24 thousand Metre-gauge tracks, while there will still remain 4,224 km. narrow gauge track in the country said to be necessary to carry more than 1 crore 10 lakh passengers each day employing 1 crore 10 lakh employees, direct or indirect engaged in rail transportation.

In assessing the mileage covered by the Railway System of the country we must say that Northern Railway with Head Quarters at New Delhi covers a run of over 10 thousand 995 km. and Western Railway with HQ at Mumbai nearly 10 thousand km. followed by South Central Railway over 7,218, South Eastern by 7,161, Southern over 7,009, North Eastern over 5, 131, Eastern over 4,303 and North East Frontier 3,858 kilometres. From this enumeration it will bring home the dissatisfaction of the people of East and North East of India who have been neglected in respect of Indian Railway services.

Sir, as one moves out of electricity operated locomotive zone at Moghalsarai towards the East and further North East it will be realised that during the 50 years of independence it has not been possible to register development of Railway transportation except a few

* Laid on the Table.

Express and Mail trains to cover the regions which depend solely on road vehicles to struggle over damaged national highways 37, 31 and 52 one of which is perpetually impassable for half of the year unable to bear the load of heavy trucks and passenger buses.

In so far as my State Assam is concerned the British prior to 1930s planned the laying of rail tracks only touching the TEA plantations, anticipating that the Railways would provide cheap transport of capital goods to come into the plantations and carry away all the load of made tea out to the market. But their own railway system betrayed the planters Raj. They hired trucks for haulage of goods by road transport. The laying on the tracks was so faulty that the trains did not run through the populous habitats, from where the people continued to depend on road transport. Yet during the past 50 and more years the Railways never changed the track passing mostly through forests far away from where people live social and commercial lives. The tracks become exposed to militants for blowing apart by the thoughtless outfits. Wrongly resorting to meaningless destruction of lives and public properties in the dark of Assam's Foggy rights. If the track passed through populated villages may lives and valuable assets could not have been blown off by remote control bombs. Men, Women and children were killed in deep predawn sleep.

Sir, taking Rangiya junction by the side of which the Divisional Headquarters of Northeast Frontier Railway is lying at its foundation stone planted 3 years ago, if the track moved South-eastward to touch and pass through Darrang District Head-Quarter Mangaldai, a thickly populated historic town, onwards to Tezpur, a pre-historic ancient capital of fifth century kings in which is installed the largest Shiva Lingam of the World, Further onwards east to joint Lakhimpur North with a branch to Itsnagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh, the trains would have helped both industrial and agrarian development leaving such of the law and order problems confined to the northern forest reserves maintained as sanctuaries for the precious mighty Shri Goneshas to grow and thrive as they like.

In so far as Assam and other parts of North East are concerned we must speak with regret that this Railway Budget, and at least two others of the past, have failed to meet the bonafide public demand beyond Siliguri which is actually the Rail Head of the East, beyond which the seven North Eastern States have been getting lakhs of rupees in transport subsidy at the cost of the Central Exchequer and will continue till 2003 A.D. and 15,000 heavy load trucks must run over land surface, national and State highways, to transport in and out goods, thereby raising the consumer prices of all commodities, compelling

the buyers to avoid paying what they cannot afford to do. A cheaper Railway without having to tranship cargo from B.G. to M.G. at Siliguri would have helped the poor people of the North East.

Sir, those of Hon'ble Members who had taken the pains to visit Assam will have noticed a glow sign, as a relief map, hanging from the roof of Guwahati Station Ticket Counters, It shows till today that during the 8th Five Year Plan, the Indian Railways would complete unigauging the track from Rangiya to Tezpur via Rangapara and from Rangapara to Morkongselek, together with the extension to Dibrugarh via Tinsukia, which are on the South Bank of the Brahmaputra and better served by a national highway, by which 1000 super-express Buses haul 5 lakh of people overnight between one end of the Valley and the other (end) inspite of a half of the whole track of 3,858 kilometre route clearing the reminder of the people who can secure reservation by trains. They need the trains, but they do not run. On the North Bank of the Brahmaputra region there is no preparation of the Railway Ministry to complete its 8th (1992-97) Plan project of unigauging, which has been on paper for the past 9 years, has ended in its inglorious demise as if development of the Railway system on the North East does not fall within the category of Common Minimum Programme of Indian Nation. Vows have been taken to confine all budgetary expenditure according to plan, but funds are being robbed from the planned projects to make them obsolete from plan after plan. In the result for the North East a patient from Majuli, the greatest river island of the world could be transported to AIIMS Delhi after sending one to buy a ticket by any mode of road transport to Guwahati to make sure of a both or two only on the fourth day at a cost of Rs. 1,900 (taxi hire) for securing berth reservation when urgently required. Berth reservation for rail travel for all the Northeasterners having been concentrated at Guwahati the common to middle class passengers are suffering beyond imagination. But to please the hillmen politically in the same way boons are being showered in Southern Bihar, the men of the farming and trading peoples on the two valleys of Assam are being ignored by going back upon the planned rail track development.

While demanding quicker development of the plains areas we welcome the circuitous BG track train across the Brahmaputra at Bogibeel and a second link track from Moinaguri (Jalpiguri) to Jogighopa for reasons of safety to rail transportation against sabotage and loss of lives, but jobs taken first must not be allowed to lapse but completed on the basis of the Plans.

Sir,

Lastly I want request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to give benefit in the Rajdhani and Shatabadi Express, to the

[Shri Madhab Rajbanshi]

Freedom Fighters. Already Freedom Fighters are getting benefit in others trains also. This is their genuine demand.

The main point that I want to stress here in this budget is the safety and security aspects. We have to give more importance to him safety and security aspects of the trains and passengers.

Now the second important point which I want to touch him is the recruitment. As you know that a few people are employed in the Railways. Hon'ble Railway Minister is requested to see the matter so what balance should be maintained in case of employment or unemployed youth of North Eastern. Because main grievances of the youth to North East is unemployment. The Govt. of India should think it seriously. We should not be neglected.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this much of time to relate the peoples' rail travel grievances in the NORTH EAST, Mainly Assam Valley North.

[Translation]

*SHRI CHANDRAMANI TRIPATHI (Rewa) : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I stand to support the rail budget, introduced by Shri Nitish Kumar. Economically, it is a very difficult financial year. In such a situation, a better budget could not be presented.

Indian railways has a special and important place in the development and progress of the nation. But, I regret to say that even after 50 years of independence the work of laying rail tracks has been slow. In 1950-51 the total length of railway line was 53,596 km. In 1997-98, it increased to 62,495 km. That is, in 47 years only 8899 km of railway line was laid. In this way there was an increase of only 0.5 per cent per annum in laying new railway lines.

I want to thank the hon. Minister of Railways for sanctioning the construction of 16 new rail lines. I want to congratulate specially for making provision in the Budget for the construction of the Lalitpur - Satna rail line, pending from 1997 and for Rewa, Singrouli and Khajuraho Mahoba new rail line. By this, a new direction has been taken for the development of the entire Vindya and Bundelkhand region. Similarly, the Minister of Railways has done a commendable job by making provision for some gauge-conversion work, doubling of railway line and electrification. Sanction has been given for the survey of several new lines. All this shows the direct accountability of the Government towards the people.

The Minister of Railways, has announced that the year 1999-2000 would be observed as the "Passengers Year". Several efforts have been made to improve amenities to the passengers. This is a welcome step. Seventy-five per cent discount, has been provided to the attendants of the handicapped persons and those suffering from paralysis, in A.C. III tier and A.C. chair car. This would certainly help them. Similarly, the facilities provided to the press correspondent, President's Medal winners and licenced porters is commendable. But, I would like to request the Railway Minister that just like the President's Medal winners, all the retired pensioners should also be given the senior citizen benefits from 60 years. I would also like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister for making arrangements for drinking water, hygienic and affordable food and clean toilets for specially, the second class ordinary passengers.

I would like to commend the Railway Minister for restoring the recognition of the Railway Protection Force Association.

While supporting the Railway budget whole heartedly, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister towards the continued neglect of my Parliamentary Constituency, Rewa. From the point of view of mineral resources and forest wealth, this is the richest region. But in the absence of the railway network the Bauxite reserves in the Samaria region of Rewa and abundant limestone reserves, in other areas can not be exploited. After a long and difficult struggle, Rewa - which was once the capital of entire Vindya region, and at present is the headquarters of Rewa division - was linked by railway line. But Rewa is served by only two passenger trains. One is Rewa to Jabalpur passenger shuttle and the other is Rewa to Bhopal Rewanchal Express. There is no direct train to Delhi from Rewa. Several times I met and wrote to the Railway Minister in this regard. On the basis of his assurances I was convinced that this demand would certainly be fulfilled in this budget. But, with great pain, I have to say that even this time the people of Rewa have been betrayed.

I again earnestly request the hon. Minister that half the coaches of Mahakaushal Express - that runs daily from Jabalpur to Hazrat Nizamuddin - should be detached at Satna and should be run till Rewa, and should again be attached at Satna. Mahamaya Express runs from Jabalpur to Nizamuddin. Both these trains depart at half-an-hour's interval. Both go via Katni. By extending this train to Rewa, neither will it cause any inconvenience to any one nor will the department have to incur any additional expenditure.

Similarly, a train should be introduced from Rewa to Allahabad to link Prayagraj Express. This would benefit immensely the people of Rewa and Siddi.

* Laid on the Table.

Thousands of people commute daily from Rewa to Jabalpur to attend work at High Court and for other purposes. Therefore, a daily express train should be introduced between Rewa to Jabalpur so that people can return back to Rewa on the same night, from Jabalpur.

Rewa railway Station and platform should be developed and equipped with modern facilities.

Lastly, I would conclude by making one demand. Damora railway station, in Rewa district is very old. And Damora has a very big market and a township. I appeal to the hon. Minister that arrangements should be made for stoppage of Shipra Express and other express trains at Damora.

With these words I support the rail budget.

*SHRI RAJENDRA AGNIHOTRI (Jhansi) : This Statement of mine may be included in the discussion on the Railway Budget.

I support the Rail Budget presented by the Hon. Railway Minister. This is the first Railway Budget, which fulfill people's aspirations. All those projects, which were announced and inaugurated and lying incomplete for long time have been included in this budget and funds have been made available for them. Rail system has been stream lined in backward region. Optimum attention has been paid for passengers convenience. I express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister for this. I want to draw attention of the Hon. Minister towards some points and hope that he would take necessary decision in this regard.

Written examination is necessary for the promotion of Railway employees but not the interview as they are not free and fair. Irregularities take place in interviews. Therefore employees should be promoted on the basis of the results of written examination. The process of appointments on compassionate grounds should be made simple and time bound. Cases of appointments of this kind should be disposed of within three months from the date of submission of application. As per my information, around four thousand application are pending in the central railway.

It is also necessary to give recognition to All India Engineers Diploma Railway Association without only delay as Diploma Engineers had vital role in prevention of accidents. Diploma Engineers are held directly responsible for the railway accidents so the demands of their organisation for recognition should be accepted. A committee should be set up to consider the proposals submitted by this association for the prevention of

accidents and railways should implement the recommendations of this committee.

I have long been emphasising on this point and would like to repeat that many cases of class III, IV and other categories have been pending in Labour Court, High Courts and the Supreme Court. Decisions on them should be taken expeditiously and the Central Railways should be directed to dispose of all ongoing cases immediately.

Sir, It is quite a small thing, but very important issue. Each facility at Lalitpur Railway Station should be upgraded for cleanliness and proper ambience, Airy Retiring halls for 2nd class passengers should be constructed and maintained properly. 1st class retiring rooms should be made comparatively large, clean and comfortable. It is necessary to increase the arrangements of shades on platforms for the protection from rains. Retiring Hall consisting atleast of five rooms should be constructed at Lalitpur railway station and full attention should be paid to cleanliness I demand that it is necessary to build retiring Hall with modern facilities at this railway station keeping in view the large number of passengers.

There is no facility of retiring room for 2nd class passengers. Thousands of passengers are compelled to stay in open space. There is no facility of retiring hall, drinking water and shelter from rains I stress upon the need of a 2nd class retiring hall in these circumstances.

It has been my long pending demand to treat patients with modern and advanced machines in the railway hospitals of Jhansi and also build some new wards there. All equipments should be made available especially for the treatment of heart disease.

There is a need to construct multi storied houses for railway employees because they work in adverse conditions. At least 70% employees need Housing in Jhansi. Efforts should be made to meet the housing facility.

These demands have been made several times and I wish that the Hon. Minister announce and ensure to meet these demands.

- I. Doubling and electrification of Jhansi-Kanpur rail line;
- II. Doubling and electrification of rail line from Jhansi to Manikpur;
- III. A new rail line from Drai to Etawah via Konch should be laid;

New trains from Jhansi to New Delhi and Lucknow should be introduced so that pressure could be eased on long distances trains and difficulties faced by the

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Rajendra Agnihotri]

passengers travelling to N. Delhi and Lucknow from Jhansi could be solved. There should be an enquiry into the reasons as to why Taj Express which runs upto Gwalior can not be extended upto Jhansi inspite of Jhansi being a tourist place and attracting tourists in large number. Therefore, extending Taj Express upto Jhansi is promotion to tourism and fulfillment of Public expectations. I leave this matter of inquiry up to to the Hon. Minister and take decisions immediately on my suggestions.

The construction work of Jhansi railway station is of very low standard. Bungling of lacs of rupees is involved in this. There should be a high level enquiry into it.

With these words I thank the Hon. Minister and conclude my speech supporting the railway budget.

[English]

*SHRI P. RAJARETHINAM (Perambalur) : Sir, I hereby support the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000.

Though the Budget is appreciable, I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to consider the following requirements.

New formation of Railway line to Perambalur

My constituency Perambalur is also the head quarters of newly created Perambalur District Tamil Nadu. Perambalur is not connected with Railway route and people of that area have to go to Ariyalur for train journey which 30 kms from Perambalur. If a Railway line is laid in between Perambalur and Ariyalur which is only 30 kilometres distance the people of that area will be benefitted and thus Perambalur will get head quarters status.

[Translation]

*SHRI SHANTI LAL CHAPLOT (Udaipur) : Sir, I would like to express my gratitude towards the Minister of Railways through you that he has presented a very good budget for dynamic pace of the nation. The year of 1999 has been a very difficult year for this nation. The entire world has been suffering from economic recession. The Railway could not remain unaffected with this. This year you did not increase the ordinary passenger's fare. This stands for love of yours towards the public. This year expenditures have increased due to impact of Fifth pay commission and in odd situations you have got desired success. This year performance of freight carriage have not been upto expectations. So it will reduce to collect

economic resources. This year two and more than two passengers compartments have been added to hundred popular trains. Total 440 additional compartments have been added in order to facilitate the travelling of nearly thirty thousands persons.

124 new trains have been started this year. 32 trains have been extended. Frequencies of 32 trains have been extended and whatever declarations were made last year have also been implemented mostly. You have done a remarkable work by announcing 1999-2000 as the year of passengers. It is expected by it that the employees will behave in a polite way and provide better services to the passengers. The reservation will be easier and passengers will get rid of agents. To declare a noble station in every division is also a praise-worthy step.

This is a kind request to you that a special train should be introduced for tourist resorts and special tourist programmes, so that passenger may not feel inconvenient. Earlier, there was so much corruption in the railways in connection with jobs. Now written tests will be the criteria to select able person. So you are entitled to thanks. The candidates will not appear in oral interview, and thus there will be a check on corruption. Two years ago crores of rupees have been mustered illegally in the name of interview for recruitment in the railway service at Ajmer and Jaipur, and later on those officers were also arrested. Now the candidates will get rid of this problem. This is also a praise-worthy step that you are going to prohibit the selling of biri and cigareets in the railway on the occasion of Environment Day celebration starting from 5th June. This year you have caused a havoc in the developing countries by making six thousands horse power diesel engine. Really this is an unprecended work. This year more than 429.30 millions of ton freight work will take place but there will be escalation in expenditure in the scheme of Rs. 1530 crores on project by fifth pay commission. Due to this reason, development work will be affected a bit. In spite of that whatever development have been done in these situations is admirable. This year you have declared that Jaipur-Bangalore Train will be run bi-weekly. Thanks you very much for that. The train that we had demanded you have fixed its route through Jaipur Secunderabad to Bangalore, but the Jaipur Bangalore train that we had demanded for that work is used by most of the people from Ajmer, Maswar, Pali, Jodhpur incoming and going to Bangalore. But you have fixed its route through Jaipur to Kota via Secunderabad. It is totally impractical. So its route should be change via Jaipur, Ajmer, Pali and Marwar, and only then this route will be meaningful. This year honourable Finance Minister has kept 9700 crores of rupees in plan outlay. Rajasthan has always been neglected. This year Rajasthan did not get even 70-80 crores of rupees in Plan outlay. Rajasthan accounts ten

* Laid on the Table.

percent of area of this country. Rajasthan has second position after Madhya Pradesh in the country. Rajasthan is the largest in area among Bengal, Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Rajasthan. A huge amount has been provided in these states but this point has not been taken account in case of Rajasthan because Rajasthan is the tenth part in view of area. According to this calculation, if outlay is sanctioned to Rajasthan, Rajasthan will get 970 crores of rupees. If in accordance with population, plan outlay is given to Rajasthan, Rajasthan is the nineteenth part of the country. If nineteenth parts of plan outlay is given to Rajasthan, Rajasthan should get five hundred crores of rupees whereas it has not got. I could not understand as to what is the criteria for deciding, plan outlay. Is it being decided on the basis of population area or gadgil formula?

I have sent several letters to you and Honourable Prime Minister saying that Rajasthan is one of the backward states. Rajasthan is border State. 1400 k.m. area of Rajasthan borders with Pakistan. The desert of Thar is also there in Rajasthan. More than ninety percent of desert of India is there in Rajasthan. Mewar is one of the places of Rajasthan and Mewar's people have constantly faced the aggression of foreiner people at least for 800 years. Who can falsify the sacrifice of Maharana Pratap for freedom? He has shown the way of freedom and the very region is being neglected in respect of development in every case.

I therefore, request you that a special attention should be paid in this regard. There is a total provision of 262 crores of rupees for conversion of broad gauge of Udaipur, Chittaur garh and Ajmer. In the year of 1998-99 20 crores of rupees have been sanctioned but even in total 1.75 crores of rupees have not been spent. I request you that the amount of Rs. 25 crore you have sanctioned for this year is very less amount and we will not be able to complete the work of gauge conversion by this amount even in several years. So you should increase an amount of Rs. 20-25 crore. If 25 crores of rupees are supposed for Udaipur to Chittaur garh, then there should be a provision of 10-12 crores of rupees for Chittaurgarh to Bhilwara to Ajmer and if work is started from these three sites, there will be swiftness in the work. The train which leaves from Mawali to Badi Sadari has only two bogies and that is inconvenient. If it is connected with Nimach via Udaipur Mawali and Bari Sadari it will be uneconomical and the public of that area will be highly benefited. Myself and Shri Laxmi Narain Pandey demanded the same many times. I demand one more thing that a survey from Basari to Dariabad Pratap garh line should also be conducted. A survey of Dariabad to Gatole and Gatole to Banswara line should also be conducted. It is said that the survey of Bansawada to Ratlam has already been

conducted. That tribal area will be developed if Bansawada is connected with Ratlam. The power, water and marble are sufficiently available here and hydel power is also there. This backward areas will be massive developed due to availability power, water and marble, A broad gauge rail line was to be constructed for a train which runs from Udaipur to Ahmedabad but afterwards it was converted into metre gauge. If it is converted into broad gauge, the route of Mumbai will be convenient. The route of Udaipur to Marwad Junction is metre gauge. The train which used to run from Udaipur to Jodhpur is running up to Marwar. There is a broad gauge from Marwar to Jodhpur and a metre gauge from Udaipur to Marwar. So the passengers have to change there train to go to Marwar from Jodhpur. That is very inconvenient. This train has been running since 70 years and now no body likes to travel by this train. So the route from Marwad to Udaipur should be converted into broad gauge.

A Survey should also be conducted from Beawar to Bhim and Bhim to Deogarh so that this route could also be linked to rail line. The train runs from Devgarh to Marwar. So this route will be linked to rail. Rajasthan accounts 21.06% of broad gauge route but out of total rail route whereas there are more than 70% of broad gauge route in Bengal, Bihar, Tamilnadu. So, I believe that you will provide full contribution to Rajasthan without any discrimination. I thanks the Minister of Railways for sanctioning 25 crores of rupees for gauge conversion of Udaipur and Ajmer.

*SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT (Shajapur) : Sir, I express the following views on the Railway Budget, 1999-2000 and request the Railway Minister to solve the problems at the earliest.

Budgetary sanction was given in the last budget for survey of new rail line from Ujjain to Agar-Malwa, Susner, Soyat, Ramganj Mandi. The hon. Railway Minister had inaugurated the survey work in a function but it has not been started so far. The survey work should be started at the earliest.

Sanction for the construction of railway overbridge at the railway crossing on Dewas-Ujjain road of Dewas rail line and Makshi railway crossing situated at Ujjain-Bhopal rail line on Agra-Mumbai National Highway no.3 should be given at the earliest.

The Ujjain-Bhopal and Ujjain-Dewas-Indore rail line should be doubled and electrified fully at the earliest.

Work on the new rail line from Makshi, Dewas, Indore, Dahod to Godhra which was sanctioned in the year 1988-

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot]

89 could not be started due to lack of proper budgetary provision. Kindly work should be started at the earliest by providing proper budgetary provision for the above line.

The railway godown at Dewas-Makshi and Shujalpur be proper', maintained and the godown capacity of Dewas railway station should be increased and its present structure be constructed by raising its height.

*SHRI SRIRAM CHAUHAN (Basti) : Hon. Speaker Sir, I strongly support the Railway Budget presented by Shri Nitish Kumar, the hon. Railway Minister because provisions have been made to lay new railway lines in the remote rural areas and care too has been taken to provide the requisite facilities to the passengers. Proper facilities have been provided to the handicapped, Journalists, old persons in this Budget. Many long pending demands have been met by introducing new trains on heavy traffic routes. Even after including many good schemes in the present budget for the country, it is extremely necessary to complete the following works in my parliamentary constituency and its related areas, in public interest.

The construction work of Katra-Ayodhya bridge over river Ghagra has started but the work is progressing very slow. Keeping, in view the historical importance of Ayodhya, the birth place of Lord Rama, and the difficulties being faced by devotees and pilgrims the hindrance in the way of its construction should be removed at the earliest.

The lines between Gorakhpur and Khanau should be doubled, the rail lines between Gorakhpur and Sahjanwan and Lucknow to Barabanki have been doubled, but the remaining railway line between Sahjanwan to Varanasi via Khalilabad-Basti-Gonda should be doubled so that travel be made easy and the recurring accidents are stopped.

New rail line should be constructed between Katra to Basti via Haraiya, Tonda to Basti, and Basti to Lumbini via Rudhauri-Banshi-Tefri-Bardpur-Kakharwa.

The roads of the railway department on both sides of Basti railway station are in a dilapidated condition. Beautification of the roads and platforms should be done.

Babhnan is a big town and the traffic gets congested, therefore an overbridge should be constructed.

Rajdhani Express and another Vaishali Express should be run on this route for the convenience of the passengers of Gorakhpur-Basti-Gonda.

The stoppage of Cochin Express should be ensured at Babhnan and Khalilabad railway stations.

Passengers should be protected from the difficulties being faced by them due to the connivance of porters and security personnel at New Delhi Railway station in Vaishali Express.

A computerised reservation centre should be opened at Babhnan.

With this hon. Speaker Sir, through you. I thank the hon. Railway Minister.

*SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY (Ranchi) : Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget presented by the Railway Minister. It is a balanced Budget. In this Budget, much relief has been provided to the poor and they are not likely to be affected much from this Budget. If we intend to lay railway net in the entire country, we are bound to increase our allocation for that purpose. I also extend my thanks to the Railway Minister for giving the country such a balanced Budget. But, at the same time, I would also like to apprise the Minister of problems being faced by the people in my constituency. They are as follows :-

1. Adequate measures should be taken for sanitation and security arrangements in railways.
2. A train between Ranchi and Mumbai should be introduced immediately as Ranchi is an important place from every point of view.
3. Adequate measures should be taken to provide drinking water and Pantry car facility in the train running between Bokaro and Madras.
4. A local passenger train between Ranchi and Jamshedpur should be introduced immediately.
5. Calcutta-Bokaro Shatabdi Express should be extended upto Ranchi.
6. Work should be accelerated on Ranchi-Lohardaga and Tory link line.
7. Swarn Jayanti train, which runs four days a week between Ranchi and Delhi, should run via Gomoou the rest of the three days.
8. Halt should be given to Tata Passenger train at Barka Thana in Bakar Kudi (Ichagarh).
9. The building of D.R.M. office, Ranchi should be constructed immediately.

The above demands are long pending but so far none of them have been met.

With these words. I again support the Railway Budget and hope that the Railway Minister, as usual, will definitely look into these problems of Vanancal region.

*SHRI INDRAJEET MISHRA (Khalilabad) : Hon'ble Minister for Railways has presented a balanced budget, I rise to thank him and support this budget. The Railway are related to the common man. Hon'ble Minister for Railways has provided relief to the poor by not increasing the second class tariff. Poor and eligible candidates were deprived of jobs in the Railways because of corruption in the recruitments there, but half of it has been brought under control by banning interviews now. For this also he deserves credit.

Sir, the number of accidents has decreased during the last year, though accidents are often there between Gonda Kachahari, Manikapur Basti and Khalilabad Magahar in eastern Uttar Pradesh. Heavy traffic is there on account of Gorakhpur-Lucknow being the main route. You are requested to convert the Lucknow-Gorakhpur route into double line. Work is on at Gorakhpur-Sahjanwa, Gonda-Barabanki. My submission is that this work be completed at an early date by providing more budget for the job.

There is a level crossing near Deegha, Meeraganj between Gorakhpur and Basti with no barriers or employees over there. Many an accident have taken place there. There have been many deaths due to tractor and train collisions. Therefore, railway barriers be set up at both these places. An over bridge be constructed for convenience of movement at Khalilabad which has now become the centre of Distt. Sant Kabir Nagar.

Sir, this year you have decided to run 14 new trains and extend the route of many a train. You know that the unemployed educated people and labourers of eastern Uttar Pradesh including Basti, Gonda, Sant Kabir Nagar, Siddharth Nagar etc. go mainly to Bombay, Delhi and Ludhiana etc. in search of jobs and labour due to poverty and unemployment in these districts. About 30 percent of the population of Bombay includes people from these areas only. You are also aware that when these people start from Bombay they are looted by the people there and when they arrive here, the locals loot them. To avoid this it is requested to extend the route of Pushpak Super Fast Express, running between Bombay and Lucknow, upto Gorakhpur.

Sir, when there was narrow gauge line, Shan-e-Avadh, and afterwards Intercity was there between Gorakhpur and Lucknow. But now there is no such train from Gorakhpur to Lucknow to ensure the arrival at Lucknow around ten o'clock. Therefore, you are requested

to arrange for the stoppage of Gorakhpur - Kochin, Gorakhpur - Hyderabad, Gorakhpur - Jammu Tavi and Gorakhpur - Dehradun trains at Khalilabad so as to enable the people of Khalilabad to reach Lucknow on time and also to speed up the progress of industries there. Khalilabad is the centre of Distt. Sant Kabir Nagar. Khalilabad is the biggest handloom mandi of the eastern region. Monday market is there when buying and selling for crores of rupees takes place in one day. The traders have to face a lot of problems while travelling to and from that area. An arrangement for at least two additional bogies be made on Sundays and Mondays to enable traders to carry the goods so that the business of handloom flourishes there.

Sir, a bridge is under construction across the Saryu river in Ayodha. The distance from Katra to Basti is lessened. Therefore, a new railway line be laid after conducting survey between Basti and Katra.

Sir, the survey of Khalilabad Manikapur railway line was conducted twice, but this railway route has not yet been started. You are requested to get this route included on the railway map at an early date. With these words I thank you and support the budget.

[English]

*SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY (Banaskantha) : Sir, I stand for support of railway budget presented by Mr. Nitish Kumarji.

I want to raise the problems of Railways in my constituency.

1. Conversion of Gandhidham - Samakhiati - Palanpur Railway into broad gauge you have approved this project but not granted single money. So kindly grant at least 10 crores Rs.
2. There is no VIP quota at Palanpur. Kindly arrange to allot 2 seats in 2nd AC in all the Trains stopping at Palanpur.
3. AJMER-MUMBAI train now running thrice a week kindly do regular and allot reservation quota of 20 SL & 4 2nd AC in this train.
4. 9263-9264 PORBUNDER-DELHI EX. Kindly give stoppage and allot 15 SL in this train also extend this train to Haridwar.
5. There is no platform for fertilizer and other goods after conversion into broad gauge Kindly give rack point for fertilizer and build new platform.

[Shri Haribhai Chaudhary]

6. Computerisation at Palanpur Station.
7. New Railway line from Bhildi to Tharad to Sanchor.
8. New Railway line from Kasa to Bhiladi.
9. Double BG line between AHMEDABAD to Delhi.
10. More reservation quota in different trains at Palanpur Jn. Rly. Station.
11. Stoppage of Delhi-AHMEDABAD and Rajdhani Express at Palanpur Jn.
12. ARAVALI Ex. and RANAKPUR Ex. kindly extend from Bandra to Mumbai.

*SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI (Shimla) : Sir, I submit my speech on Railway budget as under :

I would like to congratulate the Government for having sanctioned a railway line for Kalka and Parvanu in Himachal Pradesh in this financial year.

I want to say that after independence a decision was taken by the Government of India to lay two railway lines in Himachal Pradesh. The money was spent on Nangal-Talwada railway line but the public did not get the benefit there by it. This railway line was to be constructed upto Talwada but it has not been constructed till now and many a survey was conducted. Out of them there used to old railway line which passed through Sarhind to Nalagash and it was well constructed railway line which was removed but its track is still there. It has been demanded that a train should be started but nothing was done. Many a survey was also conducted which are lying pending in the railway department and a survey was conducted by the department of railways in which there was a proposal to run a train from Chandigarh to Dehradun via Ponta Sahib and the other survey was conducted at the time of Shri Kamalapati Tripathi, the then Minister for railways. This survey from Jagadhari to Ponta Sahib and Kalka to Parvanu was conducted in his time and he had told the House about its construction in his speech while presenting railway budget but this year the Government has repeated that bygone resolution to construct it. In this connection all the Members of Himachal Pradesh who were in 10th Lok Sabha when there was a united front Government, they protested against it that a railway line should be laid in Himachal Pradesh and the then Railway Minister had assured to conduct some survey of railway lines and work on them. In that connection nothing has

been said in his speech. An important railway line which was planned to be laid like Konkan Railway line and previous Congress Government had also demanded the Government of India in this regard and a survey was conducted. This railway line was to be laid from Bhanupali to Nathpa Jhakri via Bilaspur and Rampur after having a dialogue with all of the persons connected with Hydel Projects and cement factories to be established and some other industries already established there and in view of this dialogue, an action was taken, but today's Government did not take any action to make it successful in any way. I would also like to mention here that an old railway line leads to Shimla in Himachal Pradesh since the time of British rule and when the English were in India, they had open there booking office at Kasauli and Sapatu etc. but they are now unused and the railway land has been given on lease at so many places and the land has been given to such people who are making profit of lakhs of rupees and those people have no want for land. The poor have no partnership in it. The Government should pay attention to it and an inquiry be made as to why it happened. Along with the railway line from Kalka to Shimla trees are grown naturally and most of them are pine trees and tracks are tied with them in to take out and order and collect turpentine. If the trees grown there are cut down, it will give harm to the environment. I demand that afforestation be done along with railway line and taking out turpentine from the trees should be banned and an investigation should be made as to who have possession over this railway land from Kalka to Shimla and as to who are being benefited by it and an inquiry should be conducted against the officers who are involved in it.

Now I would like to tell you that in the area of Kangra, the railway line from Pathankot to Joginder Nagar by which an area of Himachal is benefited should be converted into broad gauge because there are religious places in this area. Jwalamukhi, Chomunda Devi Temple, Naina Devi etc. are religious places and to and fro facilities should be provided to the people. It is for the Government to extend railway line from Joginder Nagar onwards people of Himachal Pradesh should be given assistance just like Kashmir. I would like to suggest here that railway line should be extended at Kullu Manali in Joginder Nagar via Mandi which is an international tourist place and the railway line that has come under Pong Dam and has been destroyed and the rest railway line upon which a train used to run, has been discontinued. I demand that an action should be taken to repair the railway line and the people of that area demand that the land which is out of railway line should be distributed among the people there so that they may take benefit by it. That vacant lying land is not still being used. Some houses of railways are lying empty (unoccupied).

* Laid on the Table.

I can say in my constituency the railway land from Kalka to Shimla has been occupied by such persons who are transacting business and the officials of railways are involved in it. It should be investigated. Secondly, I demand that 5-6 coaches should be added from Kalka to Mumbai because the tourists come here from distant places and they feel very much inconvenient. The Kalka-Amritsar train which has been discontinued should be continued again because there too, are many holy places. Delhi-Chandigarh bound Shatabdi Express which runs in the morning and the eatable items to be served in the said train are good in number which should be investigated. If the said quantity can be lessened and thereby a good saving may be made by the railways, the fare may be reduced by which the passengers would be benefitted. That train should be extended upto Kalka because Kalka is the biggest station of Himachal and further journey may be completed by rail or car.

Besides, A number of workers used to work in the workshop of Kalka during British regime, but now that number seems to be very less. Railway department should take steps to run that work properly and a survey should be conducted to extend the railway line upto Jubal beyond Shimla so that the people from upper Himachal could be benefitted by the railway. I feel that per chapter expenditure in Himachal in the country is so less which is injustice against the hill state. It should be helped more.

With these words I want to express the feelings of the people from Himachal in the House.

[English]

*SHRI U.V. KRISHNAM RAJU (Kakinada) : Sir, I rise to support the historic Railway Budget presented by our hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar on 25.02.1999, and I congratulate him for the support of the budget which he received from all the sections of the society.

The year 1999-2000 being declared as the passenger year, the Hon'ble Railway Minister has given special gift to most of the railway passengers, like season ticket holders, travellers in the passenger trains by not increasing the fare despite rising the price of diesel and operational costs.

I welcome the setting up of customer care institute for giving orientation to booking clerks, ticket checkers, and other staff who are interfacing with the public. Keeping in view that we are entering the 21st century, like Airlines reservation, the Railway Minister has also arranged for Tele-Booking reservation of New Delhi reservation complex. I am sure, like computer reservation, this facility would

also spread to all zonal Railways and important towns and cities.

Accident prevention is also very important and I welcome the "tracks circuiting" being provided for prevention of accidents due to human failure.

Sir, on behalf of the people of Andhra Pradesh, especially the people from my constituency and on my own behalf, I want to thank the Hon'ble Prime Minister Atalji, the Hon'ble Railway Ministers Shri Nitish Kumar and Shri Ram Naik for including our long pending demand of Kakinada-Pathapuram new line, to be connected with the main line. It is long cherished dream fulfilled by our Government. I would request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to obtain the necessary clearances so that the work on the new line could start in right earnest. At present Kakinada is a fast developing town industrially and trade wise, Kakinada-Vizag industrial corridor is going to get investments worth Rs. 50,000 crores in near future. Kakinada port is also likely to handle around 10 million tonnes of cargo by next year and about 18 million tonnes by the year 2005. Once this line is completed it would develop this region and Kakinada port should attract more container cargo, especially when the capacity of Vizag port is almost in saturation point. I would also request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to increase the Budget allocation for this project for the financial year at least upto 50% of the total cost in the supplementary Railway Budget from the token amount. More over Kakinada is a District head quarters and an important industrial centre. For the convenience of people one three tier A/C sleeper may please be attached to the 7047/7048 Gautami Express running between Kakinada port and Secunderabad.

About the fair increase to long distance trains, I would make a request to Hon'ble Railway Minister in the name of rationalization, he has increased the fares in sleeper class, A/C Chair Car, A/C three tier sleeper etc. While I agree with the Hon'ble Minister that the burden of hike in the upper classes will be borne by the rich people, traders, business community. The sharp hike in 3-tier A/C and sleeper class is too heavy for the common people, farmers, lower middle class people who has to travel long distances for their avocation, meeting social obligations etc. I would therefore request you to reduce the hike in the fare at least in sleeper class and A/C 3-tier sleeper which is no longer a luxury but a necessary one.

I thank the Hon'ble Minister for extending the concessions for handicapped persons and escorts to A/C classes.

I also welcome the introduction of the new trains like Chennai-Tirupathi Shatabdi Express, Secunderabad - Machilipatnam Express, Delhi - Coimbatore Express etc.

[Shri U.V. Krishnam Raju]

While providing passengers reservation system terminals on experimental basis to private parties, I would urge upon the Railway Minister to formulate guidelines with suitable safe guards for the scheme so that the terminals are not misused and unemployed graduate youth may be given this scheme under self employment programme.

With these words, I once again thank the hon. Prime Minister and the Railway Minister for including Kakinada-Pithapuram rail line project and I support the Railway Budget and Supplementary Railway Budget.

*SHRI VENKATARAMI ANANTHA REDDY (Anantapur): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in this Debate on the Railway Budget for 1999-2000. I have been carefully listening to the speeches made by my distinguished colleagues since morning. I feel that it is my duty towards the people of Anantapur constituency in Andhra Pradesh to raise some of the important issues pertaining to the State in general and of Anantapur district in particular in this august forum.

One of the most revenue-earning Divisions of the Railways, Guntakal Division in South Central Railway, is in my constituency. It is but natural that the people of the district demand from me that I attend to their needs concerning Railways.

Firstly, there is heavy traffic between Guntakal and Renigunta and to Madras - more so the important iron ore is transported via this route. This being a single line and without much of electrification, it takes lot of time and delay. The doubling of Reniguta - Guntakal line is one of the most important and basic need in the South Central Railway. Unfortunately, no money is provided for in this Budget for this important work. I demand that suitable amendments are made and sufficient money allocated for taking up the doubling work of Renigunta - Guntakal line.

The motto of the Railways now is about Unigaue. Gauge conversion works are taken up on priority basis. The work on Pakala-Dharmavaram segment's conversion to broad gauge is very urgently needs to be taken up. Once this conversion is completed, it will provide a parallel line between Chennai and Mumbai and this will ease the pressure on the existing line. I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister to look into this and give priority for conversion of Pakala - Dharmavaram line into broad gauge.

Sir, I now turn to another important grievance of the people of Anantapur district. After the commencement of Konkan Railway, as many as TEN trains from Mumbai towards Kerala - which were hitherto being run via

Guntakal and Anantapur - have now been taken off from this route. For the last several years the people of this region are accustomed to the convenient transport towards Kerala and Mumbai and other regions in the North. Many trains are diverted via Konkan railways. The change of route, though welcome, should not cause inconvenience to the existing users. Now there is only one train from Kurla to Coimbatore which runs via Guntakal and Anantapur. I request that this may be extended upto Trivandrum so that the people of this region get transport facility upto Trivandrum. This extension will not only facilitate the people of Anantapur district but will also help several thousands of people of adjacent Bellary district of Karnataka. I strongly demand for extension of this train upto Trivandrum.

For the past several years, I have been raising the genuine need of the stoppage of Mumbai - Trivandrum Jayanti Janata Express at Tadipatri station for at least two minutes. Tadipatri is a very important station in this route. A Rs. 6,000 crore cement unit of L&T and several other units of industrial development are coming up in this region. Thousands of people travel from this area towards Mumbai and Trivandrum. Though there is a train passing through this station, they are not able to use it. A stoppage of two minutes of this train at Tadipatri is very genuinely needed. The people of this region have been agitating over this issue for the past several years. I would submit that the Hon'ble Minister may take this into consideration and order for the stoppage.

While on the issue of stoppage, I would like to submit that the prestigious Rajdhani Express running between Bangalore and Hazrat Nizamuddin does not stop at the divisional headquarters of Guntakal. For change of staff or for watering etc., a stoppage of this train at the Divisional hqrs. of Guntakal is very essential. Hon'ble Minister may consider this demand and order for stoppage of the Rajdhani Express at Guntakal for at least two minutes.

Sir, prior to announcement of gauge conversion and new project between Nandyal and Guntakal there were two trains from Tirupati to Hyderabad via Guntakal and Anantapur. They have now been taken off. There was earlier a MG train between Dharmavaram and Hyderabad which is also discontinued. This is affecting several thousands people of Dharmavaram and other regions and also those of adjacent Madanapalli and Chittoor regions in the Chittoor district. Several people of this region used to get the transport facility to Hyderabad from Dharmavaram. I urge upon the Minister of Railways that a new Dharmavaram - Hyderabad train may be introduced on the broad gauge line. This will increase the revenues of the Railways as well as help the people of the region to have direct access to the State capital.

Sir, these are but some of the very few important issues and grievances of the people of Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh. I welcome the introduction of trains between Tirupati and Chennai and other trains. Unfortunately, not much funds are allocated to the South Central Railways for taking up new projects and no trains are announced particularly in this region. For the all-round development of the South Central Railways, it is necessary that sufficient funds are allocated for taking up projects like doubling and electrification etc. Which will ultimately benefit the Railways with increased earnings. I, therefore, request the Minister of Railways that he may pay attention for this aspect and make suitable amendments in the Budget allocation. I want to turn towards the formation of new Zones also.

Now Railways are having resources crunch. Railways have gone for unique convention and modern technology of communication and equipment. So there is no need to creating new zones in Southern region. It will lead to linguistic agitations disturbing the brotherly relations. For example Guntakal division consisting of Hospet, Bellary section of Karnataka and is well accepted both in Karnataka and Andhra to be in Guntakal division. Guntakal division is in South Central Railway. Now railways are thinking new zones at Hubli or Bangalore. Guntakal division people won't accept to be in those zones. If any attempt to included the Guntakal division in the above zones there will be a lot of agitation from the public. So, I request the Government there will not any quality of service to the public only white color jobs are created. Instead creating zones railways should think of safety, maintenance to improve functionality and lower level employment may be created. So I request not create any new zones.

With these a few words, I conclude by once again urging upon the Minister of Railways to look into the genuine problems of Anantapur district in Andhra Pradesh and come out with suitable solutions as mentioned in the above paragraph and I thank you, Sir, for giving me the time to raise some of the issues of the people of my constituency.

*SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA (Sambalpur) : Today I am raising to speak on the Railway Budget with a heavy heart and hurt sentiment. Sir, since Independence it has been an accepted tradition to neglect some backward States, particularly my State Orissa by successive Governments. Specially for the Railway Department Orissa matter less. This has been proved in the successive Railway budgets. When the Government led by our beloved leader Shri A.B. Vajpayee was formed a year back

and when our party, the BIJU JANATA DAL decided to participate in the Government, it generated a great hope amongst the people of my State that the era of negligence to Orissa would be over.

My State was neglected despite the fact that Congress Party was in power at the Centre as well as in Orissa at the same time for a considerably long time. Now that my own Party is an important ally in this Government. It is but natural that our party as well as the people of Orissa would hope a great deal from the present Central Government. But Sir, all our hopes has been belied when we went through the Railway Budget of 1999-2000. Our Party leader and Union Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik has made some valuable suggestions to the Hon'ble Railway Minister at the time of pre-Budget scrutiny regarding certain important ongoing projects and proposals for some new projects in Orissa. But I am sorry to say here. It has not been adequately reflected in the Budget.

Sir, in the first instance, I would like to say something about the new East Coast Railway Zone. The U.F. Government has decided to create six new zones by reorganising the existing Railway network for efficient management and to create a scope for development of Railway network in the under developed areas, thereby discharging to an extent, the Railways social responsibility. This was done at the instance of our Late Leader Shri Biju Patnaik and the then Prime Minister Shri Deve Gowda ji himself laid the foundation stone for the new zone.

Subsequently the Ministry of Railways vide on order No. 97/E&R/700/1 dated 30.4.97 laid down certain targets, phasewise, for the operation of a new zone, As per the directive the first phase the target for which was January '97, was the setting up at the office of the OSD and creation of infrastructure for a functional office. The Second phase envisaged transferring of the divisions of KHURDA ROAD and VISAKHAPATNAM to the new zone, this was to have been achieved by Jan'98. But after 3*1/2 years of its announcement nothing has been done so far except an opening of an office and posting same Railway offices without adequate support staff. Beyond that nothing has been achieved sofar. Even no official notification is there for making the zone operative.

Sir, 3 (Three months backs, I was invited to the South East Railway consultative Committee meeting at Garden Reach. Along with me Six other MP's of my Party from Orissa wrote to the Hon'ble Railway Minister expressing our dissatisfaction and resentment for holding the meeting at Calcutta instead of establishing a separate Committee for East Coast zone and holding its meeting at Bhubaneswar. As a mark of protest we did not attend the meeting. Adding insult to our injury even till date we are awaiting a reply from the Hon'ble Railway Minister. God knows

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Prasanna Acharya]

when we will receive a reply to our communication. Sir, this is the way had the Railway Department is functioning.

Sir, through you, I urge upon the Railway Minister to take necessary immediate steps to make the East Coast Zone functional.

Now I briefly dwell upon the various on going projects which like earlier years have not got adequate allocation.

The Langigesh Road - Junagarh Railway Line with a more than 15% rate of return has got a meagre allocation of Rs. 2 (two) crores only. Only amount of Rs. 11 (Eleven) crores has been spent sofar since the project was sanctioned in 1992-1993.

The Nuapada-Gunupur Fange Conversion project is also languishing because, this project is not even got the necessary approvals from the concerned authorities like Planning Commission etc. Contrary to the belief this project writ also be very remunerative if the proposal to extended it to Rayagada is accepted.

Bhubaneshwar is probably the only the State Capital in the plains, which is not served by Shatabdi Service. There has been a persistent demand for the introduction of this service between Bhubaneswar and Hawrah leaving BBSR in the morning and returning in the evening. A cursory look at the traffic projections between BBSR-HWH would amply justify such an introduction. But for reasons best known to the Railway Administration, they feel such a service is not required for the present. The waiting list figures available with me for Passengers wishing to travel between BBSR - HWH are substantial. This is my opinion is yet another example of Railways negligetce to the State of Orissa. Through this august house I wish to implore on the Hon'ble Railway Minister to announce during the course of his reply to this debate, the introduction of a "SHATABDI" Service between BBSR - HWH.

Sir, Western Orissa is one of the most neglected and poverty stichen area of the Country. You know Sir, in the district I Kalahandi people still die of Starvation even after 50 yrs of Independence. For the overall development of those areas among other things, development in the communication network is highly essential. I am therefore proposing to with Bargarh to Nuapada by a Railway track so that through that route we can be connected to Raipur, the proposed Capital of 'CHATTISGARH' State. I would therefore request the Minister to make necessary provisions to start survey work for that time.

Sir, I have a lot of proposals to make but for the dearth of time that is perhaps not possible here. If the Minister so desires. I will submit all my proposals to him, later on.

Sir, we have sofar not been able to eradicate corruption at different stages of society and the administration as well. But Sir, the degree of corruption, i.e. found in the Railways perhaps is much more than what we experience elsewhere. I donot have much experience outside but I particularly know that is happening now in my own state of Orissa. Corrupt officials are posted at strategic points and they are behaving like emperors obviously with the help and support of political bosses. In Orissa, after this Government took over, the RRB, Bhubaneshwar was dissolved and a Railway Officer was appointed as its new Chairman. With this everybody hoped the Corruption will be brought under control. But to the contrary. Corruption is in the increase.

Few months back, examinations were conducted to recruit personnels to different Group 'C' and Group 'B' posts. I am constraint to say here Sir, the Question papers were sold to the examinees before the examination. There are so many such allegations which has been brought to the notices of Railway authorities by different persons by without any result.

Sir, I am concluding my speech, of course, with a hearty thanks to the Hon'ble Railway Minister for atleast accelerating the long, on going work of Sambalpur - Talcher Rail Line, which he inaugurated on the last Independence Day.

Sir, from the core of my heart I am not inclined to support this Budget as it utterly neglected my State, but I am duty bound to support it as a Member of the Party which is an important ally of this Government.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAMESHWAR PATIDAR (Khargone) : I rise to support the rail budget presented by the Minister for Railways, Mr. Nitish Kumar.

This rail budget is supported by all the classes and organisations of the society. The budget issues raised by the opposition are politically motivated. These people would have praised the same budget beyond bounds, had it been presented by them if they were in power. Successive Congress Governments have hiked more passenger fare and freight charges. Hon. Minister has declared 1999-2000 as the Passenger Year and it is a positive step as attention will be paid to improve the working of railway employees and railway facilities. There is much room for improvement in conduct of the railway employees and facilities in the railways. The railways can achieve a model status even at this level of expenditure by inculcating sense of duty and morality into employees and officers of the railways.

* Laid on the Table.

There is a proposal in the budget to borrow Rs. 3000 crore from the market. The railways will have to pay approximately 21 percent interest. The railways have already borrowed Rs. 14000 crore. Still the amount required for its Development is 35 times that of its income. I therefore, would like to suggest, to assign new rail line laying work to some private companies. The companies may be given right to choose any particular line with railway's consent and may be given income from 20 to 25 years in a fix percentage by calculating the cost amount with interest. These years of benefit may be increased or decreased according to cost and ratio of income.

We would be able to lay rail lines speedily with the help of this scheme otherwise development work will lay behind. When the work of roads and bridges can be assigned to private parties, why not rail lines also.

The Hon. Minister banned use of plastic bags used for packing of head rolls in the last rail budget but its implementation is yet to start. I request you to start it soon.

I welcome the ban on sale of smoking items on the railway stations and it should be implement stringently.

Smoking is allowed in open space out side bathroom in A.C. First class, A.C, Second class and A.C. Third class bogies. The passengers coming to use bathroom are forced to inhale the smoke. This smoke enters A.C. Coaches and harms the passengers. Therefore, smoking should be made prohibitory. Smokers may smoke on the stations in between

I would like to thank hon. Minister for including in rail budget a survey for rail line in my constituency from Khandawa to Khargaon via Nardana (Maharashtra). The people of my constituency are agog with happiness even on the order of survey.

People of this area have been demanding rail line ever since pre independence and last 50 years but no Minister for Railways paid heed to it. You have done a commendable job by ordering the survey. I request you to issue necessary directives as early as possible to get the survey work completed soon so that funds can be allotted for laying rail line in the next budget.

Ajmer, Khandawa metregauge line falls in my constituency. Its gauge conversion has been sanctioned in principle. I request to get the work pertaining to gauge conversion started soon. There are unmanned gates on several rail crossings on this line from Mahu to Badwah and Badwah to Khandwa. Some gates are manned in day time only. So, nearby villagers face problems in crossing the gates at night. I request to deploy gatemen round the clock.

NTPC distributes power to Centre and States from national thermal pool on low rates. But, when the railways purchase power for rail lines from these States, they charge five times for the same power availed on low rates. The Centre should enact a legislation to fix accountability on these states for providing power on low rates.

There should be a provision to deduct amount for railway Development from the huge amounts of thousands of crores of grants-in-aid or grants given to the States at source itself.

Sir, Railway booking facility is available in Chandigarh only at the Bus Stand. The population of Chandigarh is around 10 lakhs at present. Therefore, this facility should be made available at four-five places. Railway Booking offices should be opened at the High Court, Punjab University. P.GI, some major colony and some village to make easy access to the people. The survey work on Chandigarh-Dehradun via Naraingarh railway line should be completed and sanctioned soon so as to start direct rail line from Chandigarh to Haridwar. The Government has acceded to an opening of railway station from Panchkula side recently. It is a praiseworthy step. I also request to get it started and completed soon.

Sir, there is a railway crossing on the way to Mani Majra from Chandigarh. There is traffic jam at this crossing whenever at the time of passing of trains. Houses are being constructed in Mani Majra at a great pace and with the construction of Modern Residential complex thousand of people come and go to Chandigarh. I request the Government to plan an overbridge on this crossing so as to avoid traffic congestion in future. An overbridge is also required at Chandigarh-Ambala road near Dera Bassi. This should also be started soon.

Sir, officers of Railway Department declared recently that a new Shatabdi Express will be started between Delhi and Anandpur Sahib on the occasion of tricentenary of Khalsa Panth. I don't know of the Status of this scheme. It will be better if the Government starts this Shatabdi soon and should be run via Chandigarh. I am also to say that Sirhind and Fatehgarh Sahib are two important historical cities in Punjab. Both the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh ji were buried alive in the wall here. Muslim brethern have very important place in Roja Sharif here. A very big temple of the Jains is also situated here. But, this area is without railway facilities despite being so important from historical and religious view point. Thousands of pilgrimes visit this place every year but no major train stops here. Pilgrimes face a lot of due to this. Therefore, I demand that all the trains on this way should be stopped to pay respect and reverence to this historical place. Sirhind bridge has already been sanctioned by the Government.

[Shri Rameshwar Patidar]

Its construction work should be started soon. The work on railway overbridges sanctioned in Morinda and Kurali should also be started soon so that the problems of the people of the area, with whom I am emotionally attached for growing with them, may be solved.

Sir, the steps taken by the present BJP Government on my request for the development of Chandigarh Railway Station are praiseworthy and the Government deserves commendation for it. But, a lot is yet to be done. I hope the Government of India will pay more attention towards the Development of Chandigarh Railway Station. The decisions already taken will be implemented and the projects under consideration will be accepted soon and work thereupon will be started soon. The Government will keep on releasing the required funds to rejuvenate Chandigarh Railway Station. I conclude with this faith in mind.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAMESH CHANDRA DWIVEDI (Banda) : Sir, I whole heartedly support the popular Railway Budget, presented by the Railway Minister, in which several new steps have been taken for the welfare of the people. While discussing the previous railway budget, I had listed several problems of my Parliamentary Constituency, Banda and I had high hopes in this regard. However, even after a year nothing has been done. It is regretted that even small problems have not been addressed.

Sir, through you I urge upon the Railway Minister to sympathetically look into and solve the problems of Chitrakoot, which symbolises India's cultural heritage, and that of Banda- the lord of Maharishi Vamdev, and take necessary steps for the development of that backward areas. In response to some demands, a survey was conducted by the officials and their report has been sent to me by the hon. Railway Minister. I hereby enclose that report with the hope that the matter would be reconsidered and necessary action would be taken.

I again support the railway budget and finish my speech.

A. Ensuring the introduction of new trains :

- A new train be introduced from Allahabad to Haridwar, via Manikpur-Jhansi and should be named Chitrakootdham Express.
- Introduction of a new train service from Ayodhya to Chitrakootdham, via Allahabad and Manikpur.

- Introduction of Shatabdi Express from New Delhi to Allahabad - the centre of freedom struggle.

B. Special facilities for some important Stations :

- For the development of Banda and Chitrakootdham Stations, overbridge be constructed connecting both the platforms. Arrangement for ladies toilet be made at Atarra Station and the construction of additional room for station master and that of a waiting room.
- Persons like, Nanaji Deshmikh - an aged social worker - frequently travels from there to Delhi. Hence, reservation quota in the A.C. class should be increased. Also, orders should be given immediately for the conversion of side berths into main berths.

C. Changes in the destination of some important trains :

- Banda - Jhansi Shuttle (1523-24) and Banda Kanpur Shuttle (1511-12) for Chitrakootdham be run via Manikpur. By doing so, these would be connected with the trains of the Mumbai lines.
- Chambal Express (Gwalior-Howrah) runs four times a week, this should run daily and extended upto Delhi.

D. Arrangement for stoppage of some important trains at some important Stations :

- Stoppage of Ganga-Cauvery Express, Gyan-Ganga and Tirupati Express should be provided at Manikpur Junction.
- The departure time of Allahabad Jhansi Passenger train should be restored at 4.00 a.m., as earlier.
- Stoppage of Samath Express and Gorakhpur-Dadar Janata Express should be provided at Bargah Station.
- Stoppage of Chitrakoot Express should be provided at Badausa railway station.
- Tulsi Express, which runs from Allahabad to Kurla, via Chitrakootdham and Jhansi, should stop at Atarra Station which is an educational centre, and it should run daily and be extended upto Pune.

E. Changes in the timing of some important trains :

Mahakaushal Express (Jabalpur-Hazrat Nizamuddin) is the only train by which the Members from Banda, Hamirpur and other areas can go to Delhi. Its arrival time should be 9 a.m. so that we can reach the House at time. There is no A.C. second class reservation quota in the train from Attarra this should be done.

You are requested to take necessary steps for the speedy implementation of the above mentioned demands.

*SHRI K. PALANI SWAMI (Tiruchengode) : I thank the Chair for enabling me to participate in this discussion on the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000. My first and foremost request to Hon. Railway Minister is to establish in my constituency a new Railway Division with its headquarters either in Erode or Salem.

Mangla Express train was enabling the people from New Delhi, Tiruppur, Erode, Salem to go to New Delhi. Now that this train has been diverted to traverse through the newly laid Konkan Railway system, the people of my area are greatly affected. Textiles, turmeric, sabu are sent to northern States from these districts in and around my constituency. The businessmen associated with these trade used to frequent Delhi and other States in the north and they are finding it difficult now ever after the route diversion of Mangla Express. Hence, I would like to request Hon. Railway Minister to make the newly introduced weekly Coimbatore-New Delhi Express train to a daily train.

I also request the Hon. Minister for Railways to construct a overbridge at Magudanchavadi between Salem-Erode that come under my constituency. This would be of great help to several vehicle operators and the public in a big way. The level crossing there is often found closed causing great traffic disruption and inconvenience.

The travelling public from Salem and Erode are not able to book advance reservation tickets to travel by Kerala Express train which passes through these towns. Hence, I would like to impress upon the Hon. Minister to provide the people of these towns to have reservation facility with an earmarked quota.

I also request the Hon. Minister to consider giving stoppage at Sankari for all the Chennai bound trains like Kovai Express, Blue Mountain Express, West Coast Express. It is needless to mention that the business community and public in general would be greatly benefited. I request that all trains running from Erode to Karur should have a stop at Kodumudi Junction. Expressing my support to the Budget, let me conclude. Thank you.

* Translation of the speech originally in Tamil and laid on the Table.

*DR. RAM LAKHAN SINGH (Bhind) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I would like to thank Hon'ble Railways Minister Shri Nitish Kumar for presenting fairly a balanced, progressive and public-oriented Rail Budget under the leadership of Hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee and then to point out some suggestions in this regard. Steps should be taken to provide cold and uncontaminated water for common people travelling in second class compartments of all trains.

There are many vendors belonging to my constituency earning their livelihood at Railway stations like Itarsi, Kalyan V.T., Mumbai and Pune. So, the licenses in this regard may be issued in quick succession to the successors of these vendors if they cease to live longer.

Bedroll facility should be excluded from AC two tier fares since the contractors in-charge do not make it available properly as provided by the Railways.

In my constituency, there is an important Rail Project in progress, that is Guna-Bhind-Etawah Railway line. This time merely Rs. 18 crores have been earmarked for it which is scanty as three big Rail bridges are to be constructed across the rivers on route from Bhind to Etawah. Therefore more funds should be provided.

On 20th of Sept. 1998 Hon'ble Prime Minister had visited Gwalior. Addressing a public meeting there he announced a new Rail line 'Bhind-Orai-Mahoba' via Raath and said that the work would be started soon on this project. But its survey is in very slow process. My request is that the work should be sped up so that it could be included in the next budget.

There is a famous holy shrine - "Peetambra Peeth" - in Datia district of my constituency. This being a place of pilgrimage, a number of pilgrims visit there from all over the country. I am requesting for the last two years to provide stoppage of Punjab Mail and other trains at Datia station. In spite of that, trains are not being stopped there. So, my request is that the Punjab Mail may be stopped at Datia station.

There is also a Jain holy place at Sonagiri of my constituency, there too, trains should be stopped.

There is a Basai Railway station in my constituency, where Pathankot Express used to stop some time ago. But that train has ceased to stop there for some time. Instructions may be kindly issued to stop that train there. Quota of four berths should be allotted in G.T. Express from Bhind, since passengers travelling thence to Bhopal and Delhi have to face a lot of difficulties.

With these suggestions, I conclude.

* Laid on the Table.

[English]

*SHRI M. MASTER MATHAN (Nilgiris) : Our hon'ble Minister for Railways has presented his Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000 in this House. I am really happy that he has presented fairly a good Budget. In his Budget he has not touched on second class passengers fare. I am also equally happy he has opened some new Railway lines. In this connection I thank the Minister for opening a new railway line from Chamraj Nagar to Sathiyamangalam. But unfortunately he has failed to connect the same line to Mettupalayam. In the present budget no provision has been provided to my Nilgiris parliamentary constituency. I appeal the Hon'ble Minister to include certain basic provisions to Nilgiris constituency.

The new line should be extended to Mettupalayam.

The Nilgiri Express catering to Nilgiris District which is a tourist centre, has been neglected by the Railway department from Mettupalayam to Ootacamand. In this connection I appeal to the Minister that in view of the tourist importance, new diesel engines should be installed in place of the present old and obsolete engines which are being in use. In my speech in the last year budget I requested to provide new engines for which the earlier Govt. had negotiated with Swiss Government but no follow up action was taken by the Government. This should be pursued and provided. Further (3) new bogies should be provided with modern facilities.

In the present computer age, there is no computer facilities is available. On account of this non-available facilities, the tourists are put into untold hardships for booking their reservation to distant places. As such both at Ooty, Cooyon and Mettupalayam, electronic computer facilities for issuing train tickets should be arranged.

At present Nilgiris Express is being run from Madras to Coimbatore by electricity. This facility should be provided upto Mettupalayam.

Since Nilgiris District in the National tourist map, imperatively the new special engines are urgently required in the Hilly area so that it would attract tourist more and being more revenue to the Govt. exchequer.

[Translation]

*SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY (Buxar) : Sir, stoppage of Farakka Express may be provided at Raghunathpur station for five minutes.

Immediate instruction may be issued for the stoppage of Purushottam Super Fast Express and Purva Express at Bhalua Road station for three minutes.

* Laid on the Table.

Buxar station should be rennovated and the vacant land opposite the entrance gate of the station be allotted for the installation of Vishwamitra's Statue.

[English]

*DR. PRASANNA KUMAR PATASANI (Bhubaneshwar): I am raising today to put for the my views on the Railway Budget. I wish to supplement the statements made by my colleagues.

My Colleagues have already expressed their feelings about various projects and comphasized the need for their completion. They have also conveyed to this august House, the feelings of people of my state regarding introouction of certain services.

My leader Shri Naveen Patnaik had impressed upon the Hon'ble Railway Minister the need for urgently completing certain on going projects which had been progressing at a very slow place. He had also taken up the issue of introduction of certain services, which would benefit my state.

I wish to place on record my appreciation to the Hon'ble Railway Minister and to Shri Naveen Patnaik, my leader for having provided a sum of Rs. 10 crores for KHURDA-BOLANGIN new line project. Through this august house. I urge upon the Hon'ble Railway Minister to pertain the Bhooni. Punjab and state the work on the project without further delay. I also wish to place on record my appreciation for the fact that for the first time an allocation of Rs. 10 crores has been made for this project.

At the same time I am also distrened to point out that an important on going project like the Angul-Sukinda Road Project has been provided a meagre allocation of Rs. 2 crores only. I wish to urge upon the Ministry of Railway to suitably increase this allocation.

Sir, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon'ble Railway Minister the need for an introduction of a DMU service between Bhubaneshwar and Berhampur. There is a heavy traffic of daily office goers and petty traders whom this service would benefit immensely. I propose that this train should originate from Bhubaneshwar at 6.20 a.m. in the morning and reach Berhampur at about 9.30 a.m. the return service could commence from Berhampur at 5.30 p.m. in the evening leading Bhubeneshwar at 8.30 p.m. This would immensely benefit the public of Bhubeneshwar, Khurda, Jatni, Balugaon, Ramba, Khallikote etc. I can assure this august house that this would be a highly patronised service between the two Cities with a passenger offering of about 1000 passenger per day.

* Laid on the Table.

Sir, I would also like to request the Hon'ble Railway Minister through this august house, for the augmentation of the Hawrah-Madras Mail with earmarking of an additional Sleeper Coach on either direction for the travelling public of Bhubaneshwar and Berhampur. This train presently runs with a load of 19 Coaches which can easily be augmented to 20 coaches to accommodate this request. I would also like to place on record the demand for the introduction of a 3 TIER A/C service on this train by suitably earmarking Quota for Bhubaneshwar/Berhampur.

Sir, I would also like to take this opportunity to impress upon the Hon'ble Railway Minister to increase the Rajdhani Express frequency from the present bi-weekly to a daily service. The traffic offering forfeits this demand.

There is an urgent need for the introduction of an express service between Puri and Rourkela via Sambalpur.

At Bhushundapur Railway Station, the East-Coast Express should be provided a stoppage with immediate effect.

Sir, the East-Coast Railway Zone should be notified immediately and the targets as set by the Ministry of Railways should be adhered to. Necessary additional allocation should be made immediately and infrastructure created for this purpose.

Sir, although an allocation of Rs. 50 crores has been made for the electrification of Kharagpur-Bhubaneshwar line and Rs. 47 crores for the Bhubaneshwar-Kottavalana line. I urge upon the Hon'ble Railway Minister to complete this work at an early date.

Sir, I would also like to take this opportunity to request the Hon'ble Minister of Railways to take up the beautification of the Bhubaneshwar Railway Station and also Nirekarpur station, Bhusundapur station and Tapang station, Kaluparaghat and Barlugam stations.

The Khuda-Puri line which is a single line sector now, needs to be doubled keeping in view the Pilgrim traffic and also the tourist traffic. With this, Sir, I would like to conclude my discussion on the Railway Budget and I whole heartedly support the Railway Budget.

[Translation]

*SHRI BASHIST NARAYAN SINGH (Bikarmamganj) : Sir, please incorporate the following suggestions in the debate on railway in the today's proceedings of House :

1. The construction work of sanctioned railway line at Sasaram and Ara should be started immediately.

2. The computerisation of Sasaram and Dehri-on-Sone stations should be done immediately.
3. A half of Shipra train should be provided at Sasaram.
4. Buxar and Patna are historical places. These stations should be made attractive, comfortable and beautiful from the point of view of tourism and historical importance.
5. Keolwar railway bridge has become very old. So, a new railway bridge should be built in its place.

*SHRI PRABHASH CHANDRA TIWARI (Bhagalpur) : Sir, I have stood up for supporting the railway budget. I hail from the Bhagalpur constituency of Bihar. I thank hon'ble Minister for Railways who has prepared a balanced railway budget for the first time in the country perhaps, the financial year of 1998-99 has not only been a difficult year for the Ministry of Railways. From the economic point of view but also for the entire nation.

However, the target of freight traffic has to be fixed 450 million tonnes for the year 1999-2000. The receipts from gross traffic are likely to be 32411 crore rupees. It is a commendable resolution. The railway fare was not generally increased in the last railway budget but the operational cost kept on increasing. Keeping it in view, there is a proposal of 4 per cent increase in all freight rates which is nominal and practical.

- Giving 25 per cent relaxation in freight charges up to 50 kms in also a praiseworthy work.

Declaring the year 1999-2000 as the passenger year is a good resolution. During the passenger year, ninety per cent public will be feeling convenient on account of making no enhancement in fares of second class mail express trains and season ticket of the same class because about 90 per cent passengers travel in it. This step will be in the interest of public.

- The fare of journey in sleeper class and higher classes has been increased but 1.55 per cent increase made by the hon'ble Minister in the sleeper should be a little decreased because the people from common and middle class travel in it. Likewise, an enhancement has been made by making 1.55 and 5.25 times increase compared to second-class fare in connection with sleeper class and first class fare in the passenger trains.

[Shri Prabhash Chandra Tiwari]

- Despite lack of resources, increase in the passenger-transport capacity by attaching two or more passenger boggies by the hundred favorite trains in this year is a good work. Making transportation available to more than 29000 passengers by attaching about 440 additional passenger boggies daily is a revolutionary step.
- Besides it, 124 new trains have been introduced, the operation of 32 trains have been extended. The frequency of 32 trains has been increased.
- Making at least one station a model station in every district every year by the Government is a commendable step. It will provide advanced passenger facilities. There are about 80 stations and halts on the Kiul-Bahadwa loop line. I request the hon. Minister for Railway to declare the Bhagalpur station as the model station out of these stations because it is the oldest station which is the junction of 10 districts like Godda, Banka, Munger, Sahibganj, Naugachhia etc. Bhagalpur is a commercial city also which is world famous by the name of silk city. Every year, the export of 1200-1400 crore rupees is made from here.
- The decision of opening customer care Institute in order to make those employees more courteous and decent who come in the direct contact of public is also in the public interest.
- Connecting the big cities of the country like Delhi, Sikandrabad, Calcutta, Mumbai, Chennai with the network of passenger reservation system is also a good step.
- With the implementation of 'Tatkal' reservation scheme for more than 100 long distance trains, instant reservation facility on a very short notice has become available to the passengers which is an important achievement.
- The scheme of starting a railway passenger journal for the reading of the passengers is also commendable.
- Providing a whaklie-talkie set to the drivers and guards of all the trains running on 'A' and 'B' routes for emergency contacts is also a very successful and useful scheme.
- Highly sophisticated 6000 horse power electric engine manufactured in the Chittaranjan Rail Locomotive Factory is an unprecedented achievement among all the developing countries.
- Abolition of interview system after the written test in most of the categories to do away with the possibilities of malpractice in the Railway Recruitment Board is a very practical and concrete action. I know two boys of my constituency who despite qualifying the written test three times and eight times respectively could not appear in the interview. I believe that the selection of a candidate on the basis of marks obtained in the written test will result in the complete impartial recruitment in the group D.
- Afforestation on the land of railway on the 'environment day' is definitely a commendable step. This will make possible the utilisation of available land and it will remove encroachment.
- The commercial use of the railway land has been sanctioned. It may help mobilise the necessary funds for this type of construction related efforts in all parts of the country.
- The train that used to run between Bhagalpur station to Bararighat and cover the distance of about ten kilometers has now been stopped. The commercial use should be made of this railway land by giving it to the Bhagalpur Regional Development Authority or Bhagalpur Municipal Corporation. Thereby, the railway would get a huge amount as its income.
- Government propose to increase the penalty on passengers travelling without ticket from Rs. 50 to Rs. 250. There will be increase in revenue and the ticket holders will face less problems through this proposal. I request that normally poor farmers and students move without ticket they do not have long journey. They travel just two-three stations. Sometimes, they cannot purchase the tickets for themselves. In such situations, the penalty increase by five times is not justified. It should be increased by two or three times.
- The Ministry of Railways has proposed to introduce 14 new trains including Kurla Superfast Express which be run twice a week to Patna. But, not even a single train has been introduced for Bhagalpur whereas many traders go to Mumbai from this station. Therefore, I request that the Kurla Superfast Express should be originated from Bhagalpur once a week so that the people of Eastern Bihar may be benefitted.

- Rs. 600 crores has been allocated for laying new railway tracks connecting new places of the country which is 59 per cent more than last year's revised estimate. I request the hon'ble Minister that keeping in mind the importance of doubling of railway tracks, the Kiul-Badhadwa loop line should be doubled. Kiul to Calcutta via Bhagalpur loop line is 130 years old and the oldest loop line which connected Calcutta and Delhi when Calcutta used to be the capital of this country. But doubling of this loop line couldn't be possible despite the fact that Bihar has produced several Minister of railways.
- The importance of doubling of this railway line was felt in the year 1962-63 and this was sanctioned also. Again, it was sanctioned in 1987-88. But it was left out incomplete between Kiul and Bhagalpur. The doubling of a stretch of 17 kms. between Kajra station and Kiul has been lying incomplete so far since 1988-89. I would request the Minister for Railway that you have resolved to carry out the doubling of 2400 kms. railway line and you should give sanction to the doubling of this historical loop line from Bhagalpur to Badhadwa in this budget and gain representation by fulfilling the desire of the public of 15-16 districts of Bihar.
- Besides, hon'ble Minister, I am also happy that you have sanctioned the laying of new line in Bihar under the new lines from Kodarma to Girdih, via Hazaribag to Ranchi, from Kodarma and Dumka to Baidyanath. I would like to say that if you are prepared to lay a new line in the Vananchal, at least be resolved to give a new line from deoghar to Pirpainti via Godda. Thereby the whole of Vananchal would be linked to the districts of Eastern Bihar. Moreover, the Rajmahal Coal Project Mahagama of Government of India situated at the distance of 30 kms. away from Pirpainti and the N.T.P.C. Project Bhagalpur would be benefitted by it.
- During Ninth Five Year Plan there is a scheme of electrification of 2300 kms. Out of it, 485 kms. has been electrified. The electrification of 500 kms. is supposed to be completed during the current year. We are glad with this fact also that besides the other stations of the country, the work of electrification of Patna-Gaya has been included. I would request to include the work of the electrification from Patna to Kiul and Bhagalpur in this budget. The Railway Minister has declared that the handicapped persons, licensed coolies and recognised journalists will be given concession. Handicapped person would get 75 per cent concession in A.C. Chair Car and A.C. 3 Tier whereas the concession of other categories would be fifty per cent. The journalists would get fifty per cent concession in all the categories for 30,000 kms licensed coolies would get privilege order Ticket for their life partners.
- The declaration of giving 30 per cent concession to the persons recipient of President Police Medal in all the categories is welcome.
- At last, I would request the hon'ble Minister to accord Bhagalpur the status of D.R.M. office. By establishing D.R.M. office in Bhagalpur, the trains would be controlled and the efficient maintenance of 80 stations falling at Kiul Bhagalpur would be possible and the passengers would get better facilities.
- The Sahebaj Railway Block of Malda Division of Eastern Railway has been lying ignored for the last 50 years. Government of India is earning a lot of foreign exchange from the export of silk textiles and revenue from this area but railways in this saction has not been developed accordingly. So, I request you to include the following points in this railway budget :
 - Action should be taken to provide all the facilities to the Bhagalpur railway station and it should be declared as model station.
 - The number of platforms should be increased. Doubling should be carried out from Kiul to Barharwa.
 - The following trains should be extended to Bhagalpur-Sahebajanj for the direct travel service to Rajasthan, Surat, Eastern Uttar Pradesh and South Bihar.
 - 9047/9048 Surat-Patna Express to Bhagalpur
 - 3201/3202 Patna-Kurla Express to Bhagalpur/ Sahebganj
 - 8633/8624 Hatia-Ranchi-Patna Express to Bhagalpur/Sahebganj
 - 4863/4886 Jodhpur-Varanasi-Marudhar Express to Bhagalpur.
 - The facility of 3 tier A.C. Coach should be given to Bhagalpur Vikramshila Express and Bhagalpur Dadar Express.
 - Guwahti-Delhi Rajdhani Express goes to Dibrugarh Guwahti via Delhi Barouni thrice a week.

[Shri Prabhask Chandra Tiwari]

This train should be run via Farakkapur once a week so that the passengers of Sahebganj loop line may be benefitted by this special train.

- Sanction to run a 'Summer special' from Delhi to Dehradun via Sahebjang-Kiul line should be given.

[English]

*SHRI ABUL HASNAT KHAN (Jangipur) : Sir, I like to draw the kind attention of hon'ble Railway Minister through you Sir on the following few points and do hope that Railway Ministry would take appropriate and early action in this regard.

Introduction of a train in morning time from Malda Town Railway Station to Calcutta via Katwa.

A link Mail track of only one K.M. and a bridge over the Bhagirathi river near Nasipur-Azimganj junction will connect Sealda-Lalgola and Katwa-Barharwa/Farakka Sections of Eastern Railway. It will facilitate economic development of Murshidabad and Nadia district and it will help to enhance goods traffic to Bangladesh.

Katwa-Barharwa/Farakka section is a neglected section. Inhabitents of Jangipur sub-division is being deprived of railway facilities. The trains running through this route have very limited stoppage and reservation quotas in Dhuliyanga, Nimtita, Jangipur road stations.

New Farakka junction is important railway station in Eastern Railway. Every day more than 35 lacks of rupees being earned from passenger-tickets only but there is no parcel godown and loading programme through there is an ample opportunity and security of goods booking for different directions. There are two National Projects namely Farakka barrage project and NTPC at Farakka. Thousands employees of Orissa and Southern States are being deprived of availing South bound trains pass this way Gowahati-Cochin/Bangalore/Tribandram mail trains. Computerised reservation system should be introduced at New Farakka junction at the earliest.

Unabated Ganga erosion is going on near Sanko-Para railway station near Farakka. Distance of the Ganga from railway track now is less than 150 meters Railway department should take measures to protect erosion in this point.

Survey of proposed Murshidabad-Berhampure-Khagra-Kundi should be started soon.

* Laid on the Table.

Provide Identity cards for railway hawkers as recommended by Passangers Amenities Committee.

Electrification of Krishnagar to Lalgola should be taken up.

[Translation]

*SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : Sir, through you, I want to express my gratitude to Hon. Rail Minister for presenting a balanced Rail Budget. Jammu-Kashmir is a backward area, and first time in 1974-75 a train was introduced upto Jammu. Since then the number of trains has been increased. Thus this region is connected with the rest part of the country. The unity and integrity of the country has strengthened. There was a plan to extend the facility of trains upto Baramula in 1994-95. This scheme of 2500 crore rupees is a effective one to connect Kashmir valley with rest of the country. I request that funds should be provided for this scheme considering it a national scheme.

Earlier to it a scheme was started in 1983 to connect Udhampur by train. It could not be completed till now. The cost of this scheme was 51 crore rupees in the begining till date only 11 km rail line could be built at the expenses of 350 crore rupees.

Jammu-Udhampur and Udhampur-Katra on rail line work should be expedited and completed in time.

Jammu-Kashmir is a sensitive region, where Army, B.S.F., C.R.P.F. and the personnel of other paramilitary forces are risking their lives to defend the boundary of the country. They face difficulties for getting rail reservation while going on leave. Therefore military special train should be run twice a weak for them

Rajdhani Express runs once a weak between Delhi-Jammu. It should made to run thrice a weak.

More than 50 lac people are coming to visit 'Vaishno Devi' Shrine from all over the country. Majority of them want to return their home after taking holy bath at Haridwar. Lacs of people wish to visit Haridwar from Punjab, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh and other places.

I request to introduce a direct train between Jammu and Haridwar.

Super fast trains reach Jammu directly without any stoppage in Jammu-Kashmir-region. They stop at Chakibank (Punjab). Superfast trains especially Pooja Express should to stop at Kathuwa and trians coming from Bombay should stop at Hira Nagar.

* Laid on the Table.

There is only one over bridge at Jammu railway station which connects all three platforms. There should be two more bridges for convenience of passengers and it would ensure their security also.

Trains for Jammu are reaching there late by 3-4 hours due to the single rail line between Jalandhar and Jammu. Not only these trains have to stop for hours to give pass to other trains.

This project should start immediately and double track should be constructed between Jalandhar and Jammu.

Jammu is near border. Agents of Pakistan have attempted to blast it several times. Incident of Bombs blasts have occurred in many trains. Therefore, security should be increased in trains for safety of passengers.

Special attention should be paid towards rail facilities. Standard of passenger's facilities is going down. Emphasizing on the need of improvement in the quality of Food, drinking water, Toilets and the behaviour of employees, I support this budget.

Survey for Udhampur-Bhadrawah and Jammu-Rajouri Puncch line should be conducted soon so that residents of this area could also avail facility of rail.

*SHRI KISHAN LAL DILER (Hathras) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. Supporting the Railway Budget I present the problems of my constituency. Sir, there is a big problem in my constituency. The construction of an overbridge on the level crossing no. 95A at Hathras junction has been sanctioned since long. This is a broad gauge line. The vehicles have to wait for hours together. The traffic is from Kasganj to Agra via Secundera road and Hathras. A project is also going on. The traffic route of Salempur Bharat Petroleum is also the same. The funds have also been allocated for that project. The negotiations with the honourable Chief Minister has also been completed. He also promised that he will give approval when the paper of acquisition of land of State comes before him. I have also given it in writing but I have received only an assurance in your replies. So I request you to kindly give me the unambiguous reply as to when you will laid the foundation stone of that bridge?

The Hathras had become a separate district. The public are facing so much inconvenience. While going to Delhi they have to travel 45 k.m. by bus. There is a big market in Hathras and the public demand is that a passenger train should run enroute from Hathras to Aligarh and booking facility of parcel be also made available at Hathras city.

* Laid on the Table.

At present, quota of two seats is allotted for Hathras in Kalka Express. Quota of Four berths should be allotted in Kalka Mail as well as in Sangam Express for Hathras Jn. Orders should also be issued for the stoppage of trains No. 5209 U.P. Express and 2351 Barani Express at Hathras Jn. It has come to our knowledge that Godha Flag station of Muradabad division (Northern Railway) is going to be given on contracts under the prelix of low income? But I think, it is baseless. If, you conduct an enquiry about the income earned by small stations not only on this route, but other routes as well, you will fixed the income earned by the station will have an edge over all other station. An enquiry should must be conducted and status-quo should be maintained in respect of this station. It comes under my constituency. About 80 villages are benefitted from this station. As a public representative I demand that all railway facilities should be provided at this station. The level of platform should be increased, so that ladies, children, aged person could board the train conveniently. At present, the platform there is only for the name sake. The stoppage of train no. 355-356 is essential. Please issue order for making available the telephones facility. The present status of the station should be maintained because income is more than what expected. I hope that above problems will be solved by conducting an enquiry about this in public interest.

*SHRI TEJVEER SINGH (Mathura) : Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I thank you for providing me an opportunity to express my views on Railway Budget. Mr. Speaker Sir, Railway Budget of this Government for the year 1999-2000 was presented on 25 February, 99 by the Hon'ble Minister of Railways. This Budget is very balanced Railway Budget. Care has been taken of all the catogories in this budget by the hon'ble Minister of Railway Mr. Speaker Sir, due to global economic crisis and other problems and due to affected industrial and economic development in the year 1998-99. The Railway department too has been affected. Despite these adverse conditions the Minister of Railways has achieved successes while considering all aspects in an acumenous way. Mr. Speaker, Sir, all of us know that there is a much scarcity of resources in Railway department. But due to lack of resources, many concrete steps has been taken related to development of Railway department by the Minister of Railways and our Government has achieved many successes in adverse conditions. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Railway department have provided 440 additional bogies by connecting two or more than two passenger compartments in about 100 popular trains, thereby providing more facility to more than almost 29000 passengers everyday. Indeed it is praiseworthy. Besides this introduction of 124 new trains and increasing the frequency of 32 trains is the commendable work of this

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Tejveer Singh]

Government. Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to congratulate the Minister of Railways that there has been decrease in the incidence of looting and dacoity in the Railways even then, there is a great need to take concrete steps in this direction, so that such incidents could be checked. Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon'ble Minister had stated in his speech that most of the accidents occur due to Railway crossings. He also confessed that there are 40 thousand and five hundred seventeen level crossings out of which 24 thousand and three hundred fifty nine are unmanned level crossings. I would like to request the hon'ble Minister that such schemes should be formulated so that arrangement for Chowkidar can be made at all level crossings and accidents could be controlled. I would like to congratulate the hon'ble Minister of Railways that has done the commendable work in bringing transparency in recruitments by the Railway Recruitment Board. This is a very good decision to celebrate the year 1999-2000 as a passenger year. Due to this there would be certain improvement in safety and amenities for the passengers. Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister of Railways towards the unused railway land that the Railway should commercially utilise that land so that railways revenue can be increased. Mr. Speaker Sir, an objection has been made on increase in tariff rates by 4 percent. I would like to ask these Members that during the Congress regime at the time of Kamalapati Tripathy, P.C. Sethi, Shri Banshi Lal and Shri Jaffer Sharief, the tariff was raised up to the tune of ten percent. Then, where our opposition Members were. I would like to say to the hon'ble Minister of Railways that the projects of the Railways which are lying pending and on which the money has also been spent, these should be completed on priority basis. Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister of Railways through you towards Western Uttar Pradesh and Mathura my Parliamentary constituency. No attention has been paid towards Western Uttar Pradesh by the hon'ble Minister. Mr. Speaker Sir, my constituency Mathura is a holy town. This is the birth place of and work place of Lord Shri Krishna, from this point of view lacs of followers comes daily here. Hon'ble Minister of Railway, the first and second class accommodation is available in the train, whether you have kept Mathura in the top list of negligent station. Mr. Speaker Sir, Lord Shri Krishna has given atleast something to everybody, He has preached the world through the holy Geeta but I am distressed to say that nothing has been given for Mathura, the birth place of Lord Krishna by his followers even after repeatedly asking for it. I would like to request the Minister of Railways that Mathura and Allahabad are two holy towns and there is High Court in Allahabad and some main headquarters of Uttar Pradesh Government are also there. There is only one Toofan Express train from Mathura to Allahabad that is not adequate in view of passengers facility. Mr. Speaker Sir, about four years ago there used

to be Ganga-Jamuna Link Express from Mathura to Banaras via Lucknow which link with Ganga Yamuna Express at Tundla. That too stands terminated, I request the hon'ble Minister of Railways that this Ganga Yamuna Express should be restarted immediately from Mathura. Mathura is a holy place, therefore there thousands of passengers keep coming and leaving from here everyday. From this point of view A.P. and Kerala Express and Shatabdi Express's Up and down both should have stoppage at Mathura, by which lacs of passengers could be benefitted. E.M.U. running between Delhi to Kosikalan (Kosi Shuttle) should be extended up to Mathura. Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to draw the kind attention of hon'ble Minister of Railways towards Kosikalan and Chhata of Mathura district. Many major industrial units has been established here. Therefore Utkal, Dehradun Express and Taj Express's up and down stoppages should be provided at Kosikalan station. In the same way Chhata is also an industrial area, the representatives of daily passengers Sangharsh Samiti of this place has also met time to time along with me to hon'ble Minister of Railways and state Minister for Railways and both of the Ministers has given the assurance to solve the Railway problems. I am distressed to say that these problems could not be solved till now. Keeping in view the public demand at Chhata Railway station. I request you that one minute halt of Maha Kaushal Express UP and down should be provided at Chhata station. There is a famous holy place Gobaradhan of this country on Mathura-Alwar Railway route, a stoppage of (Morudhar Express) running between Jodhpur to Lucknow route should be provided at Gobardhan and the reservation facility should also be provided. Mr. Speaker Sir, I would like to make a special request that there is a Farah town Railway station between Mathura-Agra, and there a Nagla Chandrabhag village near this station which is the birth place of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay. Hence the name of Farah Railway Station should be changed as Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyay Railway station. Lastly, I thank and congratulate the hon'ble Railway Minister for this good Rail budget.

[English]

*SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO (Bolangir): Sir, I would like to congratulate both, the Hon'ble Minister of Railways as well as the Hon'ble Minister of State for Railways for presenting not only a very comprehensive budget but one which also genuinely caters to the needs of the people of the country, in these difficult times.

After 50 years of independence, we have inherited a railway network, which leaves a lot to be desired, as our colleagues from the opposition have already accepted.

* Laid on the Table.

For the first time a 'Status paper' has been placed before the Parliament and a lot of introspection has been done to improve the condition of the Indian Railways.

I would like to emphasize here, that the various ideas, schemes and achievements are absolutely revolutionary and just go to prove how minutely the various aspects have been studied. I would like to compliment the Minister for :-

The upgradation of technology like the manufacturing of a state-of-the-art 3-phase 6000 HP electric locomotive at the Chittaranjan Locomotive works.

The various measures introduced to improve passenger amenities, like the establishment of "Rail Net", the "Tatkal Scheme" etc. and to ensure safety and security to the 12 million odd passengers who travel by train everyday.

Efforts being made for optimum commercial utilisation of land and air space in order to mobilise resources for developmental works.

Environmental friendly decisions like prohibiting the sale of cigarettes/bidis in railway platforms and the plan to commence an afforestation drive on railway land in order to ensure proper utilisation of railway land and to prevent encroachment.

The various concessions announced for handicapped persons, press correspondents, winners of President's Police Medal and licensed porters add a very welcome humane touch to the budget.

Emphasis being laid on the backward classes.

The declaration of the year 1999-2000 as the "Passenger Year" and the efforts being made to ensure better and reliable services to passengers.

Although, there has been a hike in train fares however the burden of the increment falls on that strata of society which can bear it. Also the marginal increase of 4% in freight rates is negligible when compared to the figures of the previous governments, from 1980-81 to 1997-98 which range from 6%-15%.

Sir, as regards Orissa, I would like to thank the Hon'ble Minister for increasing the budgetary allocation to 262.55 crores from 226.55 crores which was last years budgetary allocation.

However, as I had stated last year, the track length per 1000 sq. kms. in Orissa is only 12.86 sq.kms., as against the national average which is 19 sq. kms. per 1000 sq. kms. This itself speaks volumes about the backwardness of our State where railways is concerned. Therefore, I request the Hon'ble Minister to take a more benevolent stand where Orissa is concerned.

Sir, regarding the Khurda-Balangir railway line, though I am indeed grateful for the budgetary allocation of Rs. 10

crores as compared to Rs. 2 crores last year, but I request the Minister to allocate at least 10% of the project cost, which is Rs. 353.38 crores. Also, there should be a timeframe within which the project should be completed.

I request the setting up of a Passenger Reservation System (PRS) at Balangir railway station and to enquire into the cancellation of the reservation quota of 12 berths for Balangir in the Hirakud Express from Nizamuddin to Puri and to kindly have it restored.

At the risk of sounding repetitive, since I had requested the Hon'ble Minister for the same works last year as well, I would like to request him to develop Titlagarh as a major junction with a coaching terminal, construction of an overhead bridge at Titlagarh station, a rake unloading platform at Balangir station, introduction of a DMU train between Titlagarh and Rayagada, introduction of an express train between Sambalpur and Nagpur via Titlagarh, introduction of a local train from Titlagarh to Bargarh/Sambalpur via Balangir, extension of the train from Raipur to Titlagarh upto Balangir, extension of Sambalpur-Nizamuddin Express upto Kantabanji station, extension of Samaleswari express to Raipur via Kantabanji.

The Railways Deptt. Possesses about 600 acres of unutilised land in my district, I request the Minister to kindly see that this land is properly utilised and maintained or else to return it to the persons who donated it to the railways, to develop a proper railway infrastructure there.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000.

[Translation]

*SHRI DAYA SINGH SODHI (Amritsar) : Sir, the Hon. Railway Minister has presented a very good budget, and he deserves congratulations for that, I request for including the following suggestions in the budget.

People of Punjab visit Haridwar to immerse the ashes of their dead near and dear ones in the holy Ganges. It is a religious ritual. Only one passenger train run between Amritsar and Haridwar. A lot of time is wasted and they feel inconvenient in this long journey, therefore a superfast train should be run between Amritsar and Haridwar. It is a long pending demand of the people of Punjab. It should be kindly taken up with priority.

A double line should be laid between Amritsar and Pathankot.

The railway station of Batala is too old. Due to the lack of platform women, old persons and children find it difficult to board and get down from the train. Therefore the platform should be repaired.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Daya Singh Sodhi]

An over bridge should be constructed at Batala.

Train should be extended upto Karia from Batala.

Electrification of the railway line from Ludhiana to Amritsar should be done so that trains may run at higher speed.

The computerised reservation counter at Amritsar should be air conditioned.

*SHRI RAMPAL SINGH (Domariaganj) : Sir, I rise to support the Railway budget - the hon. Railway Minister has presented a very good Railway budget under the leadership of the Prime Minister. My Parliamentary constituency Siddarth Nagar district of Uttar Pradesh is situated on the Gonda-Gorakhpur rail line. I am trying for its conversion into broad gauge since 1992 and every year I am being told that it has become no. 1 in the priority list. Due to the absence of broad gauge there is no train from here for the State headquarters Lucknow because gauge conversion has taken place in Lucknow after Gonda, the gauge conversion of Gorakhpur-Gonda rail line has been approved in the year 1997-98 but work has not been started so far in this regard, the industrial development of this region is not taking place because fertilizers coal, cement are not reaching here directly due to the absence of broad gauge line. I therefore request the hon. Railway Minister that gauge conversion of the Gonda-Gorakhpur rail line should be done.

Gorakhpur in Eastern Uttar Pradesh is the headquarter of the North-Eastern Railways too but there is no direct train available from here to Delhi. There is neither Rajdhani Express nor Shatabdi express on this route but only Vaishali express passes through it which comes crowded from Bihar. Many Members of Parliament of the eastern Uttar Pradesh have requested the hon. Railway Minister through letters that a train for Delhi like the Rajdhani express or, Vaishali express be run on this route.

I thank you for giving me time to speak.

*MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM (Garhwal) : Sir, I want to request the Railway Minister, Government to provide rail facilities in my Parliamentary constituency, Garhwal according relating to the following points :

A direct train service from Delhi to Kotdwara (Garhwal) should be started. I am making efforts in this regard for the last 5 to 7 years. However no attention has been paid towards it. I had written a letter to then Minister of Railways on 5.7.96 in this regard. I had raised this issue in the last budget session also.

An "Out Agency" should be opened to provide rail facility to district Rudraprayag and Chamoli: This facility should be provided in Gopeshwar and Karnprayag of district Chamoli and Guptkashi and Rudraprayag of district Rudraprayag. That passengers can enjoy convenient rail journey. I want to make it clear that the distance in railway stations are situated more than 250 kilometers away from these hill areas which may vary even upto 275 kilometers.

A fast train should be introduced from Delhi to Dehradun which may reach Delhi from Dehradun in the morning and return to Dehradun in evening. If it is not possible than the timing of Delhi-Dehradun Shatabdi Express be changed so that it may reach Delhi from Dehradun in the morning and return to Dehradun.

The journey time of Dehradun Express should be reduced by increasing the train's speed. Janseva Express (Amritsar-Barauni), Lohit express, Himgiri and Amamath Express should be provided halts at Najibabad Jn. Najibabad is the main station of hilly area. The soldiers of different parts of the country are traveling through this station. With army centres situated at Kotdwara and Lansdown, it is essential that every trains should be stopped at this station so that the army personnel may be in position to travel to remote places. A direct passenger train should be introduced between Delhi-Ramnagar.

A new rail line should be laid in between Haridwar-Kotdwara-Ramnagar.

Immediate action should be taken towards having a rail line from Rishikesh to Karnaprayag. Maintenance and beautification of Kotdwar railway station should be done and an over bridge should be construction at this station.

Computer reservation facility should be provided in Kotdwar for all the places of the country.

A direct train should be introduced from Kotdwara to Saharanpur which shall reach Kotdwara from Saharanpur in the morning and return to Kotdwara in the evening.

A computerised reservation centre should be set up in Srinagar, an important place of Garhwal. This place is the main centre of four districts. Special arrangements should be made for senior citizens on every reservation centre so that they can avail the available concession facility for them.

Permission should be granted to establish sale counters at Dehradun, Rishikesh, Haridwar, Kotdwar and Najibabad railway stations for the sale of the products of Garhwal Mandel Vikas Nigam.

An additional brake van should be attached with Mussoorie express from Delhi to Kotdwara.

* Laid on the Table.

A daily passenger train should be run in between Dehradun-Najibabad-Ramnagar-Kathgodam.

*SHRI JANARDAN PRASAD MISRA (Sitapur) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I support the Railway budget presented by Hon'ble Minister for Railways. 1999-2000 has been declared as year of the passengers in the Railway budget, and assurance for better facilities including reliable and better services alongwith gentle behaviour of staff and easy reservation to passengers has been given, and the assurance of providing easy reservation and better facilities in Shatabdi Express trains and 30 mail express trains and special attention to the maintenance of Shatabdi Express trains has also been given. A commendable job has been done by providing many a facility to passengers and concessional travel facility to the handicapped, journalists and people who have got the President's medal.

The number of computerised reservation centres has been brought at 400. I demand that computerised reservation facility be provided immediately at Sitapur Junction of N.E. Railway. Drawing the attention of the Hon'ble Minister, especially to the guage conversion of 'Lucknow-Mailaan-Bareilly' meter guage line, I want to say that with the guage conversion of this line the backwardness of Lucknow, Sitapur, Lakhimpur, Pilibheet and Bareilly districts will be removed, a new Railway path from Lucknow to Delhi via Sitapur and Shajahanpur will be available and the distance of Lucknow-Shahjahanpur Railway path will be lessened. The burden on Lucknow station will also be lessened. Guage conversion of this line was included in the budget in 1994-95, but it could not be done. It may please be completed now.

Sir, I demand that a survey for new railway line from Sitapur to Bahraich via Laharpur Tambor be conducted so that the development of this area may be begin, as this most backward area has always been deprived of the railway services. Hon'ble Minister has given a proposal in the budget for extension of Delhi-Gorakhpur 4047/4048 express train upto Raxaul via Narkatiyaganj. In this regard, drawing the attention of the Hon'ble Minister, I want to say that this train is regularly, late after it has been run to Gorakhpur, and now it has been extended upto Raxaul and it will further get late. Therefore, I demand that a new train be started from Delhi to Gorakhpur (via Sitapur), as the passengers coming from Sitapur do not get seats and berths even after reservation due to rush of passenger on return journey by the above train. So the number of berths be increased by 45 and a first class and an AC-II bogie be attached to it.

Sir, there is a train from Dehradun to Gorakhpur at 3 o'clock which arrives at Lucknow at around 2 o'clock, and no passenger from Lucknow travels by this train.

* Laid on the Table.

Therefore, this train be run from Shajahanpur to Gorakhpur via Sitapur. Passengers of the eastern region will have the economic benefit due to lessening of the distance from Gorakhpur via Sitapur-Dehradun and the local public will also be largely benefitted. Due to the unreasonable operations and irrational time-table of the trains running between Butbal Sitapur section of the Lucknow division of Eastern Railway the passengers of this area have to face a lot difficulties. Therefore, the operations time-table be set as per the convenience of the passengers.

Sir, the Railways are an important part of the economy of our country and they solve the problems of the public too. There is a proposal from Gorakhpur headquarters to convert the Barai Jalalpur Railway Station into a halt on the Lucknow Bareilly Railway path, which is not in the public interest. The deficit has been increased due to inactivity of the officers, while hundreds of passengers travel from that station to and fro Lucknow and Lakhimpur daily. So this station be kept there. Hempur Railway Station of Northern Railway was removed this way only. This station be made functional again. There is no shed for the convenience of public and no retiring room for passengers at Sitapur Cantt. Station of Northern Railway. So these public facilities be provided there.

Sir, in the end I demand the stoppage of Agra Fort at Hargaon station of North Eastern Railway in my constituency Sitapur, as it is the main demand of the people there; and you please get it fulfilled.

*SHRIMATI USHA VERMA (Hardoi) : Sir, The railway budget presented by Hon'ble Minister for Railways is really praise worthy. But there are some shortcomings which call for improvements. For example, behaviour of railway employees should be tander and satisfactory to the passengers. Complaint books remain availables on the trains but no attention is paid to the written complaints of passengers. It is a must to pay attention to them so that the quality of services could be ascertained.

When railway fares are hiked, the passengers hope of more facilities to be provided to them but when no heed is paid to their problems, it becomes very difficult for them to attach themselves with railways emotionally.

Besides, special provision should be made for the security of women passengers. Serious incidents as eve teasing, chain snatching etc. on the platforms are seen. Therefore special protection arrangements should be made on the platforms for women passengers.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I represent Hardoi Uttar Pradesh. My constituency falls under Northern Railway. There are a number of problems relating to railways in my constituency.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shrimati Usha Verma]

Under Moradabad Division of Northern Railway between Atwa-Kursath and Balamau Jn. of Kanpur, Balamau branch line a railway bridge 181 is being constructed. The old bridge built by the railways had iron plates beneath but in the bridge being made now iron plates are not being used due to which pedestrians or vehicles-users can not pass through the bridge. It is worth mentioning that there is no bridge nearby to cross the river Sai for the people of the area.

I therefore request you that in the construction work of the said bridge either a footpath should be laid along the bridge or iron plates be laid under the bridge so as to avoid the problems of traffic and help pedestrians coming and going through the bridge.

Besides, reservation quota from Hardoi is very scanty. There is quota of eight berths in Kashi Vishwanath and there are two berths in Lucknow Mail while four to five years back the quota was of twenty berths in the Kashi Vishwanath which has been reduced now. This has led the general public to problems.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request the Minister for Railways through you that the reservation quota from Hardoi should be increased. There is no facility of reservation for sleeper class from Hardoi. The people from Hardoi either have to go to Lucknow or Shahjehanpur for getting reservation. It causes inconvenience to the people of Hardoi. Reservation should be provided in sleeper class from Hardoi. At the same time, there is no facility of PCO at Hardoi station. Therefore PCO facility should be provided.

[English]

*SHRI T. GOVINDAN (Kasargod) : Sir, One more budget also become part of Indian Railway history. The budget 1999-2000 reflects no developmental necessity and the speed nor it has not learned anything from the volumes of criticism raised in the Parliament and outside regarding the function of Indian Railways. Though it was declared new Zones and Divisions, new trains necessity of the time could not be addressed. Regarding almost all sectors and services criticism dissatisfaction, disappointment are accumulating. For Passengers in trains and station new facilities have not been provided. Lower and middle class passengers suffering due to old and broken coaches which are having no light, no toilet, no water, no cleaning. The same is the plight almost in all railway stations. No toilet, no drinking water, no good waiting rooms. The premises of almost all railway stations are dark and without good passages and spreading foul

* Laid on the Table.

smell. Railway accidents are a day-to-day phenomenon regarding Indian Railway. Minister and higher officials are rushing to the spot and declaring enquiry commissions, but none of the safety commissions' recommendations were implemented. Not only most of the accidents or derailments are happening with the human failure. It indicates the shortage of lower grade workfold. For the decades Indian railway has not made new appointments in the lower grade and thousands of posts were lying vacant. I think, the railway is trying to run the whole services without manpower. As a lack of manpower, proper repair, maintenance, cleaning and other essential services are suffering. Until this shortcomings are resolved the railway cannot run satisfactorily or without accidents.

KERALA

Now-a-days Southern Railway and its Palakkad Divn. are working in almost all fronts unsatisfactory. In my region Shoranur-Mangalore sector for the last two or more years train services were totally in disorder. Most of the trains are coming 5-6 hours late, sometimes the next day. Shor-anur-Mangalore doubling work is dragging, though some amount allowed in this budget. I fear the completion of the doubling will take 3-4 years. I request the Hon'ble Minister to impart utmost importance to the completion of Shoranur-Mangalore line and increase the amount for doubling.

As Kerala is the southern most State and it is becoming more and more a consumer state it will adversely affect the economic growth of Kerala the increase of freight charge 4%. Agricultural products of Kerala are facing serious decline of prices, this freight charge increase will adversely affect the Kerala Agriculture also. Because of the economic policy of the Govt. prices of all essential commodities are increasing. This will further increase the price rise. So, I request the Hon'ble Minister to withdraw the increase in freight charge.

The priority system is going to be changed by giving priority to goods trains. This is purely an ignorance regarding passengers. From the beginning of the Railways, passenger trains were given utmost importance. The augmentation of the train services must be given topmost priority, but it should not be in the expense of stopping passenger trains. In my area Kannur-Kasaragod-Mangalore recently Palakkad division decided to stop some passenger trains. It provoked the local passengers. I request the Hon'ble Minister to seriously consider how to increase the facilities of local people and passengers.

Because of doubling work going on some difficulties are happening at certain places to pedestrians. Proposal for underbridges and new level crossings are given, but yet to be considered. Between Calicut and Mangalore

there are 11 level crossings. These level crossings cause great difficulties to road passengers. For the last 10-15 years, people of Malabar area were crying for construction of ROB's over these level crossings. In this budget a meagre amount i.e., Rs. 1 lakh was provided to each ROB's. I fear the completion of ROB's will take decades. In my constituency headquarters Kasaragod Railway Station has been promised Computer Reservation, but till date it was not provided.

I request the Hon'ble Minister to increase the amount for doubling, for ROB's and to increase passenger facilities. Hence I oppose the budget proposals.

[Translation]

*SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT (Hamirpur) (U.P.) : Sir, Please allow me to lay my written speech on the table of the House. The budget for the year 1999-2000 is in the public interest. I support it. The increase in the rail fare and freight tariff in the budget is justified. Because without the increase in the railway revenue its development linked projects can not be completed.

At present railway projects worth Rs. 38,000 crores are pending. Whereas, at present, the railways lack resources to complete the pending projects. In such a situation, the Government has only one alternative i.e., to increase its revenue. For this I have the following suggestions.

Vacant lands along the railway tracks suitable for agriculture should be auctioned to the farmers for 25-50 years on lease basis for the cultivation of fruits, vegetables and flowers. This would bring huge revenues to the Government and would also benefit the farmers who have agricultural lands along the rail tracks. Also, there would be a phenomenal improvement in the environment.

For the goods wagons, modern platforms should be constructed through modern means, its proper security, loading and unloading arrangements should be done and it must be ensured that arrangements be made so that the transported goods reach their destination speedily. This would increase the earnings from freight movement. And this arrangement should be entrusted to private sector through auction. Similarly, we should hand over through auction to the private sector, the management of the average sized railway stations, excluding those of the bigger cities. This will also increase the revenue of the Government substantially.

The Railways should investigate prevalent corruption in its production units and quality should be improved. Special attention should be paid towards cleanliness of trains, catering and railway stations.

* Laid on the Table.

Words can not describe the poor sanitation of railway stations. The sanitation work should be entrusted to the private sector and it should be monitored from time to time. This will slash the department expenditure considerably. All the free passes should be done away with. And this should be replaced by coupon system. Permanent passes for the departmental officials and employees should be terminated. Instead, they should be issued passes when they want to travel. We should limit their number of journeys. In this, the family members should be excluded from this facility.

The Government should also invite the private sector and multinational companies in this sector. So that they enhance their participation in the passenger trains and goods travel. Because we are very far behind regarding the railway traffic.

Punctuality of passenger trains should be ensured. And, the guilty persons should be punished if the trains are late. We should pay special attention towards providing quality and hygienic food. The following quality of food at railway stations and trains is a matter of concern. Misbehaviour of the conductors with the passengers is common. This is tarnishing the image of the railways. There is a need for thorough improvement of these issues. Also, there is a need for an improvement in the appearance and behaviour of T.T.s.

Kindly, approve the following demands of my parliamentary constituency after careful consideration.

- (a) A shuttle train from Jhansi to Banda should be introduced at 6 a.m. So that the office goes reach their office in time.
- (b) Mahakaushal Express should have a stoppage at Kulpahar railway station.

I congratulate the Prime Minister and the Railway Minister for this well-planned budget. They have presented a Railway budget keeping in view the interest of the people, the nation and economy of the nation. For this the Railway Minister deserves kudos.

[English]

*SHRI SAMAR CHOWDHURY (Tripura West) : Sir, While the common people of the country, the working people are highly depressed in the severe constraints and ills with economic life by the unprecedented crisis, the Rail Budget has extended further burden on them. The middle class people are frightened of with the 4% of freight hike and higher fares to mobilise additional Rs. 900 crore to the demand of the Rail Minister Shri Nitish Kumar Ji. Or the poor people it will badly affect. The Budget will severely

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Samar Chowdhury]

affect the whole of the North-East Region. We have only one communication route of railway line extends through Siliguri via Guwahati. All the essential commodities and the goods transport depends on these line. Freight hike means creation of additional crisis to the crisis burden people of whole North-East. With this position the people of the North East cannot be happy with this budget.

Sir, It is more than 50 years after Independence the Railway did not touch even the capitals of the North-East States excluding Guwahati. No growth and development of any area can be found without the Rail communication. The total North-East have the abundant resources under ground and above to be utilised for last 50 years for the regional development and the development of the whole country. Tripura and other states are reportedly floating on the oils and gases. The unemployment becomes an unattainable problem in want of infrastructure. The infrastructural gap between the North-East and other part of the country are so deep that the growth and development of the economy are confined in deadlock position. Two years back the U.F. Government and the then Prime Minister to address the gap of infrastructure in the region. Nitish Kumarji the Union Rail Minister; is seen to take initiative in Implementation of the declared project of Kumarghat Agartala Rail Construction. Thanks to Shri Nitish Kumar ji that he further extended his initiative for Survey of Agartal Sabroom Railway Line making a branch upto Belonia Town. I demand this special category of the states in this region be protected from the freight hike and the price escalation. The Budget allocation for new line of Railway construction from Agartala to Kumarghat will make the people happy but it is not known the fate of Agartala Sabroom Railway Survey now. Nothing is found in the Budget indicated on this Survey. No progress of the survey is reported. The declaration of Agartala-Akhoura Survey created a hope. A new trade relation between Bangladesh and India through Tripura is emerging. It was a long demand by the people of Tripura and the State Government that Communication from Tripura with other part of the country be channalised with the help of friendship and fraternal relation of India and Bangladesh with the help of Bangladesh Corridor. The project is to be taken up on priority. Agartala Sabroom Rail Survey needs to be expedited on priority to open up a new future and explore the possibilities of deeper friendly relation among the people of both the countries. The commodities supplied to North-East from other part of the country will be low cost and easy transport if the railway and Waterways in Bangladesh can be used for mutual interests of the both. The meter guage line from Kumarghat to Lumding is practically found in delapidated condition. Long absence of maintenance and repair have created many injuries on

the line. It is learnt that Budget has provided the conversion of the line to Broad Gauge. Naturally it will take several years and during this period Mizoram, Tripura, Shilchar will have to suffer more. Nitish Kumarji may help projecting simultaneously the maintenance and repairing of the Meter Guage line and construction of Broad Guage line to give some relief to the people of this area. The Broad Guage line might has not been sanctioned for the Badarpur-Kumarghat as yet. Nitish Kumarji may kindly see this weaknesses and problems. The line extended from Lumding across the hill district of Cachar towards Tripura including Mizoram is a very important transport communication which serves the whole district of Cachar, Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur. Adequate provision for these constructions and high priority for completion of this project in time is to be looked into. Nitish Kumar Ji may kindly see for the necessaries.

[Translation]

*SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilhaur) : Sir, I welcome the railway budget for the year 1999-2000. This is the last budget of this century. After the independence of the country, hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar and the hon'ble Railway Minister for the State Shri Ram Naik have presented such a budget under the leadership of hon'ble Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee in which special attention has been paid to poor and common citizens. Transparency has been adopted in the works and the recruitment of the railways. This will put an end to the corruption. The main feature of this budget is that the Railway is celebrating this year as the "Passenger's Amenity Year" for making the passenger-services more convenient. A model station will be established in every zone. The last year 1998-99 has been the year of successes for this Government. The main point is that all the declarations have been fulfilled which were made last year. This proves that there is no difference between the speech and action of Shri Vajpayee's Government. I, therefore, congratulate hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar.

Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, I belong to rural areas. There are many unmanned railway crossings in the rural areas. Often, accidents take place there. There is a serious problem of establishing manned railway crossings on these level crossings. It is good that special attention has been paid to the problem and it has been accepted that a separate fund would be established in this year's railway budget. The people of the village who had to suffer loss of men and their livestock due to these accidents will get relief from this scheme.

Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, the freight charges have been increased by four per cent. But the common people

* Laid on the Table.

and especially the trader's folk have welcomed the cut in the classification of freight, volume discount on loading, availability of rakes within 48 hours, decrease in journey timings of goods trains, augmentation of parcel facility, providing facility of guaranteed loading of more valuable items etc.

Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, many schemes like laying new lines, electrification of the lines, introducing new trains, gauge conversion and many schemes of laying double lines have been provided in the budget. I especially welcome the electrification of Lucknow-Kanpur railway line. I however, want to draw the attention of the hon'ble Railway Minister to the following problems which relate mainly to Kanpur and Kanpur-Dehat which is main industrial and commercial city of the Northern India where thousands of travellers come in the search of job everyday.

Kanpur is on the Howrah-Delhi main line. About two dozen trains run through Kanpur to Delhi. But reservation quota is available only in some trains which amounts to about one thousand but about ten thousand travellers visit Delhi daily. Every bus is seen completely packed. It is demanded of you that the seats which get vacant at Kanpur in the trains like the Howrah, Bhubneswar, Guwhati and Rajdhani, their quota should be fixed from Kanpur to Delhi. This facility should be provided in other trains also. A train especially from Kanpur to Delhi should be introduced. It has been demanded by almost all the M.P.'s of Kanpur. We demand of you to increase the number of boggies in the Unchahaar Express.

Intercity trains from Kanpur to Satna via Banda from Kanpur to Allahabad, from Kanpur to Jhansi and from Kanpur to Itawa should be introduced so that thousands of passengers may have the facility of transportation. Station Rura be made the district station of newly formed district Kanpur Dehat and the Rura station should be developed as the 'B' category station.

Computerised reservation service should be started at Panaki railway station and the proposal of raising the level of platform of Panaki railway station has been sanctioned. But this station should be made sub-urban railway station of the Kanpur Metropolis because Panaki is not only the newly developed residential area but also the area depot of the Steel Authority as well as that of the Indian Oil. The factory of I.E.L., Panaki Thermal Power Station etc. are the main commercial and industrial centres there.

Over bridge should be constructed in Kalyanpur and in Rura.

The gauge conversion of narrow gauge at Kanpur Farrukhabad in taking place expeditiously but on this line

a line from Mandhana Jn. goes to Vithur (Brahmavate) which is about ten kilometers. That should also be included in the gauge conversion scheme because Brahmavate is a legendary, historical and religious city. It has been the action field of Tatnya Tope Nanaji Peshwa, Maharani Laxmi Bai. It is the birth place of Love and Kush. It has been the abode of the estranged Mother Sita. It is the Ashram of the great sage Valmiki. It is the Penance place of Dhruva. Brahmaji Khoonti stands on the banks of the sacred Ganges and hundreds of travellers come here daily.

Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, through you, I request the hon'ble Railway Minister to look into the aforesaid problems and resolve them.

At last, I welcome the railway budget cheerfully and wholeheartedly and I thank the Railway Minister.

[English]

*SHRI P.S. GADHAVI (Kutch) : One more Super Fast Train between MUMBAI-KUTCH (GANDHI DHAM).

For this people of Kutch District and those who are residing in Mumbai (more than 4 lakh people) are demanding since long.

W. Rly. also runs more than 170 Special Extra Trains on this route. Therefore this demand is more justified. Some of the organisations has planned to have 'Dharma' and agitational programmes.

To speed up the gauge conversion work between GANDHIDHAM - BHUJ.

This train will boost the potentially mineral rich backward area of Kutch District.

To speed up and implement Gauge conversion between SAMKHIYALI - PALANPUR.

This route is an important link (which requires to be converted from M.G. Line to B.G. Line, which is very much) which can directly connect the Kandla Major Port with Delhi and that will boost the passenger and goods traffic whole North India with Kandla Port.

For this project Kandla Port Trust has conveyed their approval-in-principle to in Joint venture with Indian Railway, vide their letter No. PD-17701312/97-KPT dtd. 24.4.98, and thereafter one meeting was also held at Kandla Port by the Executive Director (Perspective Planning) of Railway Board on 14-9-98. Where in it was agreed upon to carry out the Financial Feasibility Report by ICICI.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri P.S. Gadhavi]

Looking to National importance of this project, it should be implemented urgently.

To establish Terminal facilities at GANDHIDHAM RLY. Station.

Kandla is a major port, and whole Kutch is potentially very rich in minerals, near port Mundra, one Private Port known as "ADANI PORT" is also commissioned last year at the cost of Rs. 800 crores, and very big cement project known as 'SANGHI CEMENT' will also be commissioned very soon. About more than 10 lakh people have migrated from Kutch District, and settled through out almost all parts of our country. Demand of extension of long distance trains from Ahmedabad to Gandhidham (Kutch) are made since long. Therefore following trains requires to be extended from Ahmedabad to Gandhidham.

- (a) HOWRAH-AHMEDABAD
- (b) KOCHIN-AHMEDABAD
- (c) CHANNAI-AHMEDABAD
- (d) JAMMU-TAVI-AHMEDABAD

SURVEY WORK FROM Gandhidham to Mandvi-via Mundra.

Mandvi and Mundra are very important sea parts of Kutch District, near Mundra Port very recently one "ADANI PORT" is commissioned at the cost of Rs. 800 crore. And also near Mundra Govt. of Gujarat has planned to develop an 'Industrial Park' of about 3000 Hectres. Further National High-way Authority of India has also decided to extend N.H. 8-A from Gandhidham to Mandvi via Mundra. Thus this area is going to be developed very much and therefore it is very much necessary for the development of this area. Indian Railways should start train facility on this route. Therefore it is requested that survey work should be carried out on the route between Gandhidham-Mandvi, via Mundra.

Gauge conversion between NALIYA-BHUJ

Naliya is an important Air Force Base, Lakhpat and Avadas talukas of Kutch District are potentially very rich in mineral and therefore, M.G. line between NALIYA-BHUJ should be converted into B.G. Line.

Old Bhuj-Rly Station Land should be saved from encrachment.

In BHUJ Town, Railway has abandoned, it valuable piece of land, because Western Railway has constructed new Railway Station. The land of old Railway Station is

of more than 50 crores of rupees. This land requires to be protected by putting up either compound wall or fencing. And if Railway is not in position to utilize this land, this should be either transferred to BHUJ Municipality, or Government of Gujarat.

*SHRI C. SREENIVASN (Dindindigul) : Sir, I request you to kindly treat the following points in the Railway Budget and this may be allowed to be lay on the table of the House during the discussions.

I request you to kindly provide funds to convert the metre guage railway line from Dindigul to Coimbatore as Broadguage line.

A platform should be constructed inside the dindigul railway station adjoining the railway platform enabling VIPs to drive their cars straight to the stations and board the trains.

I request you to direct the authorities to see that Madurai-Bangalore Express is given a stop over at Cholavandan. This will enable the producers of Betel leaves to send the leaves to Bangalore for onward transportation. This will help them in getting good price for their pan.

A toilet may be provided in the the 1st A/C coupe of the express trains to avoid inconvenience to the passengers.

The Schemes pertaining to Tamil Nadu have not been provided adequate funds in this budgets. Schemes will be delayed because of this, more funds should be allocated for these schemes in this budget itself.

There is no train from Chennai Egmore to Madurai after 8 . 10. P.M. The train that was leaving at 10 P.M. earlier which had lot of rush has been cancelled. A train should be run between Egmore and Madurai starting at 10 P.M. from Egmore Railway station daily.

The reservation quota for dindigul station is very limited. This should be increased for all the trains.

[Translation]

**SHRI M. DURAI (Vandavasi) : I thank the Chair for permitting me to putforth my view-points on the Railway Budget. I extend my support to the Budget on my own behalf and on behalf of Paattali Makkal Katchi (PMK).

Vandavasi constituency is an industrially backward area. A new railway line from Tiruvannamalai via Gingee to Tindivanam in the Chennai-Vallupuram section would greatly benefit the people of my constituency. This would

* Laid on the Table.

**Translation of speech original in Tamil and laid on the Table.

ease the traffic congestion in the Chennai-Bangalore sector also. This would enable people from the Union Territory of Pondicherry and also from Chennai to travel to Bangalore and would make this route a commercially viable one. There is also a need to have a railway overbridge near the approach the Thiruvannamalai in the Ginee-Thiruvannamalai section. I request the Railway Minister to look into this and also the plea from the people of my constituency to lay a railway line linking Meimaruvaithur with Thiruvannamalai via Vandavasi. Kanchipuram is a pilgrimage town and the seat of the seers in the great Sankaracharya tradition. This holy town needs to be linked with Tindivanam via Vandavasi. I would like to reiterate that an impetus to this industrially backward area could be given only through the implementation of these railway projects we pray for now. I am hopeful that our Hon. Railway Minister would sympathetically consider these requests. Once again expressing my support of this Railway Budget I conclude. Thank you.

[English]

*SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM (Vellore) : Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the Railway Budget discussion.

I raise here to support the Railway Budget 1999-2000 presented by the Hon'ble Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumarji. I appreciate the presentation of the Railway Budget since the Hon'ble Minister considered the poor people's welfare in the country by not increasing passenger fare for season ticket holders and second class travellers. I also appreciate the Hon'ble Ministers' steps taken for welfare of the physically handicapped persons and accompanying persons and also sports persons. I also further appreciate the Hon'ble Ministers' efforts for introductions of several trains in the country and particularly in Tamil Nadu like New Delhi to Coimbatore Express and Chennai to Tripathi Sathapti Express.

Although the Railway Budget has made some incentives and facilities to people of Tamil Nadu, I would like to bring to the knowledge of the Hon'ble Minister some grievances.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I understand that the Trinaveli-Tuticorin Express (T.T. Express - 6721/6722) is to be cancelled its services from 19.4.99 onwards. There were other two trains namely Chennai-Tuticorin Express (669/670) and Chennai-Madurai Express (6711/6712) already cancelled which were passing through Katpadi, Ambur, Vaniyambadi, Jolarpet, Tiruppathur, Dharmapuri Salem and Erode. People from Vellore District and also from

neighbouring districts like Salem, Namakkal, Dharmapuri, Periyar and Karur suffer significantly by cancellation of these two trains. Now, T.T. Express is also to be cancelled. This will definitely make the people in there district, to suffer more without this facility. By cancelling T.T. Express, the people have to face much difficulty and we may commit injustice to the people. As a Member of Parliament, I have received a number of representation from public seeking my help to restore the services of these trains.

The well known CMC hospital is situated in Vellore which is being visited by number of patients not only from neighbouring districts but also from other States for taking treatment in this hospital. Katpadi Junction is the only nearest station for this Hospital. There are big industries like Bharat Heavy Electrical Ltd. (BHEL), Greaves India Ltd., Tirumalai Chemicals Ltd. in Ranipet. Besides, there are a number of leather industries in Vellore districts, particularly at Ambur, Vaniyambadi and Ranipet. Hon'ble Speaker Sir, there are several places of interest to see in South Tamil Nadu for which people from these districts use these trains to visit Kanya Kumari, Trinaveli, Madurai and Kodaikanal. A number of businessmen and traders visit Vellore often. I request to lay a new railway line from Maruvelipur, Vandavasi, Arni to T.V. Malai.

Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I would also like to bring to the Knowledge of the Hon'ble Minister regarding extension of EMU service from Arakkanam to Katpadi. In this regard, I have already raised this matter in the House under Rule 377 and also gave a number of representation to the Hon'ble Minister. If this EMU is introduced, more than one lakh people from Vellore and surrounding areas in the Vellore district will be benefited. This is a long pending demand of the people of these areas who commute every day to Chennai for the purposes like colleges, Office employees, industrial employees, businessmen, and also patients visiting famous CMC hospital from all over India. Considering the basic requirement to be fulfilled by the Government. I would like to appeal to the Hon'ble Minister in this House once again to take immediate action for extension of EMCD Service from Arakkanam to Katpadi at the earliest.

Hence, I support the Railway Budget.

[Translation]

*SHRI S. MALLIKARJUNAIAH (Tumkur) : The Railway Budget is one of the moderate budget. It helps the travelling public. The Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000 has got a wider vision and promising prospectus

* Translation of the speech original in Kannada and laid on the Table.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri S. Mallikarjunaiah]

of this country. The Hon'ble Minister Shri Nitish Kumar with his rich experience has applied his mind very carefully and has presented a very pleasing Budget. In this connection let us not forget that this Budget suffers from want of sufficient fund to be provided to the ongoing works as well as the new declared works.

Tumkur and Yashwantpura rail line has a broad gauge now. This has to be doubled. In fact, last year a meagre amount was allocated to this project, This time only rupees two crores have been allocated whereas the total expenditure would be about rupees eighty crores. I wish that at least rupees twenty crores may kindly be allocated for this project for the year 1999-2000.

In Karnataka, particularly in Tumkur district, the railway platform's height shall have to be raised. It is causing lot of inconvenience to the passengers, particularly aged people and children of younger age. I have already written to the Hon'ble. Minister Shri Nitish Kumar in this regard. I hope he would look into this matter without any further delay.

More than two and half thousand officials are travelling daily to Bangalore to discharge their duties every day. They leave their vehicles at the railway station in the area marked for parking their vehicles. The area is in open and because of sun and rain the vehicles are spoiled. It is therefore necessary that some shed over the parking area is provided at Tumkur Railway Station. This is another long pending demand of the people of Tumkur district. Apart from officials, this shed would benefit students, businessmen and many others of Tumkur town who have to go to Bangalore by train.

Right from Tiptur to Hirehalli all stations shall have to be renovated. None of them have the basic facilities like drinking water, toilet, etc.

In between Sampige and Nittur, Rampura should be made a railway station. Rampura is 8 kms from Sampige and 8 kms from Tiptur. We are demanding for this station for the last several years. I have received hundreds of representations from the people of Rampura regarding this station. The Centre should take an early decision and construct the railway station at Rampura.

Tiptur is an important business centre. Kurla Express train should have a halt at Tiptur. Many travellers have to avail services of this train. Those who want to go to Bangalore, Bombay and North India are facing lot of problems. These people have to go to Arasikere 25 kms from Tiptur, purchase ticket and travel. It is causing lot of inconvenience. Hence I wish that this train may stop at Tiptur for at least two minutes at Tiptur Station.

There is a push and pull train which is in operation between Bangalore and Tumkur. There is no water and toilet facilities in this train. This may kindly be arranged by attaching one or two more extra bogies to this train. In addition to this, one more push and pull train may be introduced at the earliest as there is heavy rush particularly at the peak hours.

The railway zonal workshop should be established in the central area of Karnataka State. There are lot of facilities, land is available, infrastructure and all other facilities are also available.

There is unrest among the people of North Karnataka. The people of this area are demanding for a railway zone at Hubli for the last several decades. The Hon'ble Minister can ask for the views of Members of Parliament. Most of them are in favour of establishing the railway zone at Hubli. The zone should be established at Hubli immediately to avoid all confrontation and to do justice to the people of North Karnataka.

Catering service in many trains is not at all satisfactory. Drinking water facility is also not upto the mark. The Hon'ble Minister should take immediate steps to improve quality of catering service in all the trains.

There is a great demand for construction of a railway line between Maddur and Royadurga via Kunigal, Hebbur, Nagavalli, Koratagere and Madhugiri. Regarding this demand also I have contacted Hon'ble Minister on several occasions. But so far the Hon'ble Minister has not ordered for conducting survey. I once again request the Hon'ble Minister Shri Nitish Kumar and Minister of State Shri Ram Naik to look into this matter immediately.

Sir, there is only one daily train between Bangalore and New Delhi. It has become difficult to get a waiting list ticket to travel in this train, Karnataka Express. Neighbouring State capitals like Hyderabad, Chennai have three to four daily trains from New Delhi. But there is only one daily train Karnataka Express between Bangalore and New Delhi. We are demanding for the introduction of one more train between New Delhi and Bangalore. This demand is there for the last one decade. Strangely, so far the Centre has not taken any favourable decision. The people all over the State of Karnataka are agitated about this inordinate delay in introducing one more daily train. I therefore urge upon the Hon'ble Ministers Shri Nitish Kumar and Shri Ram Naik to take up this matter on top priority basis and to introduce a new express train between Bangalore and New Delhi.

Sir, I thank you for permitting me to lay my written speech on the Table of this august House.

*SHRI CHATIN SINGH SAMAON (Bhatinda) : Sir, I rise to welcome the Railway-Budget. Relief has been provided to all classes in this Budget. I also want to put up my constituency's problems before you. My constituency Bhatinda, having a population of more than 5 lakhs, is a metropolitan. There we have a thermal plant. The largest refinery of North-India is going to be established here. Here a big fertilizer-industry is located and it is contonment area also. Even after being a major railway-junction and an important city, it is regretful that still it has no over-bridge which paves way for accidents any now and then. Raising their demands, the residents organise strikes and demonstration, they have been on hunger-strike also. I request that resident's this demand be taken into consideration immediately.

Similarly, Mansa is also big city, waiting for an over-bridge. Jakhal-Bhatinda track should be converted into a double-track that problems may not be caused. This work also is to be attended soon. Similarly, Budalda is a historic city, tourists keep visiting here. People have been demanding to provide a two-minute stoppage of Inter city here for a long time, it may also be paid heed please.

Similarly, Sikhs enjoy Damdama Sahib as their fifth pilgrim-place; Delhi-Ferojpur Shatabdi Express should soon be introduced in the name of it.

I hope the hon. Minister for Railways would certainly consider these demands.

*SHRI M. THIYAGARAJAN (Pollachi) : At the outset let me thank the Chair for providing me with an opportunity to place before this august House the felt needs of the people from my constituency. I support the Railway Budget presented by Hon. Nitish Kumar and I am happy to participate in this discussion.

Pollachi Railway Station in the headquarters of my Pollachi constituency is yet to have computerised advance booking centre and I request the Hon. Minister to look into this and give necessary instructions to have computerised reservation system. Increase in reservation-quota may also be effected to benefit people from Udumalpet, Pollachi and Kinathu Kadavu. The metre gauge section between Coimbatore and Dindigul via Palani, Udumalpet, Pollachi may be converted into broadgauge line and I urge upon the authorities to take up this project.

The present Cheran Express train between Channai and Coimbatore halts and rests at Coimbatore Junction for about 5 hours till it leaves for Chennai at 11 PM. If the

*Translation of speech original in Punjabi and laid on the Table.

* Translation of speech original in Tamil and laid on the Table.

railways could go for gauge conversion between Coimbatore and Pollachi, Cheran Express could be extended upto Pollachi thereby benefitting the people of my constituency. Hon. Railway Minister may initiate action to start the train from Pollachi at 9.30 PM and cover the rest of the existing route as per the schedule fixed as of now.

The proposed new train between Coimbatore and New Delhi may be made a daily train instead of being a once-a-week train.

The long pending Dharapuram Railway Project may be taken up at the earliest to mutually benefit from the vast commercial potential there.

Avinasi in my constituency is yet to reap the benefits of having a railway transport system. A new Bangalore line via Sathia Mangalam and Avinasi would redress the long pending grievance of the people of the area.

The unmanned level crossings between Udumalpet, Pollachi and Kinathu Kadavu lines may be replaced with level bridges and overbridges accordingly.

The Olavakkot Divisional Headquarters may be shifted to Coimbatore to vastly benefit the public of three States and several districts in the area.

I heartily thank the Hon. Railway Minister for conceding to my request to run a train between Madurai and Coimbatore via Udumalpet, Pollachi. On behalf of the people of my constituency and on behalf of my party AIADMK I thank the Railways for this kind gesture.

*SHRI SATYAPAL JAIN (Chandigarh) : Hon. Chairman Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on railway budget. Chairman Sir, Chandigarh is the capital of Punjab and Haryana. It is a Union Territory in itself. It is the entry gate of Himachal Pradesh. Therefore, all these states including Chandigarh itself are benefitted if any step is taken to develop the railway station of Chandigarh. Besides, Chandigarh is also a metro city, where people from all neighbouring states reside. People in large number from Bihar, U.P., Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamilnadu live here apart from thousands of people from Manipur, Assam, Tripura. Hence Chandigarh becomes very important as far as railway is concerned and steps taken for its development benefit the people from all over India.

Mr. Chairman Sir, Congress and other Governments supported by it did not take any concrete steps for the development of Chandigarh railway station during last 40 years. No concrete work was started at this railway station.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Satyapal Jain]

Many Members remained Ministers in the Central Government but they did not pay attention towards it. I am happy that the present government under the leadership of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, where able Ministers like Nitish Kumar and Ram Naik are handling the Ministry of Railways, paid attention to the development of Chandigarh Railway station and have taken steps for its development. I am pleased that results about the issues raised by me after getting elected for the first time in 1996 have started percolating and Chandigarh Railway station is getting face left and that is very much apparent for this, I want to express my gratitudes towards your government on behalf of the residents of Chandigarh.

Mr. Chairman Sir, the demand for Chandigarh Ludhiana rail line has been pending for a long time. The real work on the Chandigarh-Ludhiana rail line is to lay 30 km long rail tracks from Chandigarh to Morinda via Mohali and Kharar. Tracks have already been laid from Morinda to Ludhiana. I am happy that the Vajpayee Government has approved this project and it has also been included in this year's budget. This step has been welcomed in Chandigarh and the whole of Punjab. Mr. Chairman Sir, this line will pass through Kharar. Which is my birth place and whenever I go there people enquire about this project with curiosity. Residents of Chandigarh also want expeditious completion of this project so that Chandigarh could be connected to Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Amritsar directly. I request the Government to commence work this project soon and it would be better if the Prime Minister lays the foundation stone at Chandigarh as soon as possible. I demand the Government to release funds and start work so that this project could be completed soon. This project involving a cost of 95 crore has been a long pending demand of the people.

Mr. Chairman Sir, I am grateful to the Government for approving electrification project of Chandigarh-Ambala Cantt rail line. I request that this project be completed so that movement of trains becomes easy. Government has started the construction of roads on platform no. 2 and 3. Steps have also been taken for the terminal point of trains there. Arrangement are also being made for the washing and stationing of trains. I request that the work for which the Government have provided an amount of 7 crores and which have already commenced and should continue, so that this work could be completed expeditiously.

Mr. Chairman Sir, Government has decided to introduce a train between Kalka and Mumbai. It is a welcome step. I request that this train service should be started on permanent basis so that the residents of Chandigarh can get the facility to travel towards U.P.,

Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra. I demand the Government to introduce trains for Kerala, Karnataka from Chandigarh for the convenience of passengers travelling towards South India. There is also scope of introducing trains for big cities like Calcutta, Patna, Lucknow, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Bhopal, Chennai from Chandigarh. Therefore, the Government should make the provision to connect these big cities with Chandigarh. At present two Shatabdis trains and one Himalayan Queen train are running between Chandigarh and Delhi. There is so much rush in these trains that passengers find it quite difficult in getting reservation. Therefore, it is necessary to run at least one more Shatabdi and one second class super fast train on the lines of trains running between Delhi-Amritsar, Delhi-Jaipur.

It is not possible for a common man to travel in Shatabdi as its ticket costs around 400 rupees. Therefore, it is necessary to introduce a second class super fast train, so that a poor man can also travel in this train and could save his time and money. Present, Himalayan Queen running between Chandigarh and Delhi takes more time than Bus. It would be better if Government pay attention to it and reduce its time so that it can complete journey in three or three and half hours.

Sir, the facility of railway reservation is available only at Bus stand in Chandigarh. At present the population of Chandigarh is approaching nearly 10 lacs. Therefore, there is scope to extend this facility at four-five more places. Railway reservation centre should be opened in the high court, Punjab University, PGI, in a big colony and village so that the inconvenience being found by the people may be reduced. And the survey work of Chandigarh-Narayangarh-Dehradun rail line should be completed soon and approved so that Chandigarh-Haridwar direct rail line may be commissioned. The Government has given approved recently for one more entry point to Chandigarh railway station towards Panchkula. It is a welcome step. I request to undertake and complete this work also.

Sir, there is a railway level crossing between Chandigarh and Manimajra, where traffic remains obstructed for long on the arrival of trains. Construction of houses has been going on in Manimajra at a very fast pace and due to the construction work of modern residential complexes there people in large number travel to and from Chandigarh from here daily. Therefore I request the Government to chalk out a plan for the construction of an overbridge here so that traffic congestion could be eased in future. Like wise, it is very necessary to construct an overbridge on Chandigarh-Ambala route near Derawasi. This work should also be started soon.

Sir, railway officials had announced to introduce a new Shatabdi train between Delhi and Anandpur Sahib on the occasion of 300th anniversary of the formation of the Sikh Panth. I do not know what happened to that project. It would be better if the Government start this train soon and it should run via Chandigarh so that it could be more effective and I want to say it also that Sarhand and Fatehgarh Sahib are two historically important cities in Punjab. The wall in which two sons of Guru Govind Singh were masoned alive is here. An important Muslim religious place Roza Sharif is also situated here. A large Mandir of Jain Samaj is also here. This area lacks railway facility despite its historical and religious importance. Thousands of devotees visit there every year but there is no important Railway Station.

This causes great inconvenience to the people, so I demand that each and every train passing through this railway track should be given stoppage at this station so that due importance is given to this hisotircal place. At the same time the government has given approval to the construction of Sarhand bridge. This work should also start quickly alongwith the construction of the railway overbridge at Morinda and Keesali station which approval has already been given. So the construction work should be undertaken at the earliest so that grivances, of the public of this areas could be redversed. I am sentimentally attached with the problem of the people of my constituency because I have nourished, played and grown there.

Sir, I welcome the steps taken by the present BJP government for the development of Chandigarh Railway station and the government deserve compliments for that but work has to be done. I hope that government of India will pay more attention for the development of Chandigarh Railway Station, and will implement the decision, taken in this regard and will take the initiatives to start the projects which are under consideration.

I hope government would keep on releasing the funds sought by the state at the Chandigarh railway station will be modernised fully in a year or two. I conclude with these words.

*DR. MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL (Bettiah) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget for 1999-2000 presented by Shri Nitish Kumar Ji. Mr. Chairman, Sir, Bagaha Chhitauni bridge was destroyed by the floods in 1928. Though Bihar has given many railway Ministers but I am to grateful to Shri George Fernandes in particular for. It was because of his efforts that this bridge was constructed again when he became the Railway Minister in 1989. It has been my long cherished dream since my childhood to have a direct train between Bettiah and Delhi so that my constitu-

* Laid on the Table.

ency is directly connected with Delhi by train. Mr. Chairman, Sir, today the work of broad gauge conversion has been completed there for which I feel grateful to the Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar ji. It would be possible to run the passenger trains on this route by the month of March as 27th March has been probably decided by the Minister for inauguration. This Budget provides extension to train No. 4047 and 4048 running between Delhi and Raksoul. There is no A/C couch in this train which I request the Minister to kindly provide.

Again I express my gratitude to him for having taken a decision to run Darbhanga-Amritsar Express via Taktiyaganj twice a week.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I request the hon'ble Railway Minister to introduce a train between Narkatiyaganj and Sonpur leaving Narkatiyaganj at 5:00 A.M. and Sonpur at 5:00 P.M. so that it reaches back at Narkatiyaganj by 10 O'clock in the night.

Train No. 5063, Gorakhpur-Bandra Oudh Express should be run via Narkatiyaganj, Muzaffarpur so that people from Agra, Kota, Nagada, Ratlam railway stations can take this train to reach Mumbai directly. This train takes 22 hours stop at Gorakhpur, therefore, it should be extended upto Muzaffarpur via Narkatiyaganj.

Train No. 5004, Choura-Chauri Express runs between Gorakhpur and Kanpur. It leaves Gorakhpur railway station at 22.10 hrs. and comes back again to Gorakhpur from Kanpur at 06.05 O'clock. It takes a 16 hours break at Gorakhpur. It is, therefore, requested that this train should be given extension upto Raksaul via Bagha-Narkatiyaganj so that people of that area can avail this train facility for going to Nepal and after the 'Darshan' of 'Pashupatinath' they can also go to Varanasi and Allahabad. This would be a new train for the people going to Nepal.

- Train No. 5007 and 5008 runs between Lucknow and Gorakhpur. It's departure time from Lucknow is 23:00 hrs. and it arrived at Gorakhpur in the morning at 05:45 O'clock. This train should be given extension upto Muzaffarpur via Kaptanganj, Bagaha, Narkatiyaganj, Bettiah, Motihari. This will provide a new facility to the people.

With Train No. 5609 and 5610, Guwahati-Delhi Oudh-Assam Express, train facility will become available for people going to Delhi and Assam via Muzaffarpur, Motihari, Bettiah, Narkatiyaganj and Gorakhpur. If that is not possible, then, this train should be run thrice a week on this route and rest of the four days via Siwan.

Now a days it is very difficult to get reservation in Vaishali Express. Therefore, it is requested that a duplicate Vaishali train, via Narkatiyaganj, should be introduced.

[Dr. Madan Prasad Jaiswal]

IRCON is constructing a road bridge over Bagaha-Chhitauni bridge. It's progress is very slow. I request you to kindly see that it is completed by December, 1999.

A survey is being conducted between Hazipur and Sugauli. It should be conducted upto Bagaha via Nautan, Baitiya, Bhoga Patti and Lautiya.

With this, I conclude and extend my thanks to you for having given me an opportunity to make my submissions in the House.

[English]

*SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi) : Sir the Railway budget placed by the Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumariji for the year 1999-2000 in this August House I whole heartedly support. Today for the First time in fifty years the Railways have given attention to the State of Orissa which was grossly neglected in this sector. This being one of the main infrastructure facilities for growth and development was and is also wanting in the state of Orissa which has a huge Natural resources Base in form of mines and very long coastline which has not been utilised to its full potential neither has the Mineral Base. That is one of the reason why Orissa is the most backward State of India as per the Economic Survey and also the Lakhadwala Committee Report. It is one of the States with least Railway network, virtually the state is devoid of a connection between Koraput which is the southern most District with the Northern Most District that is Mayurbhanj and right from North to South and East to West the State is full of heavy deposits of Mineral wealth and Forest Resources which if exploited could make the State Rich and the country richer same would open up opportunities of employment in the mining sector as well as the Industrial sector. Vast opportunities could not be tapped for the last fifty years, the entrepreneurs got discouraged as there was no Railway network for their requirement. So today I thank our efficient Railway Minister to have taken a positive approach in solving the Railway problem in the State of Orissa and in this ensuing Budget has provided us with a Budgetary Allocation of Rs. 264 Crores. The Budget Envisages a growth rate of 8.5 per cent. Traffic receipts are expected to go up due to introduction of new services and trains. Also for the Railway to be effective and give better services to the country the Working Expenses have been increased by 10.1 per cent that I am sure will make railway a safer mode to travel in future. Sir this year being a special year for passenger additional benefits earmarked in the budget, the 2nd class traveller has got relief and there is no increase in the fares, but I would request the Hon.

* Laid on the Table.

Minister to kindly extend this facility to 2nd class 3 tier class also, because the poor and needy who have to travel with family can go comfortably without any problems. Mainly they travel in a family when they have a medical case in the family and the entire family has to travel.

Now Sir I would like to throw some light in development of Railways in my Constituency which happens to be one of the KBK Districts of Orissa which in economical terms is one of the most backward and underdeveloped Districts of the Country. Thorough my Constituency passes the Railway line connecting the 5 major Steel plants of India with the Port of Visakapatnam and is one of most profitable rail lines of SE Railways, but I am sorry to say that it is one of the most under developed lines in the Railway systems. In the recent past heavy accidents have occurred in the section between Kesinga Railway Station and Rayagada Railway Station due to lack of proper Maintenance, the doubling work for which there was budgetary allocation in last years budget has been very slow retarding the progress. My suggestions which I had sent for improvement of Kesinga Railway Station to the ZRUCC Garden Reach has fallen into deaf ears. So Sir I request you to provide additional funds for the improvement of KESINGA Railway Station and allocate funds for construction of a retiring room as this station cater to the District of Kalahandi and undivided Koraput. Also a AC Retiring room should be provided. Also the Stations of RUPRA, Kandel, Narla, LANGIGARH are in a very bad shape and require improvement with proper 2nd class and 1st class Retiring rooms, Most of the Water stand posts do not supply water, this being a drought year these water points should be repaired immediately. Then the new Railway line which is under way is not being properly attended to by the DRM Office Sambalpur, there by allocations of last year are not being utilised the line in question being LANGIGARH TO JUNAGARH, already all the land has been acquired and the revenue authorities of the Districts have handed over the land but the construction is at snailpace, the concerned railway engineer stationed at Bhawanipatna is not staying there, already funds to the tune of 4 crores is available to start the work, but no work is done. so I request the Hon. Minister to take a note of it and give adequate weightage to this backward zone of Orissa. Also there was a proposal to extend this line to Ambaguda where it will join the KK line which come from the Iron ORE belt of Bailadila. If this line is constructed the train to be negotiated is easy one and only one small ghat has to be cut and after Nowrangpur it is again plain land. So this line could be known as Langigarh-Junagarh-Ambaguda line and as per preliminary survey it will be one of the most profitable Railway line of this zone, so I request my Hon. Minister to survey this Junagarh to Ambaguda Railway line. Also

the Koraput to Kottavalsa line requires to be mentioned because after the line is completed Passenger traffic cannot be effected due length of the Niliguma tunnel on this line, the length of the tunnel makes the passenger suffer suffocation as no vents are made and this has impaired passenger traffic, so adequate funds may be provided to make big vents and take steps to start passenger. Traffic as this is the Passenger Year, and also New Train may be introduced from Koraput to New Delhi via Sambalpur. Also I request that a link Express may be started from Rayagada to Sambalpur which will connect the New Nizamuddin to Bhubaneswar Express. Also I thank the Minister on allocation of funds for the doubling of the Waltair-Raipur line and funds have been earmarked for doubling the Langigarh-Titlagarh line, while doubling a second bridge has to be constructed on the river Tel, So it is my request that while designing the bridge A Railcum road bridge may be constructed to enable Road Traffic to Titlagarh which is a junction and already a road exists and the RD Department is willing to finance for the improvement of the road.

I had also written to the Hon. Minister to run the Samata Express Daily instead of three days.

The East-Coast line should be strengthened and Rayagada in the Southern Eastern Railway should be given facilities of maintenance of A/C Sleeper, A/C First Class coach.

The Railway Protection Forces powers should be reviewed for better management of the protection work, specially smuggling of fore work on the Raipur line. Freight handling yard in Kesinga should be mobilized New Super Fast Express from Vishakhapatnam to New Delhi via Kesinga. As this train connects the KBK Regions of Orissa and our Government is giving a lot of emphasis on these districts.

Before I conclude my speech Sir, I hope the Railway will keep the Railways healthy and ticking.

SHRI P. SANKARAN (Calicut) : Sir, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget presented by the Railway Minister, I am sorry to say that the Budget is unrealistic, lacks vision and directionless. The nation is paying a heavy price for the mismanagement of the economy by the BJP-led coalition Government. The coalition seeks to gain from the fact that the partners are pleased with their respective States. The needs of West Bengal duly met in the Railway Budget underlines the nature of the game plan imposed on the nation's largest transporter of goods and people. Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra have their quota of projects due to political compulsions and pressures.

The disappointing part of the Budget is that the Railways has not come up with any new and bold measures to mobilise more resources. Enhancing market borrowing will be a dangerous trend. The plans of the Railways to raise over Rs. 3000 crore from the market to finance Rs. 97,000 crore plan cause much concern and may lead to a debt trap.

To add to the woes of the passengers, the Railway Minister has resorted to the routine exercise of increasing freight and fares though he spared the ordinary second class and suburban passengers. It will have adverse effect on my State which fully depends on the foodgrains from the Northern States. I understand that 280 wagons of foodgrains are coming everyday from the Northern States to Kerala.

Kerala is the most neglected State in the country as regards railway development. Indian Railways has been neglecting Kerala in general and Northern Kerala in particular. The Railways proposes to take up 16 new railway line projects but unfortunately, no new line is given to Kerala. As my friend, Shri Mullappally Ramachandran has stated, time and again, we have been requesting to have a survey of Mysore-Calicut through Vythiri in Wynad which is the most backward district of Kerala. If my memory is correct, in 1938, the erstwhile District Collector of Malabar, Shri William Logan, had conducted a survey in which the importance of the railway line was stated. A survey was conducted by the then Dewan of Mysore, Ramaraja Bahadur. This was done in 1938. After that, in 1940, another survey was conducted by the Madras Government. So, two surveys were conducted. Sixty years have lapsed since then. But even now, the Government is not prepared to make a survey on this line. I admit that the hon. Minister for Railways is sympathetic towards my State. I am very happy to say that he is very receptive, reasonable and generous. I want him to be more generous, more receptive and more intelligent. He is more considerable also.

Sir, the Calicut railway station is as old as history as it was built during the period of East India Company. Even now, the position of the Calicut railway station is the same. There is no change. So, renovation work is most essential as far as Calicut railway station is concerned.

You have made a provision of Rs. 100.39 crore for Calicut-Mangalore doubling work. I request the hon. Minister to kindly give at least Rs. 160 crore more. An amount of Rs. 25 crore has been sanctioned for Kuttipuram-Calicut doubling work. For the completion of the work, the amount may be increased to at least Rs. 40 crore.

[Shri P. Sankaran]

There are ten railway level crossings on the national highway between Calicut and Kasaragode for which a token amount of Rs. 90 lakh was provided. For the completion of the work, an amount of Rs. 51.14 crore is necessary. So, I would request the hon. Minister that within his limitation, he should very well increase the amount. At least he should try to complete some of the ten level crossings.

I would like to draw the attention of the House to the Paaniyankara overbridge for which the State Government has sanctioned its share for the completion of the work. But I do not know how it has been missed. The technical sanction was given. But I am sorry to say that it has not been included in the Budget. So, I would request the hon. Minister to include the Paaniyankara overbridge also in the list.

A fly-over at West Hill, some 5 km. away from Calicut Railway Station, is a very urgent need because the West Hill is a very important place, a business centre with industries and many institutions. A large number of people cross the level crossing every day. For your information, I am telling you that 14 people died due to accidents within a couple of years. So, I request the hon. Minister to give special consideration to this matter.

I have got some other suggestions to make. Due to the limited time at my disposal, I may be permitted to read some of the very important things.

MR. CHAIRMAN : It is not necessary. Please lay it on the Table. It will be incorporated in the proceedings.

SHRI P. SANKARAN : That is enough. I would lay it on the Table of the House.

*An outstation centre for Railway seat booking at Wyned District is most essential since Calicut Railway Station is situated 70 to 90 km away from Wynad District.

An office of the Chief Engineer (Construction) should be established at Calicut.

Long-distance trains should be provided with mobile first aid unit for emergency purpose.

The Shoranur-Nilambur line should be adequately utilised with more running trains from Palghat, Trichur, Emakulam and Calicut.

Calicut-Trivandrum Shatabdi Express train may be sanctioned. Train timings may be regulated.

* Laid on the Table.

New compartments for long distance trains may be provided.

Delay in running trains has become a common feature on the Indian Railways. All necessary steps should be taken to avoid delays. Additional incentives should be made for track maintenance.

Passenger amenities are ignored by Railway Department since passenger fares have been raised seven times between 1970-71 and 1998-99. A majestic figure of Rs. 100 crore has been allocated for passenger amenities.

A lot needs to be done in the area of catering including supply of mineral water at Railway Stations. In a surprise check recently made, 131 sample of mineral water were found defective by the health officials.

Pantry services are available only in 117 trains and in the rest, the passengers are left at the mercy of the unscrupulous vendors. The quality of food especially of tea is horrible.

Sanitation and cleanliness in compartment as well as bath rooms is pathetic. Even in Second Class coaches, the position is equally bad.

As regards security of passengers, the Railway Protection Force has no role towards it.

In the past three years as many as 1289 persons have lost their lives while 2549 were injured in rail accidents. The Railways had 871 cases of derailment in the same period.

A comparison of various first-class and second-class air-conditioned railway passenger fares as proposed in the Railway Budget shows that the difference between air and train fares is fast narrowing down. From Delhi to Bombay, air journey costs Rs. 864 more than the first class air-conditioned railway ticket. Air India night flight is cheaper by Rs. 640 than train fare. This difference may be carefully noted and the increase in fares also to be taken into account.

In 1997-98 alone, the number of goods train derailment is 200. I request the hon. Minister to look into all these things.

I hope the Railway Minister will pay special attention to my suggestions and take necessary action to redress the grievances.

Before I conclude my speech, I may tell that the Railway Minister is generous, intelligent and receptive to ideas. I request him to kindly consider our reasonable demands and become more generous and more intelligent.

With these words, I hereby oppose the Budget proposals.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri M.B. Patil. You may please lay the speech on the table.

SHRI M.B. PATIL (Bijapur) : Sir, I am M.B. Patil, Member of Parliament from Bijapur, Karnataka. I would lay my papers on the Table after mentioning the most important part of my speech.

For the gauge conversion of Bijapur-Sholapur-Gadag, only Rs. 7 crore has been provided in the Budget. It has been totally neglected. Badami, Pattadakal and Aihole are historical and tourist places. The gauge conversion will help in the development of these areas. Tourism as well as commerce and horticulture will be developed.

I lay the rest of my speech on the Table of the House.

*Sir, the Ministry of Railways deserves our gratitude for the laudable developmental work it is doing to meet the growing needs of the economy and the people.

The Budget for 1999-2000 has been a great disappointment and injustice meted out to Karnataka and the Northern Karnataka in particular.

This part, about which I am mentioning, is a backward area which has been sidelined, ignored and neglected.

In this Budget, new lines such as the Bangalore-Satyamangalam, Bidar-Gulbarga and Gadwal-Raichur are welcome but sufficient funds have not been given.

The announcement of new trains like Jaipur-Bangalore Express via Secunderabad and Raichur-Gulbarga Intercity service is welcome.

Almatti-Talikoti-Surper-Yagdir serves as a link between the Eastern and Western Parts of North Karnataka. Survey should be made. I hope it will be completed fast. It was a demand made even before Independence. This demand was made during the British regime.

The location of the South-West Zone at Hubli is a longstanding demand of the people of the Northern Karnataka. I welcome the decision of the hon. Minister for the same.

Sir, I am now coming to the most important demand/requirement of my area Sholapur-Bijapur-Gadag gauge conversion. We are being deeply let down and great injustice has been done in this Budget.

This rail line is very important from the point of view of tourism, commerce and culture. But coming as it does

in an endemic famine-prone belt and suffering from lack of proper transport facilities, it is virtually cut off like an island from the mainstream of national transport network. Though traditionally having trade relations with important commercial centres like Mumbai and Bangalore, the rich potential of this part of the country remains unexploited to the optimum level. Quick transshipment of agricultural and horticultural products to other parts of the country or abroad, and import of essential goods has been greatly hampered. It proves expensive too in the absence of rail facilities.

This part again is full of potentialities for the development of tourism. The Aihole-Pattadakal temple-monument-complex included by the UNESCO in the World Heritage List, and the world famous cave temples of Badami carved out by the Chalukya artists coming under Bagalkot District, lie in this very belt. The Golgumbaz built by the Adilshahis, who ruled Bijapur in the 15th and 16th centuries, is the biggest pillarless dome anywhere and as such one of the wonders of the world. The Ibrahim Roza has been praised as one of the sculptural marvels of the world. All in all, the historic city of Bijapur, which should have received as much 'cultural heritage' importance as Agra or Delhi, if not more, remains woefully sidelined. Whether as part of the old Bombay State or as part of the present Karnataka State, this area being at the tail end, has continued to be neglected.

This gauge conversion, which was approved in 1993-94 with 300 kms. length, costs Rs. 274.57 crore. Expenditure up to 31.3.98 was Rs. 107.16 crore. Overall, nearly 130 crore has been spent by now and in this Budget when we expect at least 50 crore would be given, only Rs. 7 crore has been given. The target mentioned was December 2000 which has been changed to December 2001 with present level of spending it would take not 2001 to complete but I am afraid it will not be completed by 2010 also.

I do not understand our principal theory, concept of the Railways regarding gauge conversion. We have been neither here nor there. We are deprived of the existing metre gauge or broad gauge.

There is no proper planning. So many new lines are announced every day without adequate financial resources. They should complete the ongoing half-done works and works already taken up and after completion of these, they should take new works.

The hon. Prime Minister has announced a new National Highway Development Programme at an expense of Rs. 50,000 crore connecting the East-West and North-South corridors and the Golden Quadrilateral linking all the four metropolitan cities. I do not know how funds will be raised.

* Laid on the Table.



If Rs. 2000-3000 crore per year is provided additionally to Railways the existing projects will be completed at the earliest.

I request the hon. Railway Minister to make immediate provisions and do justice to genuine problems of the backward and neglected areas.

An allocation of at least Rs. 50 crore should be made for the gauge conversion between Sholapur-Bijapur-Gadag Section.

Provision should be made for the creation of spare terminal/maintenance facilities at Bijapur on top priority basis.

There should be introduction of regular trains between Bijapur and Sholapur with frequent intervals and introduction of sleeper coaches to Sri Siddeshwar Express and other Bombay/Bangalore/Hyderabad bound trains at Sholapur.

There should be introduction of a new train between Bijapur and Mumbai C.S.T.

There should be provision for extension of the 1023/1024 Sri Siddeshwar Express up to Bijapur.

Steps should be taken for the creation/provision of adequate and additional platforms for reception of trains from Bijapur and other destinations at Sholapur.

The Government should provide additional spare coaches, rakes, locos etc. on the Central and South Central Divisions (Mumbai-Hyderabad) Bangalore bound trains traversing on Sholapur line.

Rest assured, Sir, I hope that the hon. Minister would empathise with the hopes and aspirations of the people of this part. I would request him to see their speedy fulfillment.

[Translation]

*SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI (Palani) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I would like to speak on the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000 presented in this House. I would like to express my support to the Budget presented by the Hon. Minister for Railways. I wish to add that I am sharing my views on behalf of Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) and our party expresses its support to this year's Railway Budget.

I would like to congratulate and thank the Railway Minister for having conceded to certain demands made in

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

public interest by our leader Thiru Vaiko. Let me thank Hon. Nitish Kumar on behalf of our party MDMK and on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu.

Several demands from Tamil Nadu have been accepted now after a long time. The gauge conversion projects like Madurai-Rameswaram sector gauge conversion project and Quilon-Virudhunagar via Tirunelveli, Tiruchenchur, Tenkasi gauge conversion project have been accepted by the Minister of Railways after a long time. I would like to thank the Government for commencing these projects.

I may also unfailingly mention that only Rs. 10 crores has been allocated for the Quilon-Virudhunagar broad gauge conversion which is to be carried out at an estimated cost of Rs. 200 crores.

Likewise a mere five crores of rupees have been earmarked for the Madurai-Rameswaram gauge conversion project which entails more. I urge upon the Government to earmark more funds for the completion of these projects.

The Railway Minister in his Ministry's Budget made announcement about the introduction of 14 new trains this year. The weekly train between Coimbatore and Delhi, Chennai-Tirupati Shatabdi Express train, Chennai-Guwahati Express train that will be operated twice a week are the three new trains that will greatly benefit the people of Tamil Nadu. I heartily thank the Hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar for introducing three new trains at one go in a single year and I am sure the needs to be complimented for this unprecedented step as far as Tamil Nadu is concerned.

At this juncture I also put forth certain other unfulfilled demands from the people of my constituency which needs to be considered by the Ministry of Railways.

Due to the commissioning of Konkan Railways system the Delhi bound Mangla Express which goes through Coimbatore, Erode, Salem, Jolarpet takes altogether a different route now. This new circumlocutious route greatly affects the people of my region. You may still redress the grievances of the people from these districts by way of running as a daily train instead of being a once-a-week train the proposed Coimbatore-New Delhi Express.

In order to stem possible corruption during recruitment, personal interview is being done away with in the case of recruiting group 'C' and 'D' railway employees. I wish to appreciate the proposed measure to recruit people based on their meritorious performance in the competitive written tests. I wish the same practice is followed in the recruitment of Railway employees in the other groups too.

I am to point out that about 90% of the rail passengers have been spared from being hit by the fare tariff restructuring proposed in this year's Railway Budget. It is a significant achievement and commendable an exercise.

The Budget also proposes to provide 75% fare concession to the handicapped persons. Similar social concern has been shown towards the aged and students. This seeks to curtail the issuance of complementary passes at will. We welcome this move.

At a time when the plan outlay for the Railways touch a whopping Rs. 9700 crores, your proposed earning through enhanced fare structure is a mere Rs. 200 crores. This simply testifies the concern the Minister has got for the common man.

Our commendable Railway Minister who deserves deep appreciation for many of the salient features in the Budget may kindly consider some of the demands from the people of my constituency. I hope he would kindly look into them and would fulfil the aspirations of the people of my constituency.

It is a long dream of the people of my Palani constituency to have a new railway line between Samrajnagar and Palani via Sathiamangalam. This dream has partially come true in the form of your announcement to lay a new railway line between Bangalore and Sathiamangalam. You may kindly extend this line upto Palani via Perundurai, Chennimalai and Kangeyam. I would be happy if the Railway Minister could make an announcement in this regard. I would like to point out that a survey was conducted even when Britishers were here. Even today we find the survey stones found there on the intended route. The handloom town Chennimalai, coconut oil town Kangeyam, Lord Muruga's temple town Palani will all be linked through this new railway line thereby promoting commercial activity alongwith tourism and pilgrimage. The growth rate of coconut production in Tamil Nadu is 9%. At least 65% of total coconut oil production of Tamil Nadu is from Kangayam. 59% of the oil produced there goes to other States like Maharashtra and Karnataka. It is also pertinent to note that 30 to 35% of coconut needed for oil production in Kangeyam comes from Karnataka. So with a view to benefit about 35 thousand labourers working in about 300 coconut oil tilling mills in and around Kangeyam and Vellakkovil you may kindly take up the Samraj Nagar-Palani railway line. There are about 200 rice mills in Kangayam and they procure paidy from the neighbouring States also. New rail link will definitely benefit all the people concerned.

When Hon. Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar went to Malmaruvaithur there came a railway stoppage there. He went to Madurai and Rameshwaram, gauge conversion was announced. He went to Tirupati and now Chennai-

Tirupati Shatabdi Express has come. So I request Hon. Nitish Kumar to come to Palani so that Sathiamangalam-Palani new railway line could come about. Alongwith this Podanur-Dindigul gauge conversion may also be taken up.

The level crossing near Vijayamangalam Railway Station between Erode and Tiruppur needs to be replaced with an automatic gate before an overbridge is constructed there. This has to be considered in view of the great traffic disruption that is caused now.

Chennai-Kanyakumari railway line may also be improved to be a double line route. In my constituency in the Dimligul-Karur section there are two underbridges under which rainwater gets stagnated causing great inconvenience to the public. Hence I urge upon the Railway administration to take suitable steps in this regard to assuage the feelings of the agitated people of my constituency.

I want to urge upon the Railway Minister to reconsider the proposed rerouting of the trains like 6721 and 6722 now running between Kanyakumari-Chennai. If it is to be diverted through Madurai and Tiruchi you may also ensure the continuance of a similar train in the same old route.

Koodal Express train was stopped when Chennai-Madurai gauge conversion work was going on. It needs to be resumed now. If not, the proposed summer special trains may be continued as Koodal Express.

Recently the Hon'ble Railway Minister went to Karur from Coimbatore for the inauguration of Karur overbridge Foundation-stone laying ceremony. We received the Minister at Erode and drew his attention to allocate more funds for improving platform No. 4 in Erode Junction and the Loco Shed improvisation. The Minister has now conceded to our demands and we thank him heartily. You may also consider giving a stoppage at Kodumudi for all the trains running between Karur-Erode.

Kerala Express running between Trivandram and New Delhi stop at Erode and Salem but there is no reservation-quota to book tickets to and from these stations. Hence, I urge upon the Railway authorities to provide reservation quota for these stations.

On behalf of MDMK I extend my wholehearted support to this year's Railway Budget which takes care not to affect the common people. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS (Palakkad) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget proposals presented by the hon. Railway Minister for the year 1999-2000 . . . (Interruptions)

AN HON. MEMBER : It is not an Ordinance.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : I know that
(Interruptions)

SHRI HARIN PATHAK (Ahmedabad) : The speeches of the Opposition Members may be laid on the Table of the House. . . . (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : If you oppose, than all the projects in Kerala will stop. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Both the hon. Railway Ministers Shri Nitish Kumar and Shri Ram Naik are very good friends of mine. But, I cannot welcome the general proposals made in the Railway Budget by the hon. Railway Minister because at the outset, he has failed to come up with any new solutions for the basic general development of Indian railway network. He has resorted to the routine exercise of increasing freight and fares.

Now, I would come to the inherent contradiction in the approaches of the Railway Ministry. Last year, the hon. Railway Minister had tried to convince this House by saying that his proposals would mobilise enough resources for the successful completion of the Annual Plan. He was kind enough in leaving the freight charges almost untouched. But the same hon. Railway Minister has come to the House and stated that his earlier proposals have failed and there is a shortfall of Rs. 1056 crore. Because of this shortfall, he has now resorted to hike both the passenger fare and the freight charges. There is a sweeping eight per cent hike in the freight charge, which in my humble submission, would lead to spiralling inflation. Breaking the convention, the hon. Minister has not left any commodity from the freight charge increase.

Sir, essential commodities especially items meant for the Public Distribution System were exempted from freight increases all through these years and this was done with a clear vision that maximum relief is extended to the common man. A couple of weeks before the presentation of the Railway Budget, the Government had hiked the price of the foodgrains supplied through the Public Distribution System and also sugar. Now, the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar has completed this cycle by increasing the freight charges also. Increase in the freight charge is like inflicting deep wounds for the people of Kerala. The State has to depend on other States for essential commodities, including the foodgrains. The Centre, decades before, had assured the State of Kerala that it would be supplied with adequate foodgrains at a reasonable rate to reciprocate the State's contribution by producing cash crops which earn thousands of crores of foreign exchange for the country. But, I am sorry to say

that Shri Nitish Kumar has blatantly violated this solemn assurance by increasing the freight charge.

Sir, I would now come to the specific concerns of the people of Kerala. There has not been much addition of railway line since the British left the Country. Mangalore-Trivandrum line is the lifeline of the state of Kerala and most of the economic activities, apart from the passenger side, are solely dependent on this important line. For decades together, the Centre had denied the State its due by not doubling this line. Only very recently, the Railways have realised the importance of this demand.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude quickly.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Sir, I will conclude within one or two minutes.

Sir, even then, the doubling project of the Shornur-Mangalore line is not keeping its pace due to inadequate fund allocation. The Railways have promised many a time that Shornur-Mangalore stretch would be doubled as and when the Konkan line is completed. Even after the completion and commissioning of the Konkan project, this promise has not been fulfilled. There is a slight increase in the allocation in this year's Budget, but this is not a decisive step.

Sir, there has been an allocation of Rs. 100.39 crore for the Calicut-Mangalore line and there is an allocation of Rs. 25.04 crore for the Kuttipuram-Calicut sector. To complete the doubling of Calicut-Mangalore line, there should be an additional allocation of Rs. 212 crore and for the second stretch an amount of Rs. 30 crore is required. The demand for the doubling of Ernakulam-Kollam line via Kottayam has been completely ignored.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Krishnadas, you can just lay the rest of your speech on the Table of the House. It will be incorporated in the proceedings.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Sir, I would conclude now.

Sir, I would like to bring an important point to the attention of the hon. Railway Minister. In the last year's Budget, there was a proposal for the extension of Kurla-Coimbatore Express upto Palakkad. But this has not been implemented so far. Palakkad is one of the oldest Railway Divisions in the country and it continues to be an important revenue earner for the Indian Railways. But I am sorry to say that the Railways is totally neglecting this division. The Members of Parliament from Kerala have submitted a representation to the hon. Railway Minister and urged upon him to extend the Kuria-Coimbatore Express upto Palakkad, which is a divisional headquarters.

Sir, due to diversion of many trains after the commissioning of Konkan route, the Shornur-Palakkad sector is totally deprived of even the reasonable traffic. In this regard also, the MPs from Kerala have collectively represented before the Railway Minister to do the needful. But, no action has been taken, so far. In this year's proposals, there is a new weekly train (*Interruptions*) That is the second train. That is also starting from Coimbatore. . . . (*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will call you.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I am calling one Member from each of the major parties. Then, I will call you.

SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS : Both the hon. Ministers are sitting here. These two trains, that is Coimbatore-Kerala Express and the proposed New Delhi-Coimbatore train should be extended to Palakkad Division Headquarters.

The Minister has been kind enough to introduce and increase EMU services in various parts of the country. There has been a long-standing demand for the EMU service in the busy sector of Colmbatore-Palakkad. As electrification has been completed years back, there is no reason why this demand has been ignored. I would urge upon the Minister to rise above his bureaucratic vision and take up various proposals which would be beneficial for the Railways. Palakkad is a very important industrial city of Kerala and the proposal for construction of a railway overbridge in the middle of the city is remaining only on paper. As the State Government has come up to finance 50 per cent of the cost, I see no reason why the Railways have to be reluctant.

I would like to bring to the notice of the Minister some of the very important projects or such works that need urgent consideration. Though the Ernakulam-Trivandrum sector has been considered for electrification, yet there is only a token allocation in the Budget. This is as good as rejecting or neglecting the project.

Adequate funds should be provided to this project and also the Shornur-Mangalore sector be taken up for electrification. I am sure that I have not raised any unjustifiable demands and all the proposals referred to by me are viable, profitable and for the good of the Railways. I am not seeking any package for my State unlike many of the partners of the Minister. All those packages are of political nature and I do not want to bring petty politics while speaking about the problems and issues of the Railways. I hope that the Minister would consider the demands brought to the attention of the august House sympathetically.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

SHRI GEORGE EDEN (Ernakulam) : Sir, I strongly oppose the Budget presented by the Railway Minister. Keralites are the people who travel long distances by the Railways and they are also the largest in numbers compared to any other State in India. But Kerala is the most neglected State with regard to the development of Railways. I do not deny that compared to last year's Budget, this Budget has given some consideration to us. The provision for the proposed projects is meagre, insufficient and unsatisfactory.

As a Member of Parliament representing Ernakulam, I would like to draw the kind attention of the Minister to the inadequacy of projects proposed in the Ernakulam Region.

Only Rs. 1 lakh has been provided for the proposed Edappally overbridge. This level-crossing is situated on the way to the Mehta Amrithananda Mayi Super Speciality Hospital, inaugurated by the hon. Prime Minister, Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The total estimated amount for completion of this overbridge is to be provided in this Budget itself. I further request you to complete the construction of the following overbridges, namely, Pachalam, Palleppadi and Atlantis, which would enable to avoid the traffic blockades in Ernakulam city. To avoid the traffic blockades in Ernakulam city, the ring railway system has been proposed. I hope that the hon. Minister will consider it.

Some of the long-distance trains, passing through Ernakulam junction, have been directed through Ernakulam town station. Since the facilities available in the town station are insufficient, the condition has become worse and pathetic.

The bogies of many trains stretch out of the platform since the platform is very small in length. The speedy development of Ernakulam town railway station is essential and unavoidable since Ernakulam is a tourist centre and industrial capital of Kerala. Therefore, more facilities should be provided to Ernakulam junction and town stations.

I welcome the proposed electrification of Ernakulam-Thiruvananthapuram line and also the introduction of new weekly train from Pune to Ernakulam. The weekly train may be made a daily service considering the heavy traffic on this line. I also request you that stoppages may be allowed for the Venad-Vanchinad Express Trains at Thripunithura.

I hope that my reasonable suggestions will be considered favourably and action may be taken immediately.

[Translation]

DR. RAMKRISHNA KUSMARIA (Damoh) : Sir, the hon'ble Railway Minister, under the leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, has displayed his ability, capability and wisdom by presenting a wonderful, balanced, progressive and pro-poor budget. He has done the wonderful job by connecting all the backward areas in every work and corner of the country with railways. Be it Jammu-Kashmir or Assam, Imphal and Mizoram of North-East or Konkan in South - he has tied the entire India into one thread through railways.

Sir, after fifty years of our Independence, for development of Bundelkhand on the one hand he has laid the foundation stone and got the work started on Lalitpur and Sigrouli railway line and on the other hand he has honoured the all people of Bundelkhand by giving approval to conduct survey for Jabalpur-Panna-Damoh railway line. This has yielded new prospects of development for this region which has so far remained neglected.

Sir, you have given many a gifts to my Parliamentary constituency, like:

1. Kuria-Varanasi (Kamayani Express)
2. Over-bridge construction is going on at Damoh.
3. Computer reservation facility.
4. Railway out agency at Hatta.
5. Modernisation of Damoh railway platform.
6. Providing AC III tier coach in Mahamaya super fast.
7. Survey approval for Jabalpur-Panna (via Damoh) railway line which should be implemented. These historical decisions taken during the last one year are unique.

For these several achievements I extend my heartiest congratulations to the Railway Minister.

But, Sir, it would not be proper to feel contented only with this much work done. I, therefore, request you to kindly give your approval to various other utmost important smaller projects when you come to Damoh. These projects will not require any financial expenditure, their execution require only adequate arrangements.

In my parliamentary constituency, the following work, which are of utmost importance, are awaiting your nod :

Kamayni Express and Mahamaya (Godwana) Express running between Nizamuddin and Jabalpur and between

Kuria-Varanasi respectively should be given halt at Pathariya.

There is need to make an arrangement to attach a Katani-Ahmedabad coach in Bilaspur-Jabalpur found passenger train and it should be attached with Rajkot Express at Bhopal. It was announced by you in Damoh. You must fulfil this announcement, so that the people of Gujarat could be benefitted.

Earlier in Damoh, facility of rake was available. It must be restored.

Sir, Chirmiri passenger train starts at 2 O'clock from Katani and reaches Damoh at 4 O'Clock and immediately it returns for Katani at 4.30 O'clock which stays Katani till next day upto 2 O'clock.

Therefore, it should be retained at Damoh and released for Katni at 8.30 O'clock next day, which is in the interest of people and the railways as well. Departure time of Kota shuttle is 16.30 from Damoh and it is detained at Marg Baghaura; due to non-availability of platform and reaches Bina at 9 O'clock causing great difficulties to the passengers. Earlier this train was used to detained at Guna and it passed through Bina at 10.30 O'clock in night.

Therefore Damoh Kota shuttle should run as per earlier schedule and two extra platforms should be constructed at Bina. I want to point out an important matter that Jabalpur Railway Zone has not organised any meeting for consultations with Members of Parliament during last year and made changed time schedule of trains at their own, thereby causing difficulties to the passengers and financial loss to the railways as well.

Sir, I want to make a submission regarding corruption of Chairman, Railway Recruitment board, Bhopal, who had committed corruptions in recruitment and loss to department also. I have made a seperate complaint in your office please oblige me by taking action.

At the end, I thank you for a good budget and extend my support.

*SHRIMATI SHEELA GAUTAM (Aligarh) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for the time you have given me to put my ideas on Rail Budget. First of all, I thanks those all engineers working in Chittaranjan Locomotive works for manufacturing the state of art 6,000 Horse Power Electric Engine, which is unprecedented achievement for the developing, nations of the whole world. Alongwith this I thank all those players of Railway who have participated in Bangkok, Asian Games and glorified India by winning 'medals'.

In the present circumstances it is impossible to scape from increasing fare and freight but even after that the Government has given relief to the passenger of 2nd class, 2nd class of Mail Express and season ticket holders by not increasing the fare alongwith it you have also provided issue of 2nd class pass to the licence holder porters and a set of 'PTO' to any station from the working place with his wife in a year which is a good effort.

The announcement to celebrate the 1999-2000 year as "Travellers Year" is a welcome a step. Under this scheme, there is another announcement to make the Calcutta, Mumbai, Delhi and Chennai Railway stations free from touts by which the travellers will be saved from the clutch of touts and there is also an announcement to open a 'customer care institute' to establish a direct contact of the people with Railway under this scheme railway employees will be made to behave properly with the passengers. This attempt will help in increasing the number of railway passengers and also increase trust in rail travel.

Even within the limited resources announcement were made to start 14 new trains, to lay 16 new railway lines, to electrify 3 railway routes, to extend 8 trains and to attach pantry cars in 8 trains and it is also announced to bring more and more stations under the reservation system network in the year 1999-2000. More than 400 stations have computerised reservation centres in the country which is a courageous act within limited sources.

Announcement to eliminate interview system in recruitments through Railway Recruitment Board interview system, to accord recognition to the association of Railway Protection Force to make recruitment of budding players by an open advertisement from players quota and to make the contract system transparent are also commendable announcements, which is a proof of democratisation. This can helps in eliminating corruption and favouritism.

The announcement to provide concessions to physically handicapped and paralysis suffering patients with an attendant in first, 2nd and sleeper classes alongwith AC 3 tier and AC chaircar in future and to provide 50 per cent concessions in other AC classes, 50 per cent concessions to the journalists in all classes per year upto 30000 km of travelling and 30 per cent concessions to the awardies of Presidents Police in Shatabdi, Rajdhani and other trains after attaining the age of 60 years is quite appreciable. It were also be good if the family members of Armed Forces personnels killed in boarder areas are also given such concessions by Railways. There is also a proposal to connect the divisions and regional headquarters with Railway Board to dispose of the complaints, so that the credibility will increase among the passengers and pending cases will also be disposed of speedily.

Banning the sale of cigarettes-Bidis on Railway stations and in trains from June 5, 1999 for the safety of environment and this will also a good effort to plant trees beside rail line to save the environment by the Ministry.

A radio based automatic traffic control system has been taken up as a Pilot project in this budget on Delhi-Mathura rail section and alongwith it, decision has also been taken to purchase self propelled ultrasonic Rail testing car (Spurt Car), by which accidents could be prevented and Railways will be modernised also.

The scheme to launch a Railway Travellers Magazine is also a good step which will help in enhancing tourism in country as well as abroad.

At the end, I would like to say that this Railway Budget is aimed at providing facilities to the passengers, enhancing credibility and modernisation of Railways. Every class of the society has been taken care in this budget. I support this budget.

Hon. Minister, I want to say something about my constituency Aligarh. Heavy traffic passes through Aligarh and the State government is constructing a by-pass to ease the position. A Railway bridge is necessary on that by-pass. It is requested that construction of one railway bridge should be included in this budget.

Aligarh is 130 km away from Delhi. There EMU trains runs from Aligarh to Delhi in morning in which persons employed in Delhi and milk men travel in such a large number that you can not find room to seat. Those all three trains returns Aligarh in the evening. Mr. Minister, If you introduce regular EMU service then the number of Delhi dwellers would decrease and revenue will increase. For this, you will need a third track. Somewhere this facility is available and somewhere not. If you fulfill this, your difficult will be lesser. EMU trains will runs on two tracks.

Mr. Minister, we get wet sheets in AC 2 tier always and the condition of pillows is also bad. Railway employees always misuse blankets. It is my request that pillows should be of good quality.

It is very difficult to go Mumbai-Madras because Aligarh is in far away from the route. Now a train from Bareilly goes to Mumbai via Aligarh once in a week. It should run thrice in a week.

Similarly we demand a train for Madras from Aligarh.

There will be less expense in connecting Aligarh to Mathura in future. There is a railway line upto Racha. There should be a connecting line to Racha from Aligarh via Ijash.

[Shrimati Sheela Gautam]

Just after 15 minutes of Delux, a train named Lichhvi passes through Aligarh which do not have stoppage at Aligarh but it has to stop there. It will be better to provide a stoppage of Purushottam Express and this train.

Now many Rajdhani Express are running on this route. It will be most convenient for the passangers if you provide a 2 minutes halt in Aligarh.

Mr. Minister, I want to attract your attention that it will be better if you provide T.V. facility in Chair Car in long distance trains. You may increase the fare of the Chair Car a little more because so many children like to travel in this Chair Car. You will have seen it and experienced it during travelling by Aeroplane.

The project of doubling the track between Tundla and Yamuna bridge railway station is pending incomplete, it should be completed by providing adequate funds so that a travell of eastern India be made convenient from Rajasthan via Agra.

Mr. Minister, my last request is that a 2 minutes halt of Shatabdi Express should be provided at Aligarh. I am trying since a long time and problem is not solved, while :

1. Ahmedabad-Mumbai Shatabdi Express stops at Baroada, Surat, Bharauich and Bori Veli.
2. Delhi-Jaipur Shatabdi Express stops at Alwar.
3. Delhi-Chandigarh Shatabdi Express stops at Ambala.
4. Delhi-Amritsar Shatabdi Express stops at Ludhiana and Jalandhar.

Why are we being treated step motherly? There is no convenient train to go Lucknow.

[English]

*SHRI S. AJAYA KUMAR (Ottapalam) : Sir, Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget 1999-2000.

In the First Place, this Budget is acrobatics of a different kind. It highlights poverty of a political will. It is also a capitulation of all the values that this government had claimed. Above all, this budget is a confirmation of the anti-people policy of the fading ranbow coalition ruling this country.

The increase in passenger fare and freight rates has only open up one more avenue for this Govt. to impose hardship on the people.

* Laid on the Table.

Mr. Nitish Kumar's witticisms fail to camouflage the naked increase of ordinary passenger fare. In the freight rate scenario, unprecedentedly, this govt. has failed to exclude, from the burden of its increase, food grains, edible Oil, Urea, LPG etc.

Specifically, the additional revenue estimated through freight traffic, which is 700 crore rupees and coach traffic, which is Rs. 200 crore, including parcel and luggage is literally an additional burden on the poorest of of India's poor to whom this govt. has no love lost.

Another thing I want to point out is the gross negligence of the grievances aired by the people's representatives in this house. Evidently, when a government loses interest in people, how can it pay heed to their representatives?

In this connection, I like to bring to the notice of this August House the sheer callousness shown by this government to various demands I had put forward which are simple but big things for the people. I had asked for a stop at Wadakkanchery in Thrissur district which falls under my constituency for a local train Kannur-Alappuzha executive express. It fell on deaf ears adding to the hardship of the computers in the area which is a Taluk head quarters.

In another instance, I had demanded a stop at Ottapalam for the K K Express and Rajdhani Express stops Shorannur which was also turned down by ignoring the pleas.

I would like to take the attention of the Hon. Minister and this government to the doubling work of the Mangalore-Shorannur route which is hobbled by blind policies of successive governments of ignoring various stretches in this route. The Kuttippuram-Shorannur route is one of such stretches ignored by the government I seek Govt's clarification in this regard.

This Government is showing total apathy to the Railway-Based industries in my state, Kerala. A loco shed at Shoranur was closed down mercilessly. I demand the government to bring it back and keep away from destabilishing such an industry in the state.

After the Konkan route has become reality, the people of the Shorannur-Palghat route are bearing brunt of the inadequate number of trains. And I demand extension of the New Delhi-Coimbatore Express to Shorannur.

The budget is a recurring riddle and is trying to fool the people by giving token amount to various projects. There is absolutely no clarity with regard to a link line from Shorannur-Mangalore route to Guruvayoor. I had been informed personnally, instead of the Kuttippuram-

Guruvayoor Line, the Railway proposes to take up the Tanur-Guruvayoor.

Surprisingly, the budget has said nothing on this line and has reinstated Kuttippuram-Guruvayoor by allocating a paltry sum of 3.4 lakh. It is high time that railway take a decision and start the work.

I conclude by bringing to the notice of the government the plight of hundreds of catering workers in the railways who were promised a welfare fund. But it has not been delivered yet. Invite serious attention on the part of the government and hope my suggestions would be considered by this August House.

*SHRI LAKSHMAN CHANDRA SETH (Tamluk) : Sir, I like to submit some proposals to the Hon'ble Minister Indian Railway through you for his kind action. I wished to participate in debate on Railway Budget to raise these points. Failed to do so I am submitting in writing.

Please take necessary action.

Double line from Panskura to Haldia.

3rd Line from Panskura to Kharagpur.

4th line from Panskura to Howrah.

Railway over bridge at Ranichak Durgachak and Barada of Haldia.

Computerised Reservation Terminal at Haldia.

Target date of commissioning of Tamluk-Digha line.

Stoppage of Coromandal Madras Mail, Bombay Mail, Gitanjali Express trains at Mechada stations.

Recruitment from casual and contract labour.

No atrocities on Hawkers-Market complex in all stations for their rehabilitation.

Implementation of Contract Labour Act and implementation of minimum wages for contract labour.

Payment of service charge to Municipality/Corporation.

Revival of Train service between India and Bangladesh.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Does any other Member want to lay his speech on the Table of the House?

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Radhakrishnan, please sit down.

(Interruptions)

* Laid on the Table.

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will call you. I am calling one-by-one.

SHRI M. SELVARASU (Nagapattinam) : I would like to bring to your notice only one important matter before I lay the papers on the Table of the House.

In principle, I oppose the Railway budget. But in general, I thank the hon. Railway Minister for introducing 124 new trains, extending services of 34 trains and attaching 440 new coaches in 100 prestigious trains. I would like to mention that the railways have stopped many train services and in some cases reduced the number of coaches. For example, four bogies of train number 110 Tiruchirapalli-Chennai fast passenger train were reduced.

I thank the hon. Minister for introducing Rail Bus Service in Tiruthurai-pundi-Agasthiampalli. I would request the hon. Minister to extend the Service from Agasthiampalli to Kodiakarai.

Now, I will come to broad-gauge conversion. Sir, in 1995-96 Tiruchirapalli-Nagore conversion project was sanctioned, and the work from Tiruchirapalli-Thanjavur was commissioned on 1.1.98 but the work from Tiruchirapalli-Nagore has been pending for quite some time now. I do not know why. As far as the gauge conversion is concerned, the proposal was made to convert 541 km. of rail line for which Rs. 645 crore was allocated. Actually, the proposal was to complete 12 projects. In addition to this, there are so many other pending projects.

I would request the hon. Minister - because I represent Scheduled Castes constituency - to look into the matter and do the needful. In my constituency, 75 per cent people belong to Scheduled Caste. Some of them are agricultural labour. We are very confident that the Government of India, the Ministry of Railways will definitely try to boost their confidence. In my Constituency, people tried to beat me. They were asking me, what is the use of being a Member of Parliament when I cannot help them. Such is the situation in my Constituency, Tiruthurai-pundi. In one of the segments, 2000 people were rooted out, and thousands of people were arrested. I have already made this point today.

I would request the hon. Minister to kindly consider my suggestion. Now, I would like to lay my speech on the Table of the House.

I congratulate the Minister for introducing 124 new trains, extending services of 34 trains and attaching 440 new coaches in 100 prestigious trains. I like to mention

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri M. Selvarasu]

that the railways have stopped many train services and in some cases reduced the number of coaches. For example, four bogies of Train no. 110 Tiruchirappalli-Chennai Fast Passenger were reduced.

I thank the Minister for introducing Rail Bus service in Tiruthuraiipundi-Agasthiampalli. I request the Minister to extend the service from Agasthiampalli to Kodiakarai (Point Calemere). This will help the farmers in the populous area. Kodiakarai is strategically important point where a Navy unit is also situated.

I also thank the Minister for proposing Nagore-Velanganni project. Nagore and Velanganni are two important religious centres attracting many tourist all over India. I request the Minister to expedite the the plan to help the tourist.

Keeping in mind that this year being observed as the Year of Passenger, the Minister has not hiked the passenger fare. But the sleeper charge was increased manifold. In second class it was 1.5 times, which is unreasonable. I request the Minister the reduce the sleeper charge.

For guage conversions, the proposal was made to convert 541 km and allocated Rs. 645 crores. The proposal was to complete 12 projects. For other project a meagre amount was allocated. There are many Gauge conversion project is still bending not yet cleared not allocate sufficient money, in Kerala, Tamil Nadu other state also.

Tiruchirappalli-Nagore conversion was long pending project. I have been raising the matter for the last three sessions. The project for Tiruchirappalli-Thanjavur was commissioned in 1-1-1998, but for remaining portion the work is progressing very slowly. Delay in completing the project has escalated the project cost. This is a prestigious project helping tourists visiting Nagore and Velankanni.

The salt producers in my constituency face lot of problems in procuring wagons to load salt. Now the authorities have introduced new rules to procure at least 14 wagons. It is not possible for small producers to procure 14 wagons. I request the Minister to cancel the rule and order the official not to issue any condition to procure wagons.

In Tiruchirappalli Division the basic amenities are not sufficient. In many stations there is no drinking water facility. Some stations like Tiruthuraiipundi, Koradacherry, Nidamangalam the roof is not sufficient to cover the trains. So passengers get drenched during rainy season.

In Railway Recruitment Board officials are being appointed and the Chairman was appointed by the ruling part. I like to mention that there is no transparency in the selection process. I request the Minister to include some Members of Parliament in the Board, so that they can properly monitor the selection process.

Survey

In the last Budget, many rail lines were included for survey, including the following :

1. Thanjavur to Patterkottai
2. Mannargudy to Thanjavur Ariyalow.
3. Cuddalore to Pondicherry.

In fact, all over India, there are thousands kms of rail line, survey in respect of which were made but there is no further progress.

Improve the Locomotive Sector

One famous locomotive sector is in Golden Rock. The capacity of that sector needs to be improved in order to give impetus to above mentioned sector. Here I am sorry to say that one day I was travelling by Sethu Express; at Nayadutham the Engine developed some trouble but no alternative arrangement was made for the stranded passengers.

Railway Mail Service

The Postal Service recently has been withdrawn by Railways. With the cancelation of service, the people are facing inconvenience. I don't know, what is the reason behind it. I would like to ask postal authority as to who ordered them to withdraw service. I request the attention of the Hon'ble Minister on the Floor of the House to restore the RMS.

*SHRI KHAGAPATI PRADHANI (Nowrangpur) ; Mr. Chairman, Sir, as there is no time. I would like to speak only one or two sentences, and then lay my papers on the Table of the House.

Sir, the Government of India, that is the Railway Minister has totally neglected our State. They have allotted only Rs. 260 crore for the whole year for the all the on-going projects. During this year, they have allotted only Rs. 32 crore for this Daitari-Banspani line. For details, I am laying my papers on the Table of the House.

*Mr. Chairman, now, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget for the year 1999-2000 presented by the Railway Minister. The State of Orissa has been fully neglected

* Laid on the Table.

during this year. As I have already said Rs. 260 crore had been allotted for the whole State for this year for all projects undertaken.

Firstly Daitari-Banspani is the longstanding demand of this State as this is only line to transport iron ore to Paradeep Port and has been started long back to complete this construction work by 2003 at a cost of Rs. 592 crore and so far only Rs. 176 crore had been allotted for this year. If the progress of this work continues at this rate, the cost of construction would go up and this construction cannot be completed within scheduled time. Therefore, I would like to draw the attention of the Railway Minister for raising the allotment to by at least 100 crore for this year.

Secondly, to start construction of Longigarh-Jungarh railway line, only Rs. 2 crore had been allotted which is not a good beginning.

Regarding gauge conversion, though Nowpada-Gunipur has been sanctioned, no money has been allotted for this.

Every year some interior areas were included to provide railway link. The most part of Koraput and Bastar districts have no railway line. Nabarangpur district and Halkargiri districts of my constituency have no railway line totally. Though survey work was taken up to extent up to Nabarangpur from Jeypore, the project has not been sanctioned.

I would request the Railway Minister to sanction this project as early as possible without further delay.

Zonal Headquarters of East-Coast Zone was sanctioned in 1996 and the then Prime Minister inaugurated the same. The State Government have provided land costing about Rs. 47 crore for the Headquarters but only Rs. 60 lakh had been allotted which will serve no purpose.

Rajdhani Express runs only two days in a week from the State Headquarters to Delhi. This requires to be run daily.

Some new trains were proposed by the Railway Minister in 1997. One of them is Sabari Express from Koraput to Bhubaneswar. Though it was announced in that year till today it did not operate.

Most of the area of Waltair Division lies in Orissa where a Zone has been sanctioned but this Waltair Division has been attached to Secunderabad Zone which has aggravated the situation. I wish this should be included in the East Coast Zone which is very near Bhubaneswar.

Therefore, I draw the attention of the Railway Minister for sanction of more money for projects under construction, for gauge conversion and for sanction of new line for Nabarangpur to Jeypore early as it is the most backward area of this country and help them to develop themselves.

[Translation]

SHRI JAGDAMBI PRASAD YADAV (Godda) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on the Railway budget. The Railway Minister has done commendable works like the establishment of Customer Care Training Institute for maintaining better relations between passengers and staff, publication of the Railway magazine introduction of interactive voice Responce System, making constant efforts to solve the serious problem of passenger's safety, laying of new railway lines, introduction of new trains and increasing the frequency of the existing ones.

Mr. Chairman Sir, there is a need for change in the Mandar Hill-Rampur Hat-Dumka railway line. Godda is very near to Mandar Hill. The Railway line from Rampur Hat to Dumka should run through Lalmatia, the largest coal mine area of Asia, Pathargaon block, Godda district, Poraiyahat, and Hansdiha. the second thing that I want to say is that a train should be run from Baidya Nath Dham to Dumka via Basuki Nath, it should be linked with Deoghar and Hansdiha. A direct train should be run from Bhagalpur to Mumbai via Sultanganj, Kiul Baidya Nath Dham and Basuki Nath Dham. Here every day and especially during the month of Shraavan lakhs of devotees visit Baidyanath Dham and Basukinath Dham from Sultanganj.

Now I want to mention about the loop line. The Kiul-Sahibganj route has been the most neglected one till today. The Upper India Express has now been terminated at Mughalsarai, it should be run upto Delhi over a dozen of Members of Parliament have requested that the Poorva express should be run through the loop line twice in a week. The Bhagalpur-Kurta train should be run as per its previous timings.

Over 45-50 lakh people of Bihar, the eastern region and Uttar Pradesh live in Delhi and about 10,000 passengers travel to Bihar every day but enough trains are not available for the same. Over 300 to 400 persons remain in the waiting list of passengers even after having a Railway Minister who belongs to Bihar. Therefore enough trains should be provided for the same.

I have been mentioning one thing in the Standing Committee and the House as well, that general class compartments are rapidly decreasing in all the better trains. All the trains introduced by the Railways are meant for the elite class people. I want to say one more thing

[Shri Jagdambi Prasad Yadav]

that the Jamalpur factory is the biggest one of the Railways. It has a technical institute, building, hostel and sophisticated laboratory where officers of Trade Apprentice, First Class Apprentice and Special Class Apprentice are trained. The Japanese firm too had appreciated it. I want to say that it should be revived. The Standing Committee had said that rail coaches should be built at Jamalpur but only repair work of coaches is being done here, it is not possible till the coaches are built here. The welfare of the Railway Technical Institute is not possible without the work on Trade Apprentice, Special Apprentice and First Class Apprentice is started.

The booking-cum-reservation facility should be started at Godda at the earliest. Hon. Minister Sir, when you are going to provide railway facility upto Dumka then please route it through my constituency Godda so that people of this district are benefitted. I hope at least this much from you. The Vikramshila express should be run as a full fledged train as was original envisaged.

With these words, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA (Samastipur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, Minister of Railways has resolved to complete the work of doubling the railway line from Karpuri Gram to Sehere in my constituency. I express my thanks to him.

Our Minister of Railways is a technocrat and a technocrat should pay attention to quality.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Earlier you worked as teacher for technocrats.

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : He is in power not I am.

Mr. Chairman, last year at the time of budget I had drawn his attention to a very serious point that the material taken from the accident site Danapur region was investigated in Kharagpur and it was said that the equipments used on that line were of sub-standard quality.

I had kept the complete report before him and I hoped that, I will be informed about the action be taken in this regard. But this was not done. I do not know what happened to that report.

Mr. Chairman, Railways should get liberty to mobilise its resources as my hon'ble friend Shri Mohan Singh has said. In this connection I want to draw your attention that a lot a land is lying waste at Dalsingh Sarai station in north-

eastern railways. Earlier it was encroached upon but it was got vacated. I would like to urge upon the railway Minister through you Sir, that shop should be constructed on that land and allotted to the shopkeepers. Since this area fall within the city. So it will earn money for the railways. Vast area of such land is available near Vidyapati Nagar station. Similar scheme should be framed for that land too.

One of my requests is that Dalsingh Sarai railway station is very congested. It should be transferred to the earlier goods godown. Since the road is available there and it falls in the middle.

Mr. Chairman, I want to draw your attention to a point that there is some flaw in the freight structure due to which a competition like situation has emerged between road transport and railway transport. Road transport is cheaper than railway transport. That's why the people from Haryana carry the coal by trucks from the coal mines in Bihar and do not use railway wagons. It effects the railways. At the same time one important point is that mining of coal is cheap but the consumer has to pay much price for coal due to freight. So the freight should be rationalised.

Mr. Chairman, Bathauli railways station comes between Hajipur and Muzaffarpur in the North-eastern railways. The residence of noted freedom fighter Late Deep Narayan Singh was near this railway station. He had been Minister for a long time in the Government of Bihar. I therefore, suggest that Bithunli railway station should be named as Deep Narayan Nagar.

Likewise a station Vidyapati Nagar falls between Hajipur-Barauni. The people of that place have been demanding for a long time that the name of Vidyapati Nagar should be changed to Vidyapati Dham.

Mr. Chairman, through you, Sir, I want to draw the attention of railways Minister especially to these suggestions and at the same time I request you to simplify Bithauli, Bhagwanpur, Moraul Kanti, Motipur, Mahnar and Pusa road stations. Guahati Rajdhani Express has a stoppage at Hajipur but a passenger like me feels a lot of inconvenience to go his residential railway station Samastipur after having a stoppage in Hajipur. I therefore demand that after Rajdhani Express a passenger train should be introduced from Hajipur to Darbhanga via Muzaffarpur and Samastipur so that the people could be benefitted.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there is not a single train from Patna to Ranchi in day time. If there exists a train, the train generally takes more time than by road. I request you that an improvement in the operation of this train should be brought so that time could be saved.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, former Railway Ministers have awakened the wishes of the people by making different type of declarations about Samastipur in the field of railways. I would like to request the railway Minister that so many declarations have been made but their stage is not known.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : I will not awake the wishes of the public. I will fulfil them.

PROF. AJIT KUMAR MEHTA : I am grateful to the railway Minister that he has assured me to fulfil the wishes of the people of Samastipur. I would like to say that special attention be paid to establish a diesel shade there because there is no industries in Samastipur. There is only a just mill and a railway factory. Full capacity of the railway factory has also not been utilised. I therefore request the Minister of railways that the same extension be given to the factory as it was earlier and the full capacity of the factory be utilised. At the same time a Zonal office should be established.

With these words, I can not oppose the budget because you will get it passed in the house. I, therefore conclude.

[English]

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : By seven O'clock, the hon. Minister will reply. Please cooperate with the Chair.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Choudhary, I will call you.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : I will call you later.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right, I will call you later.

Shri Rama Chandra Mallick, please take two minutes.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK (Jajpur) : Sir, I have got seven minutes. You see my name is there. Sir, the Congress Party has given me seven minutes. Please see the record. I am given seven minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Originally, your Party's time is over. But they allotted 10 minutes' time per speaker but that was already consumed.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK : No, I am the only speaker from Orissa.

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I must thank you for giving me an opportunity. At the outset, I must congratulate the workers, the officers, the Members and the Chairman of the Railway Board and at the same time, I must congratulate the Railway Minister and State Minister. He is flying with success. Though Shri Nitish Kumar's father was a freedom fighter. I am sorry to say that he has done nothing to the freedom fighters of Orissa. There are 25 freedom fighters from my parliamentary constituency. Yesterday, on the 12th March, we made a rail *roko andolan* in Orissa. We, the Members of both Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, staged a *dharna* in front of Parliament, . . . (Interruptions) Please hear me first. I have not disturbed you.

Sir, I come from Jajpur parliamentary constituency. This is the third time for me. I was a Member of the Third and Sixth Lok Sabhas and this time also, I have been elected by a majority of votes.

There are two steel plants in my parliamentary constituency at Sukinda. They are MESSCO Group and Nilanchal Ispat Nigam. This place is full of iron ore, forest, water, rivers and Government land.

I want to give you an example to show how the hon. Minister is helping Orissa State. For the Nuapara-Gunupur railway line gauge conversion as against the demand of Rs. 46.52 crore, he had given only Rs. 1000. There is another line, Rajathagarh-Baranga. As against the requirement of Rs. 166.16 crore, he has given Rs. 10,000 only. I went through the speech of the Railway Minister. He is going to introduce 14 new trains but not a single train has been given to Orissa. I also want to draw his attention to page 16 of his speech. He has given a list of extension of trains and the trains for which the frequency will be increased. Not a single train is there for Orissa. He has not given even a single MEMU service and DMU train to Orissa. Again on page 21, he has given the list of 16 projects but not a single project is given to Orissa. This is a very important point. You know Orissa is a backward State. The population of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe is much more in Orissa, also

I have to refer to page 22 of the hon. Minister's speech. The hon. Minister has mentioned 16 new lines and six lines for gauge conversion. Not a single line has been given to Orissa.

Again on page 22 itself for doubling and electrification four projects have been mentioned and not a single one is for Orissa.

[Shri Rama Chandra Mallick]

On Page No. 24, Six projects consisting of 241 km. have been mentioned but not a single project is for Orissa.

On Page No. 25, he has mentioned 541 km. for gauge conversion and not a single kilometre has been given to Orissa.

I repeat that out of 24 new lines for survey not a single one was given to Orissa.

I want to mention a song in Oriya written by me :

"Talamala Tama Sarakar
Aniti Nakar Nitisha Kumar
Anyatama Mantri Ram Nayak
Tamar Atanti Sahayak
Project Katila Orissar
Mantri Hi Sabare Dhurander
Prastab Karai Rama Chandar
Orissava Dabi Shankar"

Ashtam Dheenam Basam Kasi
Deenam Yekam Purushottam
Tadad Phado Laphathe
Siri Biraja Mukhadarshan
I come from Jajpur.

I would like to make a request that the Rajdhani Express Coromandal and Falkanama Express train should stop at Jaipur-Keonjhar road. It will help the passenger from Bhadrak, Dhenkanal, Jajpur, Keonjhar and Kendrapara districts

Another thing I want to mention is that there are 28 freedom fighters in Sukunda district in my constituency and they want a passenger halt in between Janapur-Jakhapara Railway Station.

One more point. . . . (Interruptions)

Please do not disturb me. You are a new comer.

The Hon. Minister of Railways is very clever, generous and kind hearted. He knows the difficulties of the people. I come from Jajpur parliamentary constituency, a reserved constituency. Shri Biju Patnaik, our former Chief Minister had laid the foundation stone for a project for extending a railway line from Jajpur to Dhen Kanal and then to Bhuban Dul. It may be extended to Sarkand and Janpur and then Dhamia.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude, Please sit down.

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK : A passenger halt has already been sanctioned. The Chairman, Railway

Board, may please be requested to expedite the implementation. That line may also be extended to Sarkind and Jajpur and then Dhamia.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Mallick I hope the hon. Minister will reply to you. Thank you.

SHIR RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK : I request that all the points made by me may be considered sympathetically.

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK) : Sir, the hon. Member from Jajpur in Orissa took my late father's name. I would like to remind the hon. Member that when he talks about the historical neglect of the Railways in our State of Orissa. He must remember that, that historical neglect is because of Congress' rule for half a century and the Congress has virtually neglected the Railways in my State and in my birth place. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI P. SHIV SHANKER (Tenali) : I think, you have not heard him properly. He has complimented your father. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI NAVEEN PATNAIK : He has complimented my father. I wanted to say that the Congress has historically neglected my State (Interruptions)

SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN (Chirayinkil) : Sir, I am on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Radhakrishnan, I will call you. Your party man has already spoken. I will call you later. I have given the chance to a lady Member.

(Interruptions)

SHRI VARAKALA RADHAKRISHNAN : Sir, the hon. Member has raised a point. It is not proper for a Member of the Treasury Bench to answer it at the time when discussion is going on regarding the Railway Budget. The answer can be given at the time of reply by the concerned Minister or with his permission a Member of the Treasury Bench can answer, if there is a personal allegation. Here, there is no personal allegation. It is a very bad precedent. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SUKHDA MISRA (Etawah) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am very thankful to you for giving me a chance to speak. (Interruptions) The foundation stone of an under-bridge at Mainpuri crossing in my parliamentary constituency in Etawah was laid in 1991 which is still under construction. A deep digging has been done there. That bridge should have been completed by now. The whole of bridge will be filled with water if the construction work

did not complete by this June and all the houses nearby will collapsed. I request the Railway Minister to inaugurate the bridge. . . . (Interruptions)

I want to impress upon a point that when I read about new line in Etawah in your budget speech, I was surprised that I have got what I had not asked for. You have informed about a new line from Satiabagh to Oodi Mod. Which is my special area and adjacent to Bhind. Though the fund allocated for it this year is so meagre that it would perhaps finish in foundation stone laying ceremony or in doing little work only. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Madam, you lay your speech on the table. It will be included in the proceedings.

(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI SUKHDA MISRA : Sir, I will lay my copy. Please allow me to say one point. It is a very important point. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

A road has been constructed from Katiabagh. In 1985 Shri Madhav Rao Scindia had raised a question, then the Guna Railway line was constructed. There are two bridges over there and the river of Chambal and Yamuna passes through. The deptt. of railways is doing nothing. I am unable to understand of that if all the tracks are left there and these bridges are constructed with more money. All these plans would prove futile if there is no money for that work. I therefore request that at least bridge construction work should be started. Only then Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh can be connected. It would serve no purpose if all tracks are left by bringing them to the bridge. . . . (Interruptions)

Railway line was laid from Agra to Etawah, from Fatiapur to Oodi upto Beyond Bhind, but they start work unsystematically and leave it without having completed. I want that some work should start from my constituency so that the people may come to know that railway line has been started here. With these words I express my thanks to you.

*I rise to speak and support the railway budget. An under-bridge on Mainpuri-Etawah crossing has been under construction for the last seven years in my constituency Etawah but it has not been completed as yet and a george has been dug up at this place now. If it is not completed before rain by June, there will be water all around and all the nearby bamboo houses will be sunk.

* Laid on the Table.

The railway station from where all trains of Howrah line pass through is very small and the fifth platform is on a down level. The bridge collapsed in an accident and it has not been constructed as yet. The construction work of this bridge is progressing at a very slow pace thereby causing a lot of trouble to the commuters, so, this work should be completed very soon.

The surplus land of the railways is lying unused. It should be utilised. The construction work on Chambal and Yamuna bridges on Guna-Etawah railway line, has not been started even though this scheme was started in 1985. Its work should be started soon. Meagre funds have been allocated to Fatehabad-Udi Mod and therefore no work can be started this year. This task should be started from both sides.

The work from Etawah to Bhind is not in progress despite sanction. I request for a survey on this line to connect Bhind-Muraina-Thyopur-Kala and Savai Madhopur. This line will provide benefit lakhs of people of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

[English]

MAJOR GENERAL BHUVAN CHANDRA KHANDURI, AVSM (Garhwal) : Sir, those Members who want to lay their speeches, may kindly be permitted to lay their speeches.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please wait for five minutes. I will call one by one.

(Interruptions)

19.00 hrs.

[Translation]

SHRI SHAKUNI CHAUDHARY (Khagaria) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the historical railway budget framed and presented by hon. Minister Shri Nitish Kumar. I am thankful to Shri Nitish Kumar and the all personnel of Ministry of Railways.

As all of us know hon. Prime Minister has visited Lahore by bus and acted in the direction of connecting Pakistan by bus. I would like to suggest hon. Minister for Railways for connecting Rawalpindi by railway line since it may outdo the differences between India and Pakistan. As you know train stands for national integrity. Train plays a vital role in bringing about people together and it is the train through which we come closed to each other and it is very important point.

Since You have shortage of time, I must start with problem of my area. Jamalpur railway factory is the largest in Asia and it is the largest factory of railways. Twenty two

[Shri Shakuni Chaudhary]

thousand people worked in this factory during British rule but, its condition has deteriorated to an extent that only six to seven thousand people work in it at present. I do not know as to how its position came to such a low ebb during these 50 years. When Hon. Minister for Railways visited this factory in the month of May he announced that enough work load would be amounted to this workshop and that would definitely increase the number of workers. But it is a matter of regret that no workload has been exerted to it so far. Railway coaches can be produced there and the workers of this factory are competent enough to despatch any work of railway department.

Earlier apprenticeship training was imparted there, that training programme is also closed now. I would like to request hon. Minister for Railways to fulfil his assurance as given during his visit to the factory. I would like to invite the attention of hon. Minister for Railways, through you, the most important north-east railway route from Barauni to Katihar. This route is also important from strategic point of view in a wartime. I demand of the Minister, through you, at least its doubling as single line delays the trains coming from Gauhati or Assam. And, these delays are upto 24 hours, 12 hours or 10 hours. Doubling of this line will provide benefit a lot.

Second point is that there is not even a single train from Barauni to Howrah. If there is a direct train from Barauni to Howrah, the people of Begusarai, Khagaria, Naugachhia, Katihar can trade directly from Howrah. I demand of the Minister for Railways. Through you, to work for it. Meter gauge on Samastipur-Khagaria section needs to be converted into broad gauge. It is very important route and at least 50 lakh people will take benefit from it so, I request hon. Minister to get it converted.

This is through which I wanted.

Bihpur Loco Shed has not been constructed for some reasons so far. North-Eastern Railway has enough land for locoshed, quarters are already constructed. I request the Minister for Railways to get a locomotive shed erected there so as to make employment available to the people. The Government land, being encroached upon, can also be saved by this. On the other hand, misuse of hundreds of quarters will also be stopped. There Railway lines are the worst in our area. Our zone is a large one and you have allocated only Rs. 60 lakh for this purpose this year. The work cannot be resume with this meagre amount. Newly formed zone at Hazaribagh should be given more funds for proper functioning and it should be transferred from Gorakhpur to Hazipur.

*SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT 'BACHDA' (Almora):

Sir, I support the railway budget for the year 1999-2000 presented by the Minister of Railways. The Minister for Railways has paid full attention to the fact that low and medium class passengers are not forced to bear much burden in an effort to mobilise higher revenue to overcome the difficulties being faced by the Indian Railways. Also, increase for higher class passengers is very low in comparison to the facilities provided.

I am elected from Almora-Pithoragarh parliamentary constituency. There are no railway facilities in my constituency. Most of the people of my constituency are either in the armed forces or in Government or non-Government services in the plains and keep on commuting from their home town. In addition, hill area of Uttaranchal is a centre of attraction for the tourists. Tourists keep on pouring here round the year.

Lal Kuan, Kathgodam, Ramnagar, and Tanakpur are the railing heads in my parliamentary constituency. But, this area is very backward in railway facilities and the passengers are facing inconvenience owing to lack of railway facilities. Consequently, this area has lagged behind in the race of development.

I demand of the Minister of Railways to start a through train from Ramnagar to Delhi. I had apprised hon. Minister of Railways of this in the Northern Railway Consultative Committee meeting and have written letters too.

At present there are 6 coaches, 4 sleeper and 2 general class, from Ramnagar to Delhi. There are only 2 coaches from Ramnagar, west of the 2 coaches are in Kashipur quota. Therefore, people seldom get reservation. These coaches are connected with Ranikhet Express at Moradabad; even though world renowned Jim Corbet National Park is in close vicinity of Ramnagar Rail Head and it is also an entry point of Kumaun Garhwal.

I also demand for gauge conversion of meter gauge like wise, from Lal Kuan to Bareilly to be connected to Lal Kuan-Lucknow via Bareilly.

There are no through trains to Tanakpur head from Lucknow and Agra Fort and sleeper class and general class bogies are there to Tanakpur and these are connected with Nainital Express and Agra Fort at Pilibhit. There are no A.C. Coaches for Tanakpur. Gauge conversion of this line (Tanakpur-Pilibhit) into broad gauge is also needed. I demand the Minister of Railways to get the gauge conversion done alongwith attaching first class or A.C. coaches for Tanakpur.

* Laid on the Table.

There are only two long distance trains from Kathgodam to Delhi and Howrah whereas two additional trains from Kathgodam for Mumbai and Jammu Tawi are much needed keeping in view the demand of people of this area. I also request to get the railway line laid from Ramnagar to Chaukhutia and Tanakpur to Bageshwar.

While concluding, I would like to request to provide computerised reservation facility and raise reservation quota for working out agencies working in the difficult hill terrain of Ranikhet, Almora, Bageshwar, Pithoragarh and Champavat.

Finally, demanding solution for the above said problems. I conclude supporting the rail budget presented by the Minister of Railways.

*SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur) : Sir, Bilha Railway Station is considered to be one of the significant industrial centres of Bilaspur district which collects a handsome revenue of about Rs. 5 crores for the Railway Board per year. So, in view of public conveniences, the long awaited demand of public may be fulfilled as quickly as possible by stopping the following trains at that station with the facility of reservation of 5 berths each.

Sarnath Express 8157/8158 Durg Chhapra remarkably a single train running to the direction of Katni. A majority of population moves to the same direction by visiting Prayagraj-Allahabad to get through their daily routine tasks of pain and pleasure. So, it is very essential to have Sarnath Express stopped there. Bilaspur-Vishakhapatnam Line Express is also a single train running to this direction. It, too, needs to be stopped there necessarily.

Double railway track may be made enroute from Bilaspur to M.P. Khograsa Railway Station between Khodri and Anuppur (Junction) because there is no good railway traffic ever since the single track was laid from Bilaspur to Anuppur at the time of B.N.R.; and, in addition to it, it passes through a forest-area which caused several rail mishaps in the past. As per rule, merely 65 kilometre long rail line is possible to be approved. I, therefore, request you to grant approval in this regard so that the people in general may travel all the places lying between Bilaspur and Anuppur;

The railway track en route from Bilaspur to Mandla via Chhaya Mugeli may also be approved.

An Ahmedabad-bound 8033/8034 Express is a single long distance covering train that should also have a stoppage there. Apart from it, reservation facility of 5 berths each may please be granted in trains like 8237/8238

* Laid on the Table.

Chhattisgarh Express 8029/8030, Kurla Express and 8477/8478 Utkal Express.

Bilaspur-Katni railway route is the most profit-earning in the Railway Division but it has acute of passenger trains. For instance, after the departure of Sarnath Express from the Bilaspur Railway Station (Zonal headquarters) at 10 p.m., there is no train available until the next morning at 10 a.m. that is, passengers travelling from Bilaspur to Katni and vice-versa eventually have to wait around 12 hours if once Sarnath Express is missed. If an observation is made regarding railway traffic on Bilaspur-Katni route, one will find that this route is very poor in regards to passenger facility as well as train services. Therefore, from the point of public conveniences a passenger train should be introduced on Bilaspur-Katni route and it should be departed at one or two O'clock in the night from Bilaspur Railway Station to Katni and the same train should be departed from Katni at two O'clock in the noon. With the start of this train service, hundreds of small and big stations including Karangi Road (Ratanpur, Mahamaya, Chenda Pilgrimage), Anuppur, Shahdol (a grand coal field), Amlai, Birsingpur, Pali (Industrial Belt and Sanjay Thermal Power Plant) Umariya and Jaithari and a big population of Adivasi as well as businessmen will be benefitted and the income of railway will go on hike. I hope you will be aware of feelings of our public interest.

The common people have to face difficulty for not being run the 362/363 Korba Bilaspur passenger train up to Durg. So, it may please be extended up to Durg.

Under the Bilaspur parliamentary constituency Bilha city is the headquarter of legislative Assembly and an important industrial-commercial centre of Bilaspur district. Due to lack of proper railway transport facility the work of commercial development is held up there. About crores of rupees are collected as revenue per year from the freight loading at the Bilha station. After the year of 1985 no stoppage of the Express trains, even of a single one, has been provided at Bilha station. During this period so many Express trains have been run in Bilaspur Railway Division.

Now, this division has become a zonal railway. As per provision of the railways, any express train departing from zonal headquarter has entitled to get its stoppage at every station having distance of 120 kilometers. So, this benefit may also be granted to Bilha Railway Station with immediate effect.

Bilha-Bilaspur is a major parliamentary constituency. I have given an assurance to fulfil the proper demands of public. Therefore, I would request you to pass an order to arrange stoppages of the following trains in prior basis at Bilha Railway Station. :

[Shri Punnu Lal Mohale]

1. 8033/8034 - Howrah - Ahmedabad Express
2. 5159/5160 - Durg - Chhapra Sarnath Express
3. 8517/8518 - Bilaspur - Vishakhapatnam Link Express
4. 8225/8226 - Bilaspur Bhopal Mahanadi Express
5. 8253/8254 Durg-Bhopal Amarkantak Express

Stoppage of Samalpur Express may be provided at Pendra Road Station.

At least any one of the three Durg Sarnath Express, Bilaspur-Vishakhapatnam Express, Howrah Ahmedabad Express may be stopped at Bilha Station.

Approval be granted, as per provision, to conduct a survey for laying a new railway line en route from Bilaspur to Madla via Mugeli. Both Korba-Bilaspur and Jharsuguda-Bilaspur passenger trains may be extended to Durg.

An additional coach for Lucknow, as was before, be attached to 8033/8034 Indore-Bilaspur train.

Night train service be started on Bilaspur-Katni route since there is not any train service after 10 at night.

An overbridge be constructed across the platforms of Belgahna station.

An overbridge be constructed at the Tipura unmanned level crossing of Bilaspur.

Special recruitment drive may be launched for scheduled castes/scheduled tribes to fill up all vacant posts of fourth and first-grade in your entire department so that the recruitment be accomplished within three months. Recruitment be made by D.R.M. Bilaspur for the posts of fitter and gangman at Gufadi from the local people. But, unfortunately fraudulene is being done by making a false domicile certificates under the fugitive shade of priority.

Approval may be granted for a new Railway Zone in Bilaspur.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you very much.

*SHRI ADITYANATH (Gorakhpur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, today we are discussing the Budget of Indian Railways for 1999-2000 in this House presented by hon'ble Minister for Railways. This railway budget is the second railway budget of B.J.P. coalition Government. I would like to congratulate hon'ble Minister for Railways for presenting the budget

* Laid on the Table.

consecutively second time and along with this congratulation I would like to pay him thanks for fulfilling all announcements, barring some exceptions, made during the last budget of 1998-1999.

There is no denying that the Indian Railways which is the biggest network of the world being operated under a single management, has played a great role in context of national prospective. Indian Railways connecting the entire nation from north to south and east to west religiously culturally and economically stands for national unity and integrity.

Despite all ups and downs during the history of nearly, its 150 years the Indian Railways even today has got the credit of carrying each year about one crore and 25 lakh passengers approximately along with the transportation of 15 lakh tonnes goods. In view of road transport, it is a safe, comfortable and economical conveyance on one hand, whereas in view of environment it has proved to be more excellent on the other.

There has been a fall in various sectors during the last year and even Indian Railways did not remain untouched with it. The percentage of freight and passenger traffic has reduced from 89 and 80 to 40 and 20 compared to 1950-51 due to not having any curb on extravagancy, theft of railways properties and growing population and having less railway commuter facilities and freight charges against the demand or lack of capacity and acute shortage of railway resources in view of economic development.

The total length of railway track was 65217 kilometres in 1946-47 while on the other it could be extended merely by 1073160 kilometers in the year 1996-97. The same position is with the passenger coaches which were 13569 and they grew in number by 33849 in 1996-97 and wagons those used to be 205596 during 1950-51 hardly grew in number by 273129 during 1996-97.

This second railway budget of B.J.P. coalition government has been framed in view of public interest and this railway budget is in fact a budget of public interest.

The introduction to work efficiency given by this government despite the implementation of recommendations of fifth pay commission in the interest of employees while working in unfavourable conditions by doing away with slackness attitude of working and corrupt administrative system of last fifty years within one year is commendable and memorable.

Although all the organisation have complained of some discrepancies in the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission, for instance, this Pay Commission has

over looked the interests of technical and account services personnels. The BJP coalition government, in just one year terms, have made travelling easy for a greater number of more than 29000 passengers by adding the capacity of 440 extra passenger bogies to 100 important trains, also they have started 125 new trains, extended 32 trains, implemented 'Tatkal reservation' in 32 trains and made the selection process of the Railway recruitment Boards transparent.

The Minister of Railways have taken the historic decision in the Railway-Budget to stop waste for expenses, to control the expenses on needless hospitalities, advertising and other functions to check the incidence of thefts of Railway property, to minimise rail-accidents and to increase the penalty on ticket less travelling, which is commendable. Beside this, effecting no increase in general class fares and subsidised freight-charges upto 50 kms will give relief to the common man and boost to the goods transportation.

I congratulate the Minister for Railways for his commendable job of providing 35 per cent concession to senior citizens, special concession to handicapped in all classes and also special concessions to press-correspondents and President's Police Medal awardees in rail fares.

Hon'ble Railway Minister has also announced commencement of some new projects in the Railway Budget. Some of them are 16 new rail-lines, six gauge-conversion projects, one doubling the line project, three electrification projects etc. In the last Rail-budget, Gorakhpur saw only one plan for it, in the form of gauge-conversion between Gorakhpur and Narkatiyaganj, But this time there is no plan for Gorakhpur, it is disappointing. Although, I realise the Minister's bonding limits, yet, anyway I would request to him through the Chair, Mr. Speaker, Sir, that since he has commenced to start four passenger trains and one express train on this track after having gauge converted the line between Gorakhpur and Narkatiyaganj therefore, he may see to ensure stoppages of those trains at Pipraich (Gorakhpur) and Dhudhli stations. Moreover, last time while making my speech, I presented some problems pertaining to Gorakhpur and adjacent areas, but there is no progress on this. I have constantly raised these problems in the Parliament also. These are :

An over bridge be constructed on the railway underbridge at Dharamshala Market in Gorakhpur. Its proposal has already been forwarded to the Uttar Pradesh Government along with estimates. The Ministry of Railways has to bear the half of the total estimated cost.

Along with the Vaishali Superfast Express, there be one more superfast train from Gorakhpur to Delhi. There

always remain a stiff-stuff waiting-lists of reservations in Vaishali Superfast and other trains, even for more than two months. This if very urgent keeping in view the increasing rush. So, if possible, the Shatabdi Express between Delhi-Lucknow may be extended upto Delhi-Gorakhpur via Lucknow.

A double-track be laid from Gorakhpur to Sehjanwa. With this, the Railway bridges on Rohini and Rapti rivers and the footpath for light vehicles and pedestrians be constructed. This route has twice witnessed major accidents near Demiengarh only because of non-existence on a double-track. These accidents claimed hundreds of lives.

The railway station at Gorakhpur may be annexed with a ticket-counter at its northern direction, as there much crowd gathers. With this, the Siri halt and cantt. stations be also given extension.

The Maharajganj district-headquarters be connected with a railway line from Gorakhpur via Partawal.

The rail-service from Gorakhpur to Haridwar, Mumbai and Calcutta be regularised.

There is no rail line in the southern area of Gorakhpur. Therefore, Basgaon-Badhalganj-Dohrighat track may be rail linked in the Gorakhpur.

The line from Gorakhpur to Nautanava-Gonda be converted into broad-gauge.

All express trains may be given stoppage at Sahjanwa station.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I once again congratulate the Minister for Railways for presenting a budget beneficent to the public and support this railway budget presented by the BJP coalition government.

*SHRI NANDKUMAR SINGH CHAUHAN (Khandwa) : I support the demands contained in the Railway-budget presented by the Railway Minister. I would like to tell you that as far as the problems of my constituency Khandwa, related to Railways are concerned, they will pose no financial burden on the Railways department.

The Khandwa junction be facilitated with a terminus and the Surat-Bhusawal train may be extended upto Surat-Khandwa. Khandwa and Burhanpur cities are commercially related to Surat. They also enjoy social contacts with Surat. Hundreds of passengers travel from Khandwa and Burhanpur to Surat everyday. Presently, passengers of Burhanpur and Khandwa face many in conveniences, as there is only one train, namely Tapti-Ganga, which go to

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Nandkumar Singh Chauhan]

Surat. If the Surat-Bhusawal passenger train is extended upto Khandwa, it will really pose no problem to the Railways. Instead, it will add to its revenue, though.

Pushpak Express may be given stoppage at Burhanpur. Many passengers travel from Burhanpur to Lucknow and Kanpur daily. The Railways department had decided to give this stoppage to Pushpak Express in 1996 but after the notification of Elections in the same year this could not be done, as the code of conduct had come into force. This is grave injustice to the public therefore, the Pushpak Express may be given stoppage at Burhanpur.

Sachkhand Express also be given stoppage at Burhanpur. This train runs between Amritsar and Nanded. Thousands of Sikh pilgrims travel daily in this train. There is historical Gurudwara at Burhanpur where thousands of pilgrims come everyday. As this train does not stop at Burhanpur, they have to alight at Bhusawal to reach here and they face much inconvenience on this account. Therefore, the Sachkhand Express be given a stoppage at Burhanpur immediately.

At the railway platforms no. 1 and 2 at Burhanpur station, the passengers cannot protect themselves in rainy season and also in the summer season from the tremendous heat, only because their sheds are not enough in length. Therefore, these sheds be immediately adequately repaired for peoples convenience. Earlier, 1078 up Jhelam Express, used to stop at Harsood but this was put to an end in 1996, this is injustice to the public. Therefore, 1078 up Jhelam Express may be given stoppage at Harsood station.

Jhelam Express and Punjab Mail may be given stoppage at Beed station because this is the nearest station for Indira Sagar Dam, which is the largest under construction dam in India. Many personnel, officials, contractors and common people daily come here. Both the trains may be given stoppage at Beed for their convenience.

I trust that the Railway Minister will accept my demands showing his benevolence and will be come a participant in the cause of public-welfare by accepting them.

*SHRI RAMSHAKAL (Robertsganj) : Sir, I strongly support the rail budget for 1999-2000 presented by Hon. Rail Minister Shri Nitish Kumar Ji. Sir, Railway is the largest network of this country. Crores of people travel

through it and it also provides job opportunity to lacs of people. It links people through out the country.

Sir, the achievement in the shattered economy pointed out by our Hon. Minister are praise worthy. He deserves thanks for the facilities made available to passengers.

Sir, the 11-16% increase in the fare of Rajdhani, 4% increase in the transportation of Parcel, increase in the penalty from Rs. 50 to 250 and making the provision that 1st class fare would be 5.25 time of 2nd class and sleeper fare will be 1.55 time of 2nd class. On the one hand this raise will strengthen the economy on the other new trains and rail lines would be introduced. Provision of 445 crore rupees is made for the guage conversion in the rail budget of 1999-2000 the concessions and facilities provided by the Hon. Railway Minister in the railway budget which include no hike in ordinary fare of 2nd class as also in Mail trains and 50% concession to the accredited. Press correspondents of the district headquarters upto 3,000 kilometers railway journey will undoubtedly prove him an efficient and able administrator.

Hon. Railway Minister had made the arrangement to provide walkie-talkie to the drivers and guards of trains in view to enhance the safety of the, passengers. This measure will prevent the accidents. This set will be provided to drivers and guards of goods trains in the second stage.

9700 crores has been kept for plan expenditure in the year 1999-2000. It is 645 crores more than, the revised estimates of last year. Provision of 700 crore rupees has been made to expend the rail network in new areas. It is 59% more than the revised estimates. A provision of 300 crore rupees have been made to expediate the work on metropolitan projects in Calcutta, Chennai and Mumbai. It is 52% more than the last year. Provisions have been made for laying 16 new rail lines, 7 guage conversions, 5 doubling projects, electrification and allocation of 745 crore rupees for guage conversion. 34,000 crore rupees has been made available for these projects in this budget.

There is a proposal to complete the work on Calcutta Circular railway and increase the frequency of two trains. Provision has been made to introduce three new trains for Bihar, two new trains for Maharashtra, and one each for Karnataka and Jammu. The introduction of these new trains will help in regional balance and the long distances journeys from South to North and East to West will be more convenient. Mr. Speaker Sir, our state Uttar Pradesh is number one in the country as far as population in concerned and come under Northern Railway and North-Eastern Railway. Hon. Rail Minister has paid less attention

for laying new rail lines. Only 5 projects have been taken up. Whether these are Guna, Etawah, Lalitpur, Singrouli or Agra, Etawah, Fakhabad, Rampur, Kathgodam.

There are very few provisions of doubling rail line projects on Kanpur, Panki, Muradnagar, Gonda, Jarbal Road and Gorakhpur, Sahjanwan, Deoria, Tankhar.

Only 7 projects for guage conversions have been taken up in such a large state like Uttar Pradesh.

1. Mathura-Achnera
2. Khadda-Gorakhpur
3. Muzaffarpur-Raksouli
4. Gonda-Baharaich-Sitapur-Lucknow
5. Gonda-Gorakhpur-Voutanwa
6. Kanpur-Kasganj-Mathura-Bareilly

Only 7 railway bridges are being taken up for construction in this financial year.

1. Rampur Kathgodam over bridge
2. Mugalsarai division Sonpur bridge
3. Tundla Yamuna bridge
4. Lucknow-bridge on river Gomti
5. Bridge over Ganga river-Muradabad-Saharanpur
6. Bridge over Ganga river-Muradabad-Gaziabad
7. Deoria-Noonkhar-over bridge

Sir, Hon. Minister has taken up very few projects in the budget for such a large state.

Hon. Speaker Sir, there are two districts Mirzapur and Sonbhadra in Parliamentary constituency Robertsganj from where I have been elected. It is linked to the borders of Bihar and Madhya Pradesh where many projects of Government of India and Uttar Pradesh Government are going on but there are very less railway facilities.

Through you I would like to request Hon. Rail Minister to include these demands in the current financial year.

1. Shaktinagar rail service may be started from Varanasi.
2. Chopan may be made divisional office
3. A new Express train may be introduced from Gorakhpur upto Singrouli.

4. Prayagraj Express may be extended upto Varanasi.
5. Double rail line from Chunar upto Singrouli.
6. Chopan and Chunar may be connected through computer facility.
7. Jodhpur-Hawrah Express may be halted at Mirzapur.
8. Express trains may be halted at Chunar as it is a historical city.
9. North-East Express may be halted at Mirzapur.

*SHRI ASHOK ARGAL (Murena) : Hon. Speaker Sir, first of all I would like to congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for presenting such a befitting gift in the form of this budget to the people.

The Hon. Railway Minister has in a sense presented a gift to 90 per cent railway passengers by not effecting any increase in second class rail fare in respect of mail, express and passenger trains and season tickets of the second class category. I welcome it. The Hon. Railway Minister has declared the year 1999-2000 as 'Passenger Year'. Accidents at railway level crossings are of major concern as there are 24.359 unmaned railway level crossings in the country. It would cost rupees one lakh to install a gate and rupees 2200 crore would be needed if we include the salary of staff required for manning these gates. The Railways do not have as much funds.

Therefore, the people would have to be made aware about this. My request to the hon. Railway Minister is that it is necessary to continuously train the staff of the Railways in order to provide dependable and better services to the passengers. People are facing serious problems at the reservation counters throughout the country. In my parliamentary constituency Murena, the reservation counter remaining open only for four hours from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. The people have to face a lot of difficulty due to this, it should be kept open till 5 P.M. keeping in view the difficulties faced by peoples.

In my parliamentary constituency there is lack of sheds at platform no. 1 and 2 at Murena railway station of Jhansi division of Central Railways. The passengers have to face lots of difficulty during rainy and summer season due to this. I want to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister towards Gwalior-Showpur Kala metre gauge rail line in respect of which survey work has already been completed to convert it into broad gauge one, but no concrete decision has been taken so far in this regard. I request you to take a decision in this regard at the earliest

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Ashok Argal]

so that 10 lakh people of this region could be benefitted and at the same time the railways would be able to earn more.

Likewise, I request the hon. Railway Minister to lay new railway line from Etawah-Bhind to Sawai Madhopur via Ambah-Murena-Sheopurkalan so that people from Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan could be benefitted from it. Apart from this, I want to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards Murena railway station. Thousands of people travel daily from Morena to Bhopal, the Capital of Madhya Pradesh. There is no other train for the passengers except the Malwa express. It is necessary to provide stoppage of G.T. Express and Mahamaya Express at Malwa in consonance with the public demand. No stoppage of any train has been given at Murena during the last 7-8 years. I request the hon. Railway Minister to provide stoppage of both these trains at Murena.

There is no night train for Bhopal and Delhi from Vanmer in my parliamentary constituency leaving and passengers suffer greatly due to this. I request that stoppage of Dadar Express and Malwa Express should be provided there for journey to Delhi and Bhopal respectively.

There is a great need of a railway over bridge at Lalor railway crossing which connects Murena town, the divisional headquarter of Chambal with Bhind. Due to the absence of the over bridge, traffic jams occur frequently at the crossing and the passengers face great difficulty. Lastly I request that Railway Passes should be issued to those who were detained under 'MISA' during emergency by giving them the status of freedom fighters.

The hon. Railway Ministers performance and the budget prescribed by him have been commendable during his tenure of one year. People have appreciated it. Poor people have been given relief in railway ticket. I welcome the budget.

[English]

*SHRI S. MURUGESAN (Tenkasi) : Sir, I would draw the attention before this August House to the Honourable Railway Minister Nitish Kumar Ji through you Sir.

First of all I congratulate the Railway Minister on behalf of our A.I.A.D.M.K. Party and myself and my constituency people that the gauge conversion work in Metre gauge to Broad gauge in my Tenkasi constituency. Tenkasi to Tirunelveli Tirchundur and Virdunasam to Quilon.

* Laid on the Table.

I would request the Honourable Minister one important point, in city in Tamilnadu. Now it has been upgraded as a corporation out of Fire corporation in Tamilnadu. It is the main junction of connecting main cities Tuticorin Tenkasi, Thiruchender, Madurai, Kanyakumari.

I am the Member of the Consultative Committee I have made several representation to the Railway authorities, General Manager of Southern Railway the important of PIT LINE in Tirunelveli. All the infrastructural facilities are available like water etc. The G.M. of the Southern Railway replies one and the commercial organisation, I would forward to the Railway Minister, because the Honourable Railway Minister to considered PIT LINE facilities in Tirunelveli of Tamilnadu.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The following Members have requested me to lay their speeches on the Table. I will call them one by one. So, nothing will go on record except laying of speeches.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : Their main speeches are going on record. They should be allowed to speak. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : No, I am not allowing them.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWLE (Mumbai, South-Central) : Mr. Chairman Sir, the year 1999-2000 has been declared as the 'Passenger year' but only 130 crore rupees have been allocated for the passengers. Only 1.3 per cent of the passengers have been given facilities Ninety per cent of the passengers travel in second class and you are paying attention only to the Rajdhani passengers and I request you to pay attention towards the facilities for local railway passengers. The Hon. Minister of state in the Ministry of Railways belongs to Mumbai and he knows better about the Mumbai suburb. The railway schemes are financed largely through internal resources and credit borrowings. The budgetary support is becoming less. If we are to implement the pending and on-going projects, we would need at least 34000 crores of rupees and as per the present budgetary provisions, it may take twenty to twenty five years to complete them. I therefore request the Railway Minister to take up this matter with the Finance Minister, we, too would apprise him about the need for more allocation for the Railways.

The Nanded express runs between Mumbai and Nizamabad, Telgu speaking people of Andhra Pradesh live mostly in Mumbai. They are more in numbers in my constituency. They had called for Nizamabad bandh too.

The broad gauge line is available from Nanded to Mudged and they are demanding that it should be extended upto Nizamabad. They are demanding the introduction of a new train between Mumbai and Nizamabad. They observed Nizamabad bandh twice. They say that they travel from Nanded to Mudged but have to change the train thrice while returning from Mudged. If the direct train is introduced and the broad gauge is made operational from Nizamabad, the distance is only 50 kilometres, is this would serve the purpose.

Regarding the Konkan railway, I would like to say that the Konkan railway station, is not useful in any way. More coaches should be provided for Konkan railway. More trains are needed in Maharashtra during Ganpati festival, Dewali and Holi. More funds are being allocated to the Railway Ministry for the passenger's amenities for Charch gate at Mumbai's when the Railway state Minister, used to sit on this side, he used to say this repeatedly. I request you to pay attention towards the passenger's amenities.

Toilets are in very bad condition. Few days ago, I took a round of Church gate railway station. There, goods were kept even in the toilets. Toilets are not being cleaned and maintained.

Trains of the urban lines do not run on time. Whereas the trains of the western lines run on time. Coaches on the urban lines are sub-standard without fans and lights. Some times clothes get torn due to bad conditions of coaches. If someone sustains an injury, it can result in AIDS. This is a serious matter. In my constituency there is a Karirod station. If a foot bridge is constructed from there to Namjoshi Marg, it will save a lot of time. A bridge should be constructed at lower parel and Karirod. Since 1991 I have been demanding that a bridge be constructed at Shivri railway station. These at level crossing a lot of people died and bridge is yet to be constructed there. It is my request to the Minister that a bridge should be constructed there at the earliest . . . (*Interruptions*)

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN Shri Mohan Rawale, please conclude.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Sir, this is the most surprising thing to me. He is the first Member to speak on behalf of my party and you are asking him to conclude within two minutes. There were many Members who spoke for nearly one hour each. This is not fair.

MR. CHAIRMAN : If the hon. Member wants to speak he can. Or else, he can lay the rest of his speech on the Table. The entire speech will form part of the record.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Sir, there are slums near the rail line and trains slow down there and people throw stones from there. They have occupied railway land. They should be shifted at an alternate site at the earliest. There are several hospitals in my constituency, such as K.M. Hospital, T.B. and Tata Hospital. Some fast trains should have a stoppage there. There are some important stations from where trains originate. Trains go to Kurla and Bandra via this station. My request is that trains should start at peak hours from Kurla and Bandra. More trains should start across the ghat. People go to work during peak hours. Several industries are there. Trains should leave from Harbour lines on time and more frequently. Platforms are not adequate there. These should be increased. Parel is very crowded place. The bridge there is very narrow. Due to this people can get killed there. Getting down there is very difficult. Hence, a bridge should be constructed there.

Sir, in Konkan railway, the passengers have to stand. People can not go to toilet. A train can be started from Chhatrapati Shivaji terminal via bridge. If a train is started from Churchgate, it can go via Parel and Karjot. This facility can be given by constructing an overbridge like the one at Bandra. A train from Bandra to Bikaner starts from Ranakpur station. At Bikaner, the majority of the people are Marwaris. There are a lot of Marwaris at Bhayandar. Therefore a train should start from Bhayandar. Toilet facilities should be provided on Diwa Chiploom train. Devgiri Express train should be introduced from Mumbai to Sambhaji nagar. A train comes from Nasik was to cater the needs of the businessmen. This train arrives at 12 O'clock. This causes a lot of inconvenience to others. Sir, there should be a complaint book in that train and it should also be checked. No one goes through the complaint book. The train that comes at peak hour from Nasik starts at 6 O'clock and arrives at ten O'clock.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Mohan Rawale, please conclude now.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Mr. Chairman Sir, more trains should have twelve coaches and the number of platforms should also be increased. . . . (*Interruptions*) I am speaking on behalf of all the people. When the train left the villages, agents enter into it. When the ordinary passengers enter they are beaten by the R.P.F. personnel.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Mohan Rawale, rest of your speech, you lay on the Table. It will form part of the proceedings.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the morning when Shri Basu Deb Acharia was delivering his speech, at that time, he requested the hon. Chairman to consider and give him more time as the entire discussion would go on right upto 4 O'clock in the morning. He said that keeping that situation in view, he should be allowed to speak for some more time. And, Sir, Shri Basu Deb Acharia was allowed to speak for more than one hour. But now, after speaking for two minutes only, we are being asked to conclude and sit down. This is very unfair. I am just putting it on the record. That is all.

MR. CHAIRMAN : As per the time schedule, your party was allotted four minutes. He has already consumed four minutes. Even then, I have given him more time. But now, anyhow, he can lay the remaining part of his speech on the Table of the House. That will form part of the proceedings.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : I have been informed that it is only four minutes allotted to our party. But are these four minutes allotted to us after taking into consideration that we would sit upto 4 O'clock in the morning?

MR. CHAIRMAN : All right.

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : No argument, please.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Sir, in our country in every state priority is given to the language of that state. But in Mumbai, injustice is being done against Marathi. It should also be given priority there corruption is rampant in the Railway Recruitment Board. People from outside the state are being recruited and Marathi people are not recruited. I appeal to you in this regard.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : If there is any allegation of corruption in Railway Recruitment Board please give me the information. One complaint was received regarding corruption against the Bombay's Recruitment Board. There was an incident of leakage of examination paper at a railway station. There some one had caught for doing cheating during an

examination, that examination was cancelled. If you have any complaint regarding the Railway Recruitment Board you can tell me.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Thank you, we have great respect for you in our heart. I want to thank you for what you are going to do. But, what I am telling is also a fact. We had launched an agitation. Trains were stopped because local apprentices were not getting employment. They told us that one could seek employment only after paying Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 50,000 . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI SHYAM BIHARI MISHRA (Bilhaur) : This does not pertain to this government. This happened during the previous regime.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Shri Mohan Rawale, please address to the Chair. Why are you unnecessarily arguing with them?

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Mr. Nitish Kumar ji, this happened during the previous regime. The workers and the apprentice of Mahalakshmi, Central Railway, and the apprentice of Mumbai Central should be given employment at the earliest. Shri Ram Naik jee represents Mumbai. At that railway station there is no arrangement of public announcement system. It was damaged in a fire. I had written to the then Prime Minister, Shri Narasimha Rao. Shri Jaffer Sharif was the then Railway Minister. The matter was raised by Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. I request to Shri Ram Naik that compensation should be paid to the next of the kin of its women who died there. Kindly accept my demands. Cleanliness should be maintained in trains.

*Mr. Speaker, Sir, I had visited Cotton Green, Parel, Elphinston and Churchgate Railway Stations of Harbour Line, Central Railway and Western Railway respectively between 3rd and 5th March, 1999 and had a direct with the passengers. Many passengers voiced their grievances and gave their suggestions. They also submitted their grievances and suggestions in writing. I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to consider my suggestions which reflect the grievances and suggestions made by the passengers :

Western Railway

- number of trains between Chatrapati Shivaji and Bandra Terminals should be increased

*Translation of the speech original in Marathi and laid on the Table.

- more trains should be introduced between Malad and Goregaon during the peak hours, i.e., between 8 AM- 10 and 5PM-9PM
- reintroduce Andheri fast local
- more fans should be provided in the bogies
- train between Andheri and Virar should be started
- Goregaon local at 1.45 should have 12 bogies
- Virar-Borivali double pair of trains should be started
- more local trains should be started from Bhainder in the morning
- connecting bridge between platform No. 6 and 7 should be constructed at Andheri
- Meera Road local should be started
- Bandra-Bikaner Ranakpur Express should have a stop at Bhainder
- Jogeshwari local should be started in the morning
- Mumbai-Delhi Superfast AC Express should be started
- more booking windows should be opened at Jogeshwari
- The incidents of looting the passengers in Jammu Tawi Swaraja Express have tremendously increased. The Punjab Police are threatening the passengers with charge of gambling and extracting Rs 5000 from them.
- Leaking drainage pipe at Elphinston Road Station Railway Quarters should be repaired.
- Computerised booking system should be introduced in railway stations.
- Computers cannot board the trains at Elphinston Station between 8.30-10.30 AM. Bandra-Dadar locals should be started during this time.
- At Elphinston and Parel Stations commuters cross the railway tracks instead of using the bridge. There should be fencing to avoid crossing of tracks. This will help in avoiding the accidents.
- Lane roads in Western Railway Quarters at Todankar Cross Lane, Elphinston Road are in bad shape. Drainage pipes are leaking. Corporation is refusing to do this work under the plea that it is railway work.
- Borivali fast train should have halt at Kandivali and then proceed as a fast train.
- Pickpocketing is increasing between Church gate-Lower Parel.
- One more platform should be constructed at Elphinston Station for fast trains.
- PRO does not function promptly at Churchgate Station. There are no complaint books at Church gate Station. Complaint books should be available at all railway stations. They should be under the charge of DRM and not PRO.
- Immediate assistance should be given to the victims of railway accidents. Fine for ticketless travel should be reduced to Rs 250/-.
- Names of railway stations given in British regime should be changed.
- Bridge at Cotton Railway Station should be extended upto Dock Labour Yard.
- Public announcement at Parel Station should be clear.
- Railway Police should specially give protection to women and school children.
- More trains should be introduced between Mumbai-Sawantwadi.
- Fast trains should have a halt at Parel and Elphinston as more hospitals are located here.
- Booking windows should be increased at Shivdi, Cotton Green, Sandhurst Road, Curry Road and Chinchpokli Stations.
- 12 bogie local should be increased.
- Bridge at Parel Station should be widened. At the Centre a new bridge should be constructed.
- 'Group Insurance Scheme' should be introduced for Railway Pass holders.
- First Aid Centre should be started at all railway stations.
- Toilets on railway platforms should be clean.
- Steps should be taken to check tooting and pick pocketing of passengers.

[Shri Mohan Rawale]

Central Railway

- Booking windows at Dadar-Bhaikhala, Kurla are not opened in time.
 - The only tea stall at Parel Station was exploded due to cooking gas leakage. Fire fighting equipment should be a must at tea stalls.
 - Street lights to be provided outside Parel Station. Leaking drainage should be repaired.
 - Ghatkopar-Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal local should be started at 7 AM.
 - Road outside Parel Station should be repaired.
 - Thane train should be introduced in the morning.
 - Stairs at platforms 1 and 2 should be widened.
 - Computerised booking should be started at Parel Station.
 - More trains should be started between Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal-Thane after 11 PM.
 - Consumption of liquor between Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal-Bhaikhala Sandhurst Stations should be checked.
 - Time table of trains between Dadar-Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal should be changed between 6-9 PM. The time gap is more.
 - Traffic bridge to be provided between Kalva East-West.
 - Fast local should have a halt at Bhandup after every 15 minutes.
 - Sulabh toilet to be provided at Ghatkopar Junction.
 - One more train should be started between Mumbai-Sambhajinagar.
 - Indicators do not function at Parel Station.
- Mumbai-Nasik, Nasik-Mumbai trains should be started for office goers. Kandivali local should be started in the morning.
- Seats and toilets in Mumbai-Pune trains are not clean.
- Liquor cans are transported at Diva to Ghatkopar and Matunga with the connivance of police and motormen. This should be stopped.

- Fast trains should have a halt at Bhandup.
- Toilets should be provided in Diva-Chiplun trains.
- Waterlogging outside Parel Station during monsoon should be stopped.
- Four trains in morning from Thane should be restarted.
- More trains from Karjat-Chatrapati Shivaji Terminals should be started.
- Central Railway trains should start with a gap of 5 minutes like Western Railway.
- Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal-Karjat train starts at 12.45. The timing of this train should be changed or another train should be introduced.
- Fast train from Ghatkopar after 9.52 PM should be introduced.
- Local trains from Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal should go via Elphinston, Churchgate and Lower Parel.
- Overbridge lines should be started between Shivaji Terminals-Borivali-Virar and Churchgate to Karjat via Elphinston-Parel.

General Suggestions

- As finishing of windows etc. is not proper, clothes of passengers are torn and at times injuries are caused.
- Many windows of trains have no glasses.
- Electrical maintenance is not proper. If one touches switches, at times one gets shocks.
- Train roofs leak during the monsoon.
- Fine should be reduced from Rs 250 to 50. Staff/City Police/relatives travel unauthorisedly in first class coaches. Railways will get lot of revenue by way of fine if all these persons are fined.
- Theft of iron material from Vadi Bandar workshed and loco shed should be stopped.
- Railway goods transport from Vadi Bands goods depot has increased manifold. Reasons should be found out.
- Accident victims should be given some facilities at railway stations.

- 12 bogie trains should be increased.
- Drinking water should be supplied in the bogies.
- Concession to be given to the handicapped in issuing monthly passes.
- Drinking water to be provided at all railway stations.
- Singing of bhajans should be stopped in trains.
- Stalls should be given to Marathi persons.
- STD booths on railway stations should be given to the handicapped persons.
- Three language formula should be adopted by the Railways.
- First aid centre to be opened at every railway station.
- Huts near railway tracks should be removed.
- Passengers without reservation should not be allowed in reserved bogies.
- Unauthorised booking agents to be dealt with sternly.
- More booking windows to be provided at Dadar Terminal.
- Police assistance at railway stations to be made available round the clock.
- Women TTEs should be deployed in women compartments.
- Liquor consumption should be stopped in Harbour and Western Railway.
- Double passage at Elphinston like Dadar should be introduced.
- TTEs should produce their identity card.
- Fans do not function in trains.
- Barbed wire fencing to be provided at Parel, Elphinston Stations.
- Street lights to be provided outside Parel Station.
- Special bogie for the handicapped.
- Policemen do not cooperate with the passengers.

First and the last bogie in a train should be reserved for women.

- Toilets are unclean.
- Drinking water facility is a must.
- First aid at railway stations is a must.
- Ladies toilets are unclean.
- Seats for passengers to be provided on platforms.
- Hawkers on bridges and platforms to be shifted elsewhere.
- Trains to be introduced after every 5 minutes.
- Late running of trains during the peak hours should be stopped.
- Free railway travel facility should be provided for persons above 60 years.

Konkan Railway

- Number of trains to Sawantwadi should be increased.
- Number of tickets issued for general compartments in Konkan Railway should be in accordance with seating capacity. Many passengers have to stand in toilets also presently.
- Madgaon Express leaving at 11 PM should have separate coaches for Ratnagiri, Sawantwadi and Malvan.
- Konkan Railway should have a halt at Taluka places.
- Policemen should be deployed in Konkan Railway.
- Konkan Railway which leaves at 10.30 should be rescheduled to leave at 7.
- Konkan Railway does not benefit Malvan passengers.

Harbour Railway

- Sandhurt Railway Station is very unclean. Proper cleanliness should be maintained at this station.
- Only one booking window out of two is functioning at Shivdi.
- The time gap in trains running between Bandra-Andheri is 20 minutes. This gap should be reduced.
- There should be a train between Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal to Karjat via Harbour.

[Shri Mohan Rawale]

- The height of Dockyard platform should be raised.
 - Complaint Centre to be started at every station.
 - Mud accumulating on stairs during the monsoon should be removed.
 - Police protection should be provided in ladies compartments.
 - Very few women travel in ladies' compartments in early hours or late hours. Women travelling at such time should be protected from anti-social elements.
 - Unauthorised hutments have increased between Mankhurd-Wadala. Trains move slow on this section. Incidents of stone throwing are increasing. Flying Squad of Railways is not to be found. Patrolling should be intensified on this section.
- Foot bridge should be constructed at Shivdi Harbour line Gate 7A. Many industrial units are located here. Lot of traffic is there.
- Passengers cross the tracks at Shivdi while going to platform No. 2 from 1. Iron fencing should be provided. Passengers crossing the tracks should be fined.
 - There is dense traffic at Cotton Green Road. There is no signalling system or traffic police on the road. Several accidents regularly take place on this road. The present bridge should be extended upto Dock Labour Board Colony.
 - Presently the amount of fine is Rs 250/-. It should be reduced.
 - The booking window at Cotton Green Station should be located at Mumbai-Chatrapati Shivaji Terminal side. Presently the booking window is located at the Centre.
 - Extension window should be opened at Cotton Green Station.
 - The present booking counter is at Harbour Platform No. 1 at Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminal. The extension counter should be started near main booking office as it existed earlier.
- Indicators at Chembur are always not functional.
- 60 taxis to go Pune from Cotton Green station. Many passengers fall down in a hurry due to mud in that area.

- Passengers are inconvenienced due to hutments from Ray Road to Cotton Green.
- Stone throwing is there between Cotton Green and Shivdi Stations.
- Ray Road station should be renamed as 'Deshbhakt Babu Genu' station.
- Sandhurst Station should be renamed as 'Chaphekar Bandhu'.
- 'Masjid Bandar' should be renamed as 'Mumbadevi'.
- Toilet on platform No. 1 at Chembur Station is locked. It should be opened for the passengers. Fans on the platform of Chembur Station should be made operational.

[English]

*PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM (Badagara) : Sir, I may submit that I am constrained to oppose the Railway Budget for 1999-2000, presented by our Honorable Minister for Railways Shri Nitish Kumarji. Sir Railway is the symbol of national unity and integrator and the railway net-work throughout the length and breadth of the country carries the message of India's pluralistic culture. 85% of the existing railway net work has been completed before independence and the pace of progress of railway networking during the half a century of independence is very slow I must say that even that slow progress is imbalanced. This regional imbalance is continued and it is reflected in this budget also. I wish that budget has reflected some viscin for the new millenium.

There is across the board like in both passenger and freight charges. Increase in freight charge is 80% and this sweeping like would definitely lead to inflationary effect on the prices of all essential Commodities. In this context I may submit that on the eve of the budget, Govt. of India increased the issue price of food grains and sugar to be distributed through the P.D.S. and against this background the burden falling on the common man is very unbearable. Hike in the passenger charges is going to adversely affect the common traveller. Sir Railway barb, during the course of the year paid Rs. 1489 crores as dividend to the general revenue. If the Govt. allowed this amount to be retained by the Railway, the hike in the passenger and freight charges could have been avoided.

Sir, the allocations made for expanding the net work, doubling, gauge conversion and safety measures are very inaducate. Electrical Multiple Units must be established with greater speed.

* Laid on the Table.

Sir coming to the development of my own state of Kerala, I am grateful to the Honorable Minister Sri Nitish Kumar for having bestowed some attention to certain areas of the people's demand. It is true that Rs. 103.39 crores are allotted for doubling of Shornur Mangalore line. This is of course a greater amount than last year's share. But I would like to bring to the attention of Honorable Minister through you Sir, that atleast Rs. 212 crores more would be required to complete this project as per the present estimate. I may also submit Sir, that in the absence of double line from Shornur to manglore, the Completion and Commissioning of Konkan Railway has turned out to be a curse and not a blessing. Most of the passenger trains, including express, mail and even Rajadhani Express are running hours late. Moreover goods trains are given precedence over passenger trains.

Another problem faced by the people of Malaban is the numerous level crossings on the national highway between Calicut and Kannur. There are 9 level crossings. I am thanking the Hon'ble Minister for including them in the present budget, but only token amount is allotted. request through you Sir, the Hon'ble Minister to increase the allotment. I also request the Hon'ble Minister to consider the reconstruction and improvements of Railway Stations of Badagara and Tellicherry which are two of the oldest. Railway station in the country. I also request the Hon'ble Minister through you Sir, to consider the new Railway from Badagara through Wynad to Mysore which will definitely be economically viable especially in the light of the Commissioning of the Konkan Railway.

Going to the time constraint I am concluding my speech.

*SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHANAN (Chirayinki) : Sir, I am constrained to oppose the budget proposals. The railway administration had all along consistantly adopted a policy of neglect towards Kerala. The development works during the plan period have been negligible when compared with other states.

Kerala being the southern most state. the Keralities will have to travel long distance. Hence the railway fares collected from Kerala will be the highest among the Indian states. There are about 20 lakhs of Malayalees in Mumbai, 10 lakhs in Chennai, two lakhs in Calcutta and about five lakhs in and around Delhi. Lakhs of Malayalees reside in the capital cities of states of India. It may not be an exaggration that there will not be any village in India where there are no Keralaties. Hence it is abuldantly clear that Keralities use the railways as their main source of transport. It is only just and proper that the railway administration should do justice to Kerala.

What is our experience? Long distance trains connecting Kerala with the major cities in India are not being run. Keralities living outside demand long distance train services. There have been a demand from Mumbai malayalees for an additional Express train service to Kerala which has not been sanctioned so far. The available long distance trains are quite inadequate. Accommodation is very difficult in these trains. They are always overcrowded. I therefore strongly demand for daily express service between connecting the metropolitan cities in India with Kerala.

In the Budget proposals there is no new train services connecting Kerala. The megar proposal of a weekly Express service between Erankulam and Pune will not serve any purpose.

The train service now operated are becoming a burden to the people. Almost all long distance trains are running behind schedule ranging from 10 hrs to 12 hrs. Cancellation has become the daily occurrence. The wagon and coaches used in service in Kerala are outdated. They are not track worthy. It is very risky to travel in these coaches. During monsoon it become a bitter experience for travellers. Rain water will yet accumulated inside the coaches. Sometimes passengers will be compelled to use their umbralles inside the coach when it is raining. In spite of repeated requests the railway administration did not take any remedial steps.

The doubling process is also at a slow speed. It will take decades to complete the work. The Budget allotment was negligible in the past. Trivandrum, Kollam Section doubling is taking a longer period than expected. It is yet to be completed. Shornur-Mangalore doubling project is also taking years to complete. Funds were not properly allotted previously. The doubling of Erankulam-Kayamkulam via Kottayam have not been taken up. The delay in running up trains can be prevented only when this project is taken up. I request the railway Minister to take up the doubling of this line at the earliest.

The long pending request of connecting Punaloor with Trivandrum Via Nedumamagad has not been considered. The line connecting Erumeali with Punaloor will not be complete, If punalar TVM line is not taken up. I therefore, once again request the railway Minister to sanction the Punaloor-Trivandrum Via Nedumanagad immediately.

Regarding the development of Trivandrum Centra station the project has not been taken up seriously by railway authorities. The model station project for Trivandrum Central has already announced by the Railway administration had not been implemented.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Varkala Radhakrishnan]

Many adjacent buildings in Trivandrum Central are now in occupation by the railway authorities. The Kerala Electricity office, Kerala state Road Transport office building, and Trivandrum corporation Guest House are some of the buildings unused. They have not been reconstructed to cater the needs of the Railway. One Pucca building is used as a two wheeler stand on rent. The additional platforms have not been completed. A new Railway station building proposed to be built is still in paper. The work has not been commenced. The proposal of new developmental works in Trivandrum Central station should be implemented immediately.

There is sufficient land available with the Railway at Nennam for the construction of a marshaling yard. This is only 4 to 5 km from Trivandrum Central. The congestion at Trivandrum Central can be reduced. It is high time to start with the construction of Marshaling Yard. The Railway stations between Trivandrum and Quilon requires urgent repairs. Passenger amenities in these stations are neglected. Proposal for foot over bridges are pending for long. Road over bridges across the national highway are pending sanction for number of years particularly in Shornur-Mangalore line. Traffic congestion due to closure of level crossing is a daily occurrence throughout Kerala. Nothing has been done in this respect. I, In conclusion, I would request the Hon'ble Minister to look into all these grievances and take remedial measures immediately. It is not enough to claim that justice is done. But the people should feel that they are given a due share. With these words I conclude.

[Translation]

*SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA (Kheri) : Sir, I would like to discuss certain points of the rail budget presented by the hon. Minister of Railways for the year 1999-2000 which are as follows :

Indian Railway is a multi dimensional organisation owing great responsibilities. Indian Railway's contribution towards economic development has been immense. Indian Railway cannot remain isolated at the end of the twentieth century when the whole world is undergoing tremendous changes. It has become essential to incorporate international standards of quality to maintain good railway facilities.

As has been pointed out earlier, the railway needs Rs. 32 thousand crore for its infrastructural development. Liberalisation process has already started and it won't be a surprise if foreign investors come forward to invest in different sections of the railways keeping in view tremendous potential of Indian market.

As I have said the railway is a successful medium of national integration and since the global politics is undergoing changes, there is great need for economic and political cooperation in the whole South-East Asia and Central-East Asia; and I think Indian Railway is capable of performing this Diplomatic responsibility also. The need is being felt to connect Indian main land to the Medeterranian sea to the Pacific Ocean. It will change the future of South Asia. Indian Railway will have to take initiative in this direction.

Another important issue is of enhancement of service performance of Railway Department. It will be very difficult to minimise its deficit without improving the level of services since it is very big organisation. It has become essential to keep punctuality and raise the quality of services to the international level in the changing scenario. The growing concern over indifference to the problems of the passengers is but natural. Lack of sense of responsibility and carelessness have resulted in many tragic accidents. It has often been observed that accidents are reoccurring at a certain place but the staff continue to act irresponsibly. I have said about it during question-hour already.

It is essential to put the feeling of readiness and service towards the interests of the passengers. Likewise, the level of freight services need to be raised. Pilferages, spoilage of goods, etc. are some of the reasons causing huge losses to the railways but, unfortunately no strict check seems to be imposed on it. The railways can be a very important utility medium by raising the level of quality of passenger and freight services and it will be a very good achievement.

The level of deficit can be reduced substantially by corporatising railway equipment manufacture plants. Pilot projects in this field have yielded very good results in past.

The nexus between corrupt police personnel and criminals on railway stations and other foundations is a big problem and has posed a serious threat to the safety of the passengers, particularly women passengers. The increase in the incidents of theft, decoity, loot show that railway institutions have turned into criminal dens owing to Administrative apathy. Special attention needs to be paid to this problem. Especially, the complaints lodged by the passengers need to be dealt seriously with professional efficiency.

Skilful and serious attitude is needed to be adopted

At last I want to draw the attention of the House to some special problems of my constituency.

1. Computer Reservation facility is needed to be provided at Lakhimpur Nagar Station.
2. A subway is needed to be constructed at Lakhimpur Nagar Railway Crossing so that the traffic problem of the residents of city could be solved.
3. Gauge conversion between Bareilly to Lucknow is needed to be done on priority basis.
4. A survey of a rail route has earlier been conducted from Shahjehanpur to Nikoonia (Nepal Border). It needs to be revamped. It is a railway route of strategic importance.
5. All passenger coaches of N.E.R. are in very bad condition. They need to be repaired.
6. Rail/Road bridge on river Sharda on Palia-Meeva railway line is very old. Therefore it is necessary to study and evaluate it.
7. The grade of Kheeri and Rajaganj station of the district is being lowered down. It should be stopped and an arrangement should be made to have a stoppage for M.S.T. train at Kheeri station.
8. An extension of Platform at Palia station should be done and a passenger shelter (yatri niwas) with all facilities should be constructed so that the domestic and foreign tourists visiting Dudhwa National Park may feel convenient.

In the end with these words I express my thanks to you and conclude my speech.

*DR. ASHOK PATEL (Fatehpur) : Mr. Speaker, Hon'ble Minister for railways deserves commendation. The interest of the poor has been kept in view in this year's budget. All sections of society especially the poor have appreciated this budget. I am personally very much thankful to Hon'ble Minister for railways who has done a wonderful job for the people of Fatehpur district by permitting the Railway over head bridge crossing No. 50, long awaited for, the last 25 years keeping in view the difficulties of the general public of Fatehpur district which I had made him aware about. The grateful general public of Fatehpur district can never forget this gesture expressed by the Minister for Railways.

My district has two main problems. First, people in a large number visit Ajmer. From this place. They have to face many problems due to there being no stoppage at

Fatehpur for the Up and Down of Hawrah-Jodhpur Express. I therefore urge the Hon'ble Minister to make arrangements for providing a stoppage at Fatehpur for Hawrah-Jodhpur Express train. As my second demand, I shall like to inform that computerised reservation facility is available in the district headquarters of neighbouring Fatehpur district but this facility is not available to us. I urge the Hon'ble Minister to provide computerised reservation facility in my district headquarters in the budget so that the residents of the district may feel relieved.

[English]

*SHRI JUAL ORAM (Sundergarh) : Sir, Honourable Minister Railway while congratulating and supporting the Railway budget 1999-2000 I would like draw your kind attention to take immediate action.

That East cost Railway zone though it is function at Bhubaneswar administrative power and operational Boundary has yet to be finalised. During the tour of Honorable Shri Ram Naik Minister he has assured to look into the matter but it is still pending, I would request the Govt. must take needful decision to make the East cost Railway zone fulfilled operational at Bhubaneswar.

There is a need for construction of Bimbalgarh-Talcher Railway Link which will connect the Rourkela Industrial city to Bhubaneswar State capital. This line passes through the rich minerals belt of Manganese and Iron ores. This line also will enable to supply iron ores and coal to Paradeep port and Gopal pur Port. Last year there was a allocation of 3 lakhs I would request to raise the amount and get the project executed at an early possible time.

I being the Member of Sundargarh parliamentary constituency always demanding the operation of Train from Patna to Rourkela steel city because a lot of people from Bihar state are servicing in Rourkela steel plant.

Bisra a small town of my Parliament constituency located in the Bombay-Howrah main line. Public are demanding the stoppage of 29 UP and 30 DN Dowrah - Kurla Express. The matter is pending before the Railway Board. I request the Minister to direct to take an early positive decision.

While congratulating the Railway Minister for extending the Sambalpur-Nizamuddin Express up to Bhubaneswar. But here I would urge upon the Honourable Minister to increase the frequency of the train i.e. the train should operate daily.

A separate Rajdhani Express should be operated from Bhubaneswar to New Delhi - via - Talcher - Sambalpur - Juarsuguda - Bilaspur.

I once again support this progressive Railway budget.

* Laid on the Table.

* Laid on the Table.

[Translation]

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY (Kokrajhar) : Hon. Chairman, Sir, I rise to speak on behalf of the distressed people of Bodoland. I hope that the Minister of Railways will pay attention to our problems. I will try again to express my self in broken Hindi. This government are going to complete its one year tenure. We have not got justice from the hon. Minister of Railways in which way it should have been meted out during one year. I want to put up some important points before you. My first demand is about Bodoland area. All trains arrive and depart from here except the Rajdhani Express which runs Dimapur to Guwahati via New Delhi. We had demanded a halt of this train at Kokrajhar should be provided but it was not provided to this date. I demand a halt of Rajdhani train at Kokrajhar railway station should be provided. All south-west bound trains go to Mumbai Trivandrum and Chennai through Kokrajhar railway station but no train stop there. I demand that Trivandrum Express, Kochin Express, Bangalore Express, Dadar Express, Saraeeghat Express, Lohit Express and newly introduced Guwahati-Chennai Express train should be stopped at Kokrajhar railway station. North-East Express train should be stopped at Bijani and Gosaigaon railway stations. Likewise Kamarupa Express should also be stopped at Gosaigaon railway station.

Some years ago a new train was introduced for the people of Bodoland. Name of that train was Sifang Express. I have to say with a heavy heart that the services of that train were stopped after some time.

[English]

Why should there be such sort of a betroyal by the Railway Ministry?

[Translation]

Why did you stop that train?

[English]

This train has to be again reintroduced.

[Translation]

Therefore, I am requesting the Minister of Railways to reintroduce this train immediately 29 up and 30 down train from Dhubri to Guwahati should be run regularly. Arunachal Express 172 down and 171 up from Murubhosainik to Alipur Dwar should also be run regularly. Along with this new trains should be introduced.

[English]

A superfast express train from Murbhong Selek to New Delhi with the name and style of Arunachal Bodoland Express, should be introduced soon.

[Translation]

Along with this, I request the hon. Minister of Railways that a new passenger train between N.J.P. and Guwahati should be introduced. The Meter gauge railway line between Murbhong Salek and Rangiya should be converted into broad gauge. The M.G. railway line between Fakiragram Jn. and Dhubri should be converted into broad gauge line. The foundation stone of Bogibeeel railway bridge on Brahmaputra river was laid by Shri Devegowda but that project has not been started as yet. It should be started immediately. If a separate arrangement for B.G. line is made in the whole N.F. railways, the people will be great benefitted and convenient.

All railway stations of Bodoland area should be converted into computerised booking offices. The foundation stone of a new railway station in Rangia Railway Division was laid but the work has not been started on that as yet. Jobs should be reserved for 80 per cent unemployed youths of North East in N.F. Railways. All railway stations including Kokrajhar station of Bodoland area should be developed.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : Please conclude now.

SHRI SANSAMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY : All right, I am concluding. I would like to appeal to the hon. Minister of Railways through your honour to look into these genuine grievances and problems which I have raised in this august House and resolve them as early as possible in the interest of the people of the North-eastern region.

[Translation]

DR. BIZAY SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur) : Sir, I am expressing my views in favour of the Railway Budget. People express their view in support here only when this august House is greced by God and we are fortunate to have this grace and the Railway Budget is the backbone of Indian economy. Every individual is affected directly or indirectly by the Railways. Lakhs of people get employment from the Railways. It is difficult to think about frieght carriage and traffic without the Railways. In the light of the above, every person remains attentive about the Railways and Railway Budget. One remains curious to know about the latest contents of the Railway Budget.

Both of our Ministers have prepared the Railway Budget with great acumen. I firmly believe that while preporing the Railway Budget the map of the whole country or its geographic structure must have been in their

* Laid on the Table.

minds. If they had any thought about Bihar, I think, Maharashtra too would have been in their minds. They must have thought about Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa, Kerala, Karnataka, Gujrat, Punjab, Jammu and Himachal Pradesh. Sir, In the Railway Budget Special attention has been paid to those classes of India who seem to be related with the Railways and the hon. Minister has easily identified himself with the rail line, railway labourer, railway employees or members of their families.

However, an attention has been paid to the convenience of the passengers on the one hand, the welfare of the employees running the Railways have also been kept in mind on the other hand in the Railway Budget. Hon. Speaker Sir, I have been elected from the Saidpur parliamentary constituency of eastern Uttar Pradesh which is a backward area of the country. In the sixties, one hon. Member had said that people of that area lived a life of extreme poverty. The Patel Commission was constituted to suggest ways for the development of eastern Uttar Pradesh against this backdrop. The Patel Commission had declared it as a most backward area and recommended about establishing factories. Hon. Speaker Sir, I had said in this august House last year that there are many reasons for Poorvanchal's backwardness and inadequate railway facility is one among them. I had requested about the conversion of Aurihar-Jaunpur meter gauge line into broad gauge. It was enlisted into the Railway survey list on my request. Sir, the survey work has been completed within about two months but you have still kept it in the survey list. I thank you even for this. Now I would like to make a strong plea to include it in the list of gauge conversion. I request on behalf of the people of the 20 districts to include it in the list of gauge conversion. I thank you on behalf of the crores of people of Poorvanchal for this, the rich and the poor, farmers, labourer and students are directly related to it.

We are also looking forward for establishing big railway industry in eastern Uttar Pradesh in order to implement the recommendations of the Patel Commission. First of all please install computerised reservation counter and telephone inquiry at Aurihar railway junction, it is a simple work. People of many districts would be benefitted from it.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I would demand from the hon. Railway Minister through you to rennovate some of the stations of Ghazipur districts like Sadat, Jainia, Dullahpur, Naikdih Halt, Saidpur Bheetri and Nandgang. There is a need for making additional facilities available at Saidpur and Ghazipur railway stations. Conditions of the towns would improve with the improvement in the conditions of the villages. In the recent days discussion was going on that Satelite towns of Delhi, Mumbai,

Chennai and Calcutta are faced with many problems. The problems of these towns would be solved only when villages are developed.

Mr. Speaker Sir, our eastern Uttar Pradesh, especially Jaunpur, Ghazipur, Azamgarh and Mau districts, is extremely backward. The rural area of Varanasi is extremely backward. Lakhs of youths are jobless. They need care of the Government. They need proper attention. I would like to convey the pains of the people of eastern Uttar Pradesh through this railway budget speech to the Government. I am sure that the Central Government would surely pay attention towards it. Hon. Speaker Sir Varanasi is not only a pilgrim's place of the Hindus alone but an important place for the Buddhists as well. This is the place of the fourth 'Teerthankar' of the Jains. It is also important for the Muslims because the foot signs of Mohammed Saheb is found in Lallapur. There is no direct railway link for Calcutta from here. Lakhs of labourer and employees who are employed in Calcutta have to face lots of difficulties.

The Prayagraj Express should be linked with Varanasi. I would like to say that there is overnight journey from Varanasi to Delhi but there is no train for the same. It is extremely important and should be stayed at the earliest. The work would be completed in lessen a cost by extending Prayagraj Express upto Varanasi.

In the end, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to make gauge conversion of the Aurihar-Jaunpur rail route, and introduce a direct train and overnight train for Varanasi-Calcutta and Varanasi-Delhi respectively and if possible, I establish a big industry at Ghazipur district under Saidpur Parliamentary constituency as per the recommendations of the Patel Commission. I conclude my speech with hope, faith and thanks.

*SHRI HARPAL SINGH SATHI (Haridwar) : Sir, I support the railway budget presented by the hon. Railway Minister through you. The facilities provided by the hon. Railway Minister for the poor people has come for the first time in Indian history. The facilities provided by the hon. Railway Minister to the porters in the Railway budget too is a commendable step.

Hon. Speaker Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister towards certain important problems of my Parliamentary constituency, Haridwar.

Hon. Speaker Sir, Haridwar is a world famous Pilgrims, place and the dargah of Sabid Sahib at Kaliar Sharif is situated near it where Hindus and Muslims of the country and from abroad come to seek blessings and it reflects

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Harpal Singh Sathi]

the fraternity of the Hindus and Muslims. In addition to it, many important institutions like the Engineering College, C.B.R.I., I.R.I.N.I.H, Military Brigade, Roorkee Udyog are situated at Roorkee, where students from all over the world come for education.

Hon. Speaker Sir, through you. I demand from the hon. Minister to improve the railway facilities in keeping with the above facts.

A passengers rest house should be constructed at the Pilgrim town of Haridwar so that visitors may get relief from, rainy, summer and winter seasons.

The Haridwar-Amritsar Lahari train should be provided stoppages at small stations like Indora, Landhora, Dasni, Pathri, Aithal, Ekkarh, Iqbalpur and Churiyala so that relief could be provided to the passengers. It is worth mentioning that the Lahari train used to stop at the above mentioned stations which has been withdrawn now and there is great amount of agitation in the minds of the people of the region.

The Ujjain train running bi-weekly from Haridwar to Ujjain should be run daily.

Beautification of the Haridwar railway station should be done.

The Himgiri express should be stopped at Roorkee.

A Platform should be constructed at Iqbalpur railway station which is situated in the rural area.

The D.M.U. train from Delhi to Shaharanpur via Shamli should be run twice in a day. The above train returns to Delhi from Shamli in the morning itself and the passengers face lots of difficulty due to this.

The Darul-uloom (Arabic Madarsa) is situated at Deo band where students from all over the world come to get education and the Dehradun Shatabdi Express should be stopped here for 2 minutes.

Hon. Speaker Sir, I once again thank the hon. Railway Minister and hope that he would certainly solve the problems relating to the Railways in my parliamentary constituency. With this I once again support the Railway Budget.

[English]

SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI (Barpeta): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to say to the hon. Minister of Railways that when the earlier Railway Budget was presented by him, there were some definite signs of

pragmatic reflection as to the way in which he wanted to proceed.

In this year's Budget, we have seen that he has given weightage to pressures and abandoned those fundamental principles, primarily with reference to on-going projects. The Bongaigaon-Guwahati project was taken up for a BG line in 1983 and the bridge was completed. After fourteen years, that bridge was inaugurated in the presence of the hon. Prime Minister. It is very good. From Goalpara to Guwahati, we could make this whole line useful but that was not done. The hon. Minister of Railways, in the meeting with the MPs from the North-East promised that it will be completed within a year. Now, he has detracted and said that it would take another year. Is this the way you can complete the projects? You are under the pressure of the packages and it will naturally affect others.

When a Government makes a promise, it is binding on its successor also. There was a promise by his predecessor to establish a new railway division at Rangia. Now, in answer to a recent Parliamentary Question, the hon. Minister has given the answer that the State Government is not giving the land and that is why he is not in a position to found that division.

The State Government, in return, has come out with a statement saying that they were not approached properly, otherwise they would have given the land. The State Government has vehemently reacted and said about its willingness to provide land. If the concerned Railway authorities initiate to comply with the formalities of land acquisition. What has the hon. Minister to say in this regard? Sir, what are we to understand? Is this the way to delay the matters? I feel that the hon. Minister is doing things under compulsion. But to say that he has increased the fares from the angle of comfort that is being enjoyed by the passengers of different classes, is not fair, Is there any comfort in the sleeper class coaches any more? Does the hon. Minister not know himself, when he comes from Bihar, that it is no longer free to travel by a sleeper coach?

In search of a Rational Fare Structure, he has proposed to increase the fare, taking into account the difference in the level of comfort as between various classes. In that premise, he proposes to increase the fare of Sleeper Class by 1.55 times of the present fare, Fare of Guwahati-Delhi by Sleeper coach is at present Rs. 389. In the new fare structure, it would go up to Rs.603 which is a 50 per cent increase. The Minister of Railways must be knowing about the overcrowding in II Tier coaches, Each coach generally provides 75 berths. As mentioned, since the tickets are being issued in waiting list, coaches run full, up to the brim, Not only the passages are

occupied, even toilets are becoming unapproachable, NE region, presently being disturbed, a large number of military and paramilitary forces are being deployed and the movement of these forces have become one of the main reasons for overcrowding. The difference between Reserved and General Compartments has vanished in North East Bihar region. May I know whether the hon. Minister has any imaginative idea to bring the Journey by Sleeper Coaches within the limits of tolerable journey, not to speak of comfort? In fact, persons like us, who would no longer be MPs or Minister, perhaps would be travelling by Sleeper Coaches; so, he should make it tolerable.

So far as the gauge conversion between Lumding and Badarpur is concerned, he has again failed to keep the promise. He promised that work would start. There was an allotment of an amount of Rs.40 crore; only Rs.4 crore or Rs.5 crore has been spent. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to do the necessary things in this regard. I would request the hon. Minister to pay attention to these things.

DR. SAROJA V. (Rasipuram): Mr. Chairman and learned Members of this august House, at the outset, I stand here to support the Railway Budget. Sir, I am thankful to the hon. Railway Minister for having included a proposal for conversion of Salem-Cuddalore-Vridhachalam railway line, considering the importance of promoting coal transport for Cuddalore Port. At this juncture, I would like to point out that he said that this proposal would be taken up after obtaining clearance. I appeal to him that the annual outlay for that project may kindly be increased considering the importance of coal transport from Rs.05 lakh to even Rs.5 crore, since the State Government is also going to contribute 50 per cent of the cost.

For the ongoing Karur-Salem project, I would appeal to the hon. Minister to at least allot Rs.50 crore. In the same project, we have one bridge which is the second largest bridge in India which is to be constructed in my Constituency at Mohanur. I invite the hon. Minister to inaugurate it, after Budget allocation!

On behalf of my leader, Idhaya Daivam Dr. Puratchi Thalaivi, under the leadership of the floor leader of our party, Shri Muthiah, all Members from AIADMK submitted a memorandum to the hon. Prime Minister of India requesting him to make Salem a separate division. We are disappointed to see that the hon. Minister has not made any mention about it. I hope that he would give a positive response when he replies.

Sir, I would appreciate the hon. Minister and congratulate the Sports Promotion Council and the players from railways for having bagged five gold medals out of

seven in the recently concluded Asian Games at Bangkok. This shows how much importance the Ministry of Railways attaches to the improvement of sports, welfare of youth. Disabled and the pensioners are also benefited by the recent Budget. I would request hon. Minister that the Railway Divisional Headquarters to later sports complex and identify the hidden talented players. They should be adopted through the Sports Promotion Council and all facilities should be given, including the educational facilities. In that way we can produce players to the international standards.

Sir, the learned Members from the Opposition failed to appreciate the points which have been mentioned in the Budget. The hon. Railway Minister has identified the grey areas which have not been identified by the previous Railway Ministers.

One of the novel schemes that he has brought out is the afforestation drive by the Railways. The Minister has recently appointed the Railway Users Consultative Committee. The members of that Committee are willingly coming forward to assist us in improving the railway services. Here, I would like to give a suggestion. The Ministry should involve the Forest Department, Agriculture Department along with the railway authorities of the local area Panchayat Presidents and local M.P. This scheme can be effectively implemented. Those M.Ps who involve themselves in implementing this programme by assisting the local officials under the Chairmanship of Collector, must be complimented.

Regarding commercial land utilization, I appreciate the move made by the Minister. As a medical doctor I can appreciate the concern shown by the Railway Ministry for the national programmes, like the family planning programme. The national target for reducing the birth rate was 18/1000 the Minister's reply it is said that they have brought it down to 14/1000 live birth. That shows the Railway Ministry's concern for the national programmes like, AIDS control programme, national welfare Programme, afforestation Programme and other health care delivery system.

Before I conclude, on behalf of the members of the Railway Users Consultative Committee, I would like to point out that they are not getting TA/DA or rail passes. I would request the hon. Minister to consider their request and to utilize their services.

Salem, Namakkal, Erode, Coimbatore, Karur, Dharmapuri and North Arcot districts are famous for their textiles, turmeric and sago. They contribute a lot for the economy of the country. As you know, the Mangala Express has been connected with the Konkan Rail project. Due to this, the businessmen from these districts are put

[Dr. Saroja V.]

to hardship, tension and torture. That is one of the reasons why the economic growth of the region is coming down. After considering a request from the MPs of Tamil Nadu, the hon. Minister has given a promise that a train which is run once in a week would be operated daily up and down. . . . (Interruptions)

Before I conclude, I would like to appeal to the hon. Minister that an optimum time should be fixed for the completion of Salem-Vridachalam project because it involves the economy of our country.

On my behalf and on behalf of the people of Tamil Nadu, particularly the people of my constituency. I request the Minister to implement this scheme within a fixed time frame.

Lastly, with a painful heart I wish to say something. We hear about the various schemes only on the floor of the House or from the newspaper. There is no feed-back from the official machinery about the progress made. There should be some monitoring system whereby MPs should be informed about the progress of various projects so that we can act as a bridge between the Government and the officials. With these few words I thank you for the opportunity given to me.

SHRI G. GANGA REDDY (Nizamabad) : Thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me an opportunity to speak. I am from Nizamabad Constituency. Firstly I would speak about the gauge conversion. On 2nd February, there was an all Party rail roko agitation. Once a prosperous district, in Tilangana has now become more backward to the districts of Nanded of Maharashtra. I am happy that last year the Railway Minister had provided Rs.5 crore and another Rs.20 crore have been provided this year for the development work. During the agitation, the people of Nizamabad were promised that from Muthked to Nizamabad. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN : There are a number of speakers. I will give you a chance later on.

SHRI G. GANGA REDDY : The conversion of metergauge to broadgauge will take place in two years time. I request the Minister to take up the issue on a warfooting, particularly the gauge conversion from Muthked to Secundrabad. Though the Government has provided Rs. 3 lakh 60 crore, for Secundrabad to Bolaram Section, we still need Rs. 254 crore so that the work can be completed earlier. We have about 50 seed processing units in our district. They are supplying their products throughout India. We are not getting even the fertilizers. Farmers, particularly, are suffering a lot. In addition to the provision made

* Laid on the Table.

in the Budget, we need another Rs.254 crore. The Minister should consider how will the Railways meet all this.

Peddepali to Nizamabad line is pending for long. Though it was inaugurated in 1992, The Government provided Rs. 7 crore for it only last year. This year also, we have got Rs. 10 crore for it. We are thankful to the Minister for this.

There is an urgent need to expedite work for Karimnagar to Nizamabad second stage. A lot of labourers go from Armoor, Metpally, Koratla and Jagtial to Mumbai. In this regard, on 16th July, 1998 our hon. Prime Minister requested the Railway Minister to provide Rs. 20 crore to do the needful. Our hon. Chief Minister, Shri Naidu also has written three letters to the Government asking for Rs. 20 crore.

Today also we gave a memorandum to the hon. Prime Minister requesting that there is a need to start work on Nizamabad-Karimnagar sector. So I request both the Railway Ministers to consider this and provide adequate funds. Sir, the Nizamabad Station needs improvement as there are no platforms etc. We need rail overbridges particularly on National Highway as people are facing a lot of difficulties.

With these words, I once again thank the Ministry of Railways.

[Translation]

*SHRI CHETAN CHAUHAN (Amroha) : I rise to support the railway Budget presented by the Railway Minister. This Budget will provide much relief to the people of the entire country and will help in the development of the country. Uttar Pradesh is the biggest state of the country and it's population is 13 crores. Density of population is too much which depend largely on railway transport beside the road transport. District Muradabad, J.P. Nagar and Bijnor-all these three districts fall in my parliamentary constituency. This area is faced with certain problems which I want to place before you.

Amroha station is situated on the Delhi-Ghaziabad-Muradabad-Lucknow railway line. There is single line from Ghaziabad to Muradabad. Approval has been given to convert this route into double line. Work has also begun on this project. But under the first phase, budgetory fund provided for doubling of this track is insufficient due to which work between Ghaziabad and Hapur is progressing with rather very slow speed. Allocation of funds is required to be increased in order to accelerate and complete the work at the earliest. Likewise, merely a sum of Rs. 1 crore has been given for doubling of railway line between

* Laid on the Table.

Muradabad and Amroha. I request you to kindly increase this amount also.

A computerised railway reservation centre should also be set-up at Amroha station so that people of Amroha and nearby places are not compelled to go to Delhi and Muradabad for getting their railway reservation. Even people from Brijnora are likely to be benefitted from this facility. There are a number of Sugar, Jaggery(Gur), vegetables, foodgrains, cotton handlooms, textiles, etc industries in Amroha. These industries sell their goods in the entire country. Traders and their men tour the the whole of the country to sell their goods.

Since Amroha happens to be the headquarters of Jyotiba Phoole Nagar, number of passengers, which include officers, employees, traders and daily commuters, is very large between Delhi and Lucknow for the convenience of all these passengers, it is very necessary to give halt to Shramjeevi Express, Lucknow-Saharanpur Express, Lucknow Mail and Ranikhet Express at Amroha station. And, at the same time, it is also very necessary to provide quota of seats/berths at Amroha station.

Survey has been completed to connect the missing railway lines. Gajraula, Hasanpur, Sambhal and for Meerut, Hastinapur and Bijnora. With the introduction of railway services in these areas, people living there will be greatly benefitted and, at the same time, revenue earnings of the railways will also increase.

Muradabad exports goods worth Rs. 1200 crores every year. Muradabad exports gilted and brass utensils, decorative pieces, medals, sports and games trophies and hand-made utensils as well. Buyers from foreign countries come to buy these items. But there is no convenient train available between Delhi and Muradabad. Most of these foreign buyers use road transport. But since National Highway-24 is very narrow in width, many accidents take place on this road resulting in Jams. My suggestion is that Lucknow bound Shatabdi Express leaving New Delhi station in the morning should be run via Muradabad and Bareilly. So that foreigners and traders boarding at New Delhi can take this train and go to Muradabad, Bareilly and Lucknow and come back in the evening. Presently Shatabdi Express runs between New Delhi and Lucknow via Kanpur. But till Shatabdi Express via above route is not introduced, a new train between New Delhi and Bareilly should be introduced. Earlier there was a train from Balamau to New Delhi which would start and reach at scheduled time but now, since it has been given extension upto Gonda, it is not running on time. Usually it is running late. My demand is that a new train between Bareilly and New Delhi should be introduced. Many people from Muradabad, Amroha and its nearby place go to West

and South India. I, therefore, request the hon'ble Minister to introduce a new train between Muradabad and Mumbai via Amroha and Delhi. District Kath is the Tehsil headquarter of J.P. Nagar. Since long back people have been raising their demand to provide stop to 3307/3308 Kisan Express at this station. I request you to kindly meet this long standing demand so that daily commuters, local people and passengers going in both directions can get the much required relief.

Likewise the train no. 5005/5006 Dehradun-Gorakhpur Express should be given stoppage at Dhampur railway station so that people living in Dhampur and nearby areas can get additional railway transport facility. Dhampur town is an important Tehsil headquarter of district Bijnora. I request the hon'ble Minister to kindly give a sympathetic consideration these demands.

With these words I conclude my submissions and extend my support to this railway Budget presented by the hon'ble Railway Minister.

SHRI BHASKAR RAO PATIL (Nanded) : I want to express my views on the Railway Budget of 1999-2000. What effect the budget, presented by Hon'ble Minister for Railways Shri Nitish Kumar, will have on the common man, I do not want to go into its details. Keeping the importance of time in view, I will put some questions here related to my constituency only. Hon'ble Minister for Railways Shri Nitish Kumar ji is a very talented leader. I had an opportunity of listening to his speech while sitting in the gallery of this House when I was not a Member here. I was a member of the Maharashtra assembly at that time. Whenever he spoke in this house he was very enthusiastic and used to talk about the backward areas of Bihar with a lot of authenticity. He used to say emphatically at that time that those who were in power should pay more attention to the development projects of the backward areas. If this would not be done in this country then the unity and integrity of this country would not last longer. He used to emphasise this fact while delivering his speech here. I used to be influenced greatly by his speeches and used to feel that Shri Nitish ji did not talk about his area only but talked about the heartfelt things of the people of the backward areas of India. I used to feel that he talked about my area only and used to get immensely influenced.

When the Cabinet of Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji was formed I was sorry though that it was not formed out of my party Members, yet I was happy about one thing that Shri Nitish Kumar ji had got the Ministry of Railways. I felt happy that an authentic leader who was aware of the pain and sorrow of the backward areas had got the Ministry of Railways and now there would be many a thing in the Railways that would provide justice to the backward areas.

[Shri Bhaskar Rao Patil]

When I went through the Railway budget, Nitish ji, I felt very disappointed that an authentic and talented leader who always talked about the backward areas, had greatly neglected my constituency. I can understand his helplessness but I rise with great hope to put forth my views about my area, there are 540 areas and it is quite possible that your Railway Ministry might not have placed the things about the backwardness of my area before you.

I want to keep the development projects of my backward area before the Minister for Railways, as they are related to the Railways, and I am sure that the Hon'ble Minister would definitely try to do something about them. Your Ministry will have to expedite the projects sanctioned already. *(Interruptions)* I am speaking for the first time and request you to please let me speak. . . *(Interruptions)* Nanded Railway division, the foundation of which was laid ten years ago, has not yet been completed. The cost comes to Rs. six and a half crores in it but till today only four crore rupees have been obtained. I urge you to make provisions for that to get the work completed there. Nanded division still does not have full rights, all the things are done from Secunderabad. I request that the Nanded division may be given full rights, total staff; and all the business of our area be done through that. Nanded division is connected with the South Central Railway, we demand that it be connected to Central Railway. Many a work can be done for that area through that division.

Hon'ble Member of the Telugu Desam just talked about Nizamabad and Secunderabad. I would express my gratitude that Shri Nitish Kumar ji has kept Rs. 20 crores for that this year but my submission is that it is a very important Railway line, related to the backward areas and areas of Telangana, Marathwada, Gulbarga and Raichur which were earlier in the Nizam state; its budget be increased and there should be an attempt from your side to complete that work in the year that is to come. Mudkhed-Secunderabad, Poorna and Akola, which has been discussed earlier, there the proposal for conversion of meter gauge into broad gauge is under your consideration. Survey is required to be conducted for some new lines in my area viz. Udgir, Bejur, Bodan, Biloli, Narsih, Mudkhed, Sarur, Tajband and Latur Road, Nanded, Loa, Gangakhed, Ahmadpur, Chaakur, Baroi, Beed etc. We have been demanding these railway lines since long. You please try to get the survey conducted this year.

I am very happy that when your party Member Shri Prabhunath Singh said about the train from Vaishali to Delhi, you very promptly said that a 24 bogie train had been started. I expect the same about my proposal also. I request that six new coaches be added to 7688 Devgiri

Express from Nanded to Mumbai, and the same kind of announcement be made about my proposal also as was made in regard to Prabhunath Singh ji. Sachkand Express runs five days a week from Amritsar to Gurudwara Nanded for the Sikh community, Barnala Saheb knows about it. A very large number of passengers travel by it. I request that it be run daily.

19.59 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

1402 Panchvati Express from Mumbai to Manmaad be extended upto Nanded or a new train may please be started from Nanded to Manmaad. Pune Express passenger train No. 1604, 1321 be changed into express train, extended to Nanded and given the name of Nandi Gram. Two sleeper coaches be attached to Rayalseema Express at Vikarabad Junction for the passengers going to Tirupati and travelling by Nanded-Bangalore Express.

20.00 hrs.

You are aware that the tricentenary of the Khalsa is being celebrated this year by the Sikh community. This Government has the support of Barnala ji, Akali Dal also. He will be pleased, and all our Sikh brothers will congratulate you if a train connecting Nanded to Patna is started this year for Guru Govind Singh ji's Gurudwara at Patna. I request you to please start that train. Two sleeper coaches be attached to Pune Poorna passenger train. Maltekri be made a suburban railway station of Nanded, this will provide convenience to the Sikh passengers. The work of diesel locomotive shed at Poorna Junction be expedited to get completed this year. There was a platform of South Central Railway at Manmaad Junction earlier, but after the reorganisation of the Railways it went to the side of Central Railway. The train coming from the side of Nanded does not get platform at Manmaad. This causes great problems to the trains coming from Marathwada, therefore, two new platforms be constructed at Manmaad for Marathwada trains. A new reservation counter be opened at Nanded Railway Station. The work of railway station between Aurangabad Chikalpana Manmaad be started at an early date. A pilgrim train be started from Hyderabad to Ahmedabad via Parbhani.

There is a very big function at Nagpur on the 14th of April and at Mumbai on the sixth of December on the occasions of 'Deeksha Diwas' and 'Nirvan Diwas' respectively of Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Ambedkar for which thousands of our brothers go there from Nanded. In this connection I request Shri Nitish Kumari ji to run a special train at that time from there.

Before concluding, I want to draw the attention of the Minister for Railways to an important point that there are

quite a few people in the Railway services from the Marathwada sector. You please clear the backlog of Marathwada sector by preparing a crash programme.

With these words, Hon'ble Speaker Sir, I express my gratitude and conclude my speech.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Rajveer Singh. He is the last speaker.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA (Andaman and Nicobar Islands) : We have been waiting here to speak. There are four more Members to speak. . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : He is the last speaker.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : How can it be? We have agreed to sit late for this purpose . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : Please give them two minutes each . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : It is impossible. It is very difficult.

SHRI MANORANJAN BHAKTA : That is why, we have agreed to sit late. Please permit us.

[Translation]

*SHRI DATTA MEHGE (Wardha) : Sir, Mr. Railway Minister has presented Rail Budget for the year 1999-2000 in Parliament. There was no hike in freight charges in the Budget previous year. But Freight charges of all goods have been increased by 4 per cent this year which directly affect poor people. Burden will also increase on common people as deficit for mobilising Rs. 900 crores surplus for financing of chargeable construction work has been shown here.

Fare has been enhanced in trains in which mostly poor and middle class people travel to their nearest destinations. This burden is also on common people. This budget is not in the interest of the people. There is no farsightedness in this budget. This budget is against the interest of the people. I oppose this budget.

I want to attract the attention of hon. Minister toward important issues. Even today pointsman work as a slave on roadside stations continue for 12 hrs. I have also informed the hon. Minister through letters about this. Pointsman were demanding for a 8 hours worksystem. Fourth Pay Commission has kept pointsman, lowerman, cabinman in the same category of pay and they should get equal priority in promotion. But they have been

* Laid on the Table.

deprived of it till date while switchmen, cabinmen, lowermen get 25 per cent reservation. Pointsmen should also be included in these service. I demand the Government that essential steps must be taken to provide the maximum reservation for pointsmen from departmental quota. I want to inform the hon. Minister that my constituency Wardha district is the holy land of Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba Bhave and also an important district. Here Railway related questions are lying pending for so many days. I have informed the hon. Minister through letters about all these questions.

I am very sorry to say that not a single case has been solved, we get only routine answer, "I am enquiring into these matters." This is the answer given to the public representatives by the hon. Minister.

People of my constituency are facing so many problems. I am giving here details of all these problems.

There should be stoppage of Navjivan Express (Chennai-Ahmadabad) on Dhamangaon bridge village Railway station.

Stoppage of Okha Puri Express and Navjivan Express at Pulgao station.

Stoppage of Cochin-Varanasi and Jaipur-Chennai Express at Hinganghat station.

Stoppage of Mail Express at Pulgao station.

Stoppage of Andhra Pradesh Express, Tamil Nadu Express and Gitanjali Express at Sewagram Wardha.

And there should be the stoppage of 2106 Up Vidarbha Express and 8001 Dn Mail Mumbai-Howrah via Nagpur at the Sewagram station.

Similarly, provide more and more reservation quota should be provided for Wardha district. Pulgao-Aarvi narrow gauge should be converter into Broad gauge at the earliest. Hinganghat situated gate No. 13 Railway overbridge of my constituency should be constructed soon. Similarly, construction of Railway Overbridge on Sindi Railway and Chandur Railway is also very important. But Government has not prepared any proposal. People are facing inconvenience for last so many years in going hospital and in day to day life and for important works. But no concrete step has been taken in this direction.

Attention must be paid to the sanitation of the platform so that common men are in good health.

Monthly pass holders like students and working hands who travel to the nearest stations by trains must get the permission to travel by the Express trains.

[Shri Datta Mehge]

At last, I request the hon. Minister to give priority to the above problems and oblige by giving orders to solve these problems. With this, there will be the solution of problem of the people facing for so many years.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, discussion is still continuing on Rail Budget since the morning. We oppose it. I laid papers on the table in which problems of my constituency were mentioned, but I want to say that I have written letter to Mr. Ram Naik who is a state Minister of State for Railways Minister and who belong to Maharashtra, but he has not given any satisfactory answer. Now I have laid my speech on the table of the House. I hope that the problems, I have presented will be responded to properly.

MR. SPEAKER : Now you sit down. Please Shri Nitish Kumar.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (Aoula) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the situation in which Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee has come in Power, since then be it either the General Budget, or the Rail Budget, that all is in the interest of the public. In this rail budget also, there is no increase in general train fare, facilities are provided to the common people, only rich person who travel in A.C. can pay surcharge. By watching all these matters, I support this budget.

Had something else been included in this budget, then this budget would have been a better one. I want to suggest the hon. Minister, that he should show it to his experts. Suppose, there is a full truck, this truck should be loaded in the train wagon and should be taken to their destination. With this method the expense in loading-unloading will be saved and the rush from the road will also be decongested. People will also be saved from accident. General expense will be less from this method and truck owners will also be interested in availing themselves of this facility. Somewhere this facility has also been started. As we load container, just like that trucks also should be loaded. With this, we can avoid demurrage and our wagons will also be vacated soon, unloading will also be made soon. This is a very advantageous matter for the Railways. (Interruptions)

Mr. Speaker, Sir, You please keep the House in order. They are speaking and I am feeling disturbed and time is running short also. I want to conclude my speech within 10 minutes.

MR. SPEAKER : Not in ten minutes, you have to conclude it in five minutes.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : We have been demanding to run a Shatabdi Express train from Delhi to Lucknow via Bareilly for a long time. This is very necessary. I have

requested many times to the Minister of Railways in this regard. Irrelevant answers are given to us. When a Shatabdi Express starts from Delhi for Lucknow via Kanpur in the morning then a Shatabdi Express should also be introduced from Lucknow for Delhi via Bareilly in the morning which may return here in the evening. The people of our area will be benefitted by that, because there is also a business centre in this area. The constituency of the Hon. Prime Minister also falls in this region therefore, he too should help me and instruct the Minister of Railways in this regard.

The condition of platform No. one of the Bareilly railway station is all right. It's length has been increased and a shed has also been constructed there but the condition of platform No. two is not satisfactory. There is no shed, so the people face so many problems during the rainy and the winter seasons and they get wet. I request that the length of platform No. two should be increased as has been done in the case of platform No. one, A shed should be constructed there, and necessary public facilities should be provided there.

Pitamber is a Railway Station. There is a tin shed on platform No. three at this station, but there is no shed on platform No. one. Passengers come there and buy tickets, but there is no place where they can sit. Badaun station also falls under my area. There is no overbridge, so the traffic gets jammed for hours. An overbridge has been sanctioned on Bareilly railway crossing. Budget has also been sanctioned for this purpose. I request the Hon. Minister of Railways to lay a foundation stone of that overbridge after completion of first part of this session on the 18th of March so that the people can believe in it. I have told them so many times that the overbridge has been sanctioned but they are not ready to believe it. Therefore you please lay the foundation stone so the work can be started, there.

A very big railway factory is situated at Ijlatnagar. A coach factory had been sanctioned for this placed but it was transferred to Punjab because of political reasons during the Prime Ministership of Shri Rajeev Gandhi. Now, the work of construction of rail bus has been started there. Many employees have become jobless there. The work should be augmented there so the employees can get their job, and the factory also can run. The condition of parks of Ijlatnagar railway colony should be improved because they are in bad shape there.

We have been told that Members of Parliament can construct level crossing by providing money from their personal funds for that purpose. When we ask the officers as to in whose favour the cheque should be issued, they show their ignorance. I had asked the Manager, the D.R.M. etc. but nobody is interested in it. Therefore, the problems are cropping up in the construction of levels crossing.

I want to tell one more thing for the benefit of railways. The scraps of railways like quantum of scraps come out during the gauge conversion and dismantlement of bogies. Such goods are often auctioned but the auction takes place in an unscrupulous manner. If railways take over this procedure then it can be able to make a huge profit of hundreds of crores of rupees. Four trucks of goods pass on only one gate pass. All this takes place in connivance with the R.P.F. and the officers of the railways.

The condition of Ijzatnagar Railway Hospital is very critical. There is no facility of any kind of treatment. People are harassed. I want that the condition of that hospital should be improved.

I have got a slip just now. I had said that the name of Shri Santosh kumar Gangwar who is the M.P. from Bareilly and a Minister also, should also be included in it. This is our collective demand and I think the Hon. Minister of Railways will not avoid a Minister. Shri Satya Pal Singh Yadav also agrees with me, he is also a Minister and his constituency also falls in the same area. My colleague Shri Chetan Chauhan from Amroha constituency also shares our views.

Shahamatganj railway station of Bareilly is smashed and thousands or lakhs of metres of land of Railways are being encroached there. I want that either Railway should occupy this land or a Railway employees colony should be set up there. A railway line is lying useless there. A railbus should be introduced on this rail line from Shahamatganj to Ijzatnagar via Bareilly etc. So that the rail line can be used and the people of this area can be benefitted. Likewise, Any Railway platform number five at Bareilly junction: Agra going trains pass through this platform, but there is no tin shed on this platform. Length of the trains exceeds that of the platform and people get wet in the rainy season. A tin shed should be constructed there. A head of it, there is Makrandpur Railway station situated just nearby IFFCO factory. The people of this area have to come to Bareilly to go to Agra or Jaipur. I demand that a two minute stoppage of express train should be provided there so that the employees of IFFCO can travel through this train.

There is a very old station Nisui between Visharadganj and Aonla, Murders had taken place here because of illicit relationship between one woman and two men. So, the station is being smashed. A public movement is going on there. There is no facility there besides railways. If any public movement is lunched then I shall have to go there and remain present during the movement. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister that the station should not be smashed probably Railway officers present here and they must be listening to it. There is no other means of

transportation and if any incident of misbehavior or roudyism takes place then some security arrangements are made but trains are not cancelled. Therefore, the train should not be withdrawn because of this reason. If some people create disturbance with the help of Railway employees then they should be removed from there.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, you Please conclude.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : I will not take more than ten minutes. I demand that the station should be restored. The people of that area are angry. There are orders for local purchase. A three member committee is constituted and merely worth Rs. 200 or 250 goods are purchased. This three member committee goes to Calcutta from Bareilly and produces a T.A. bill of Rs. 6,000. The price of goods purchased is just Rs. 200 and the T.A. bill is to the tune of Rs. 6,000. What kind of justice it is? This is a serious matter. What kind of saving it is? If only local purchase is permitted then it should be done from the local city itself, lakhs of rupees are being wasted in this manner. I want to save the money of the Hon. Minister of Railways, I request him to note down this fact.

We had expressed our thanks to you for doing away with plastic products but plastic product is in the use even today. Bread roll is supplied in polypacks even today. Food is wrapped in plastic products Consideration should be given to it.

I want to mention one more thing. Railway employee gets a pass and he can travel in A.C. sleeper compartment but his attendant has to travel in second or third class. How can he be able to look after the person, the employee? When so many people are getting facilities then it should be made available to attendants also.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, you conclude please.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : I am not talking anything irrelevant, I am not delivering any intruductory lecture.

The Railways have imparted training to the apprentices. There are thousands of apprentices in the whole country, hundred of them are from my area. But they have not got any job. There is resentment among them and they want to launch a movement, therefore, preference should be given to the apprentices in Railway recruitments.

The chances should be given to those apprentices who have been imparted training. You have increased the fair of first class A.C. This is a good step, you may increase it further, I don't have any objection to it. But provide some facilities for the passengers also.

Sir, the catering system of the railways is very poor. Unauthorised venders travel in the pantry car. All the

[Shri Rajveer Singh]

venders travelling in our area belong to Patna. If we want to talk to them they don't care at all. . . . (Interruptions)

This is not the fault of Mr. Minister. They have been appointed by his predecessors. He has not appointed them in a year only. Doubling of track has been done upto Mahrauli only between Gaziabad and Moradabad. This work has been going on for the last 7-8 years. If the track is doubled upto Moradabad then it will become double line upto Calcutta. It should be done immediately. All trade unions are getting recognition. A labour union called Bhartiya Majdoor Sangh has the highest number of members in India. It is the number one labour union but Railways have not recognised this union as yet. It should be recognised by the Railways. Old hegemony is going on in railways. Entry of new unions is not permitted, therefore it should be recognised. Talks were going on about a survey from Chandausi to Moradabad, Farrukhabad. A train should be introduced from Chandausi to Farrukhabad via Bisauli, Vajeerganj, Badaun, Dataganj, Usavan. You will get a loop line in the middle of Rampur. There is a huge rush in Kanpur and Lucknow, and accidents have taken there due to derailment of trains and the line is blocked because of that. Therefore, you will get an extra rail line here and people will get a means of transportation. Ramganga falls in the middle of this route. The Railway bridges of Ramganga and Kachhla have completed their lives. They have completed a hundred years, They should be reconstructed otherwise the lives of many people will be in jeopardy some day.

I want a serious consideration over all the facts which I have produced, and prompt immediate action, should be taken in this regard.

[English]

*SHRIMATI MINATI SEN (Jalpaiguri) : Hon'ble Speaker Sir, Thank you for giving me a chance to participate in the Railway budget. I associate myself with my former speaker Hon'ble M.P. Sri Basudev Acharia of West Bengal who has included in his speech most of the technical points of budget. Without repeating them I would like to say Sir, there are many pending projects for which we are raising our voice to include it in the Rail budget, even this year our youth from West Bengal assembled here and handed over 39 points demand to Hon'ble Railway Minister.

I would like to mention about few important projects.

* Laid on the Table.

I demand modernisation of Darjeeling Himalayan track. It is traditional Railway track attracting the tourists who are going to Darjeeling.

Conversion from metre gauge to broad gauge from NJP to Bongaigaon via Siliguri.

To complete Balurghat-Ekhlakhi Project. Now Sir, I would like to suggest few of the points for my own constituency. I would like to make you aware of the situation of Northern part of West Bengal and entire North-eastern region of India. Since independence the development work for this area has deliberately been neglected by the Central Govt. The people of this area being quite and peace-loving were taken for granted.

Northern part of West Bengal and entire North eastern region blessed with rich natural resources and endowed with tea, timber and tourism industry which is one of the biggest foreign exchange earner of the country, yet this area is not being provided with adequate Rail infrastructure for quick transit of these commodities.

I would like to suggest some points for your consideration.

First of all I congratulate Hon'ble Minister through you for accepting our demand of one computerised city booking-cum-reservation centre at Jalpaiguri.

At the same time I would request you to provide one fast train ex. Haldibari to Sealdah to facilitate the people of North Bengal, Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan to reach the nearest metropolitan city Calcutta. Infrastructure for the running of the proposed train is available at Haldibari and paucity of funds should not be any criteria for providing public amenity.

Jalpaiguri being the Divisional Head quarter of town of North Bengal Div. all Express/Mail train should give a stoppage at Jalpaiguri Road station.

Since by now the Engineering-cum-traffic survey is completed, immediate undertaking of construction of B.G. line for Maynaguri, Mathbhanga, New Coochbehar to Jogikhopa via Bakirhat, Golakganj, Gouripur, Dhubri, Belasipara and others along with NH 31.

Construction of a regular double line train from NJP to Kamakshyaguri (not the separate gauge converted line).

I request you Sir, to construct DRM Office at NJP.

I would request you to hand over unused Railway and defence land for expansion of Siliguri and construction of a fly over in the city and bridge over the Mecchi at Ghoshpukur to help Indo-Nepal trade.

Construct a fly over to connect Siliguri and Hill Cart.

One over bridge should be constructed over state highway No. 12A between Raninagar, Jalpaiguri since this road is life line to Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and North eastern States, hence traffic density is very high and when the level crossing gate is closed for the passage of trains it causes lots of inconvenience to the Road traffic. Moreover, the level crossing being situated on a sharp curve, accident in this level crossing is almost a daily affair. I oppose this budget.

[Translation]

*SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar) : Mr Chairman Sir, Kolar district is a drought prone district. The ground water level has gone down to 500 feet, In spite of all these constraints farmers are somehow managing to produce foodgrain, mango, grape, cashew, onion, potato, tamarind, tomato and other essential commodities. Unfortunately there is no transportation facilities. I am insisting upon the Government of India for the last several years to complete the gauge conversion work between Yelahanka (Bangalore) and Bangarpet. About half of the work has been completed and about 67 kms is yet to be converted into broad gauge. This long pending conversion work must be completed during the current financial year 1999-2000. Sufficient funds have to be allocated for this purpose.

After our continuous struggle during the 10th Lok Sabha this work of gauge conversion picked up speed and so far about 80 kms has been converted into broad gauge. Another 67 kms is left and this work has to be completed at the earliest. The amount spent so far on this line is rupees 80 crores. The farmers particularly those who want transport perishable commodities like potato, mango, tomato, etc. are in great trouble. Very recently there were no takers for tomato and it was sold at rupee 1 per kg in Kolar town. It was sold at 50 paise per kg in the rural areas of Kolar district. These perishable commodities have been shifted to Bangarpet, Chennai, Bangalore and other place without any delay. In the absence of a broad-gauged railway line the economy of the farmers of the entire Kolar district is in jeopardy.

I therefore request the Centre to complete this gauge conversion work between Yelahanka and Bangarpet. I would also like to inform the Government of India that any further delay in this matter may lead to a number of agitations and strikes in various parts of Kolar district.

Sir, last year I have demanded to provide computer booking at kolar town. So far the Ministry has not taken any step in this regard. Hon'ble Minister Shri Ram Naik is here and I hope he would do the Needful in this regard.

*Translation of the speech Originally delivered in Kannada.

Sir, regarding the Island Express I have already written letters to the Hon'ble Minister about its change of route. In fact, I met him personally and requested him to look into this matter as early as possible. I have explained him about Lalbagh Express and the new stops for Lalbagh Express for the convenience of the common people.

Near Bisanatham the conversion work is still pending despite our repeated memorandums to the Hon'ble Railway Minister. This has to be completed at the earliest.

Sir, Rajdhani Express which runs between Bangalore and Hazrat Nizamuddin is only a tri-weekly. There is heavy rush in this train and people who wish to travel by this train are not getting any reservation. In fact, I am raising this issue for the last three years. Unfortunately so far no action has been taken in this regard. Rajdhani Express which runs between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Bangalore should be made a daily train with immediate effect. Circular Ring Railway for Bangalore city is a must. The roads in the garden city of India are very narrow and the road traffic particularly during peak hours will come to halt for hours. The number of road accidents in Bangalore city is increasing day by day. The most busy roads like Kempe Gowda Road, Jaychamarajendra Road, Avenue Road and other roads do not have even a single fly over. All these traffic problems can be tackled only by constructing a circular ring railway in Bangalore. I am making this demand repeatedly for the last several years. The then Railway Minister had given us some assurance also in this regard. Now it is the responsibility of the present Railway Ministers Shri Nitish Kumarji and Shri Ram Naikji to take up this long pending project without any further loss of time. The people of Karnataka particularly those who hail from Bangalore district are very much agitated about the inordinate delay in the construction of the ring railway in Bangalore city. I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister Shri Nitish Kumar to allocate sufficient funds for this purpose during the current financial year 1999-2000.

There is urgent need to improve the catering service in the trains. Catering service is not at all catering to the needs and expectations of train passengers. The service is not good even in Rajdhani Express trains. Cleaning the compartments (bogies) including the toilets is not being done regularly. These unhealthy situations will definitely create problems to the passengers. I request the Hon'ble Minister to take proper and immediate measures in this regard.

Sir, I thank you for permitting me to speak at this far end of the day and with these words I conclude my speech.

SHRI ANUP LAL YADAV (Saharsa) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak at end. I can understand your problem, the problem of the

[Shri Anup Lal Yadav]

House and that of the Railway Minister. The Railway is a huge department with a separate budget. To allot one day for this is not justified. It should go atleast for two days. I want to speak about my constituency. Shri Nitish Kumar, comes from Bihar. I had an opportunity to work with Nitishjee for a long time in Bihar. The people of Bihar have great hopes from him. So far 8-9 Ministers have come from Bihar only. The first Minister was Shri Ram Subhag jee. The second was Shri Lalit Babu. Today, they are no more. I come from Saharsa. Mr. Speaker, Sir, in 1997 a scheme was checked out to convert narrow gauge into broad gauge from Mansi to Saharsa. Work had started. The distance was 60 km. This work has been delayed. Earth work has been so far done in a stretch of 20 km only. Rest of the work has come to a stand still. Several times I told the Railway Minister to take personal interest in this. This he has not done so far. 'Rail roko' agitation is going on in Saharsa in this regard. The Railway Minister is aware of this. It was to have been completed during 1998-99. But this does not seem possible now. I do not know when it would be completed. The line from Nirmali to Saraigarh was destroyed due to the flood waters of Kosi. During the previous discussion on the railway budget I had requested for the restoration of that rail line. Its length is not much. Paswan jee is not present here. I had requested him to be present during the discussion on the railway budget. He is not present here. He has left for some work. He had announced that rail service would be started from Bakhtiyarpur to Biharganj. I do not know the status of that. Nitishjee may be in the know. There is a lot of problem in travelling from Mansi to Saharsa, Forbesganj and Katihar. My constituency is a backward one. It is contiguous with Nepal. It takes 12 hours to travel from Patra to Saharsa. He had said that a broad gauge line from Mansi to Saharsa would be laid by 1999. I do not know whether this would be done or not. The arrival time of the train which comes separated from Danapur via Katihar, should be in accordance with the timing of Hariharnath train. An A.C. II tier coach has been attached to the train which runs from Danapur to Katihar. I do not want to describe its condition here. The Minister himself is aware. There is neither proper arrangement for cleanliness nor proper toilet facilities. By looking at the coaches and the toilets of the trains running on the narrow gauge line from Samastipur to Katihar and Forbesganj, one can understand how the people travel. When I speak to Shri Nitishjee in this regard, he said that he shall get the needful done.

Thousands of labourers migrate from our region. Shramjeevi train caters to their needs. A train should be introduced to enable comfortable journey to Delhi. At Mansi there is no waiting room arrangement for the MPs

and the VIPs. A separate restroom should be constructed there. A narrow gauge line is also there. We have to wait for even 4 hours long. Restroom should be constructed for the VIPs and the first class passangers. With these words I thank you and request Nitish jee to ponder over the points seriously raised by me.

MR. SHANKAR PANNU (Sri Ganganagar) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I stand to oppose the Railway Budget for 1999-2000 presented in this august House by the Railway Minister, Shri Nitish Kumar. This Railway Budget is very partial. The Hon'ble Railway Minister has paid more attention towards the projects in the regions of the ruling allies.

Hon'ble, Mr. Speaker, Sir, in the previous budget when Rajasthan did not gets its due, we hoped, this would be rectified in this budget. But this time Rajasthan has been altogether ignored. The Minister proposed two surveys in Rajasthan and extended one train. This is like a drop in the ocean.

We were expecting the Minister to announce new rail lines for Rajasthan. The Sri Ganganagar-Saroopsar rail line and the gauge conversion from Sri Ganganagar to Jaipur. But, I am sorry to say that this was not done. A great injustice has been meted out with the people of Rajasthan.

When the whenever the Government is in need of conducting nuclear tests, it does in Rajasthan. The Hon'ble Prime Minister spoke of the need for a package, for a backward state like Rajasthan. What happened to it? Sri Ganganagar borders Pakistan. We bore the brunt of 1965 and 1971 wars. We underwent the travails of terrorism also. And, being a border area it should have been given extra attention due to its strategic importance.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, hence my request to the Hon'ble Minister of Railways, through you, is to pay more attention towards Rajasthan, specially to my constituency which is situated along the border.

My request is that the gauge conversion of Saroopsar to Sri Ganganagar which is omitted in every budget must be taken care of this time. Please include the following too in the budget.

- Gauge conversion of Sri Ganganagar to Jaipur line.
- Work relating to the laying of a new rail line from Sardarsahar to Nohar via Rawatsar.
- Construction work for the laying of a new line from Sri Ganganagar to Padampur.

- Rail connection between Tonk and Pushkar, for the pilgrims.
- Construction of an over bridge on the Highway-15, at Sri Ganganagar and at Hanumangarh Jn.
- Inter-city train from Anoopgarh to Delhi.
- Inter-city train from Hanumangarh to Jaipur.
- Construction of another platform at Sri Ganganagar.
- Starting of a train for Lucknow and Kanpur from Sri Ganganagar.

Hanumangarh-Jaipur rail line crosses Raslana minor of the Siddhmukh canal. The state government has deposited about Rs. 40 lakh with the Railways. Its work is yet to begin. It is my request to you to get this work completed early. There is a shortage of drinking water in that area. The people of that area will get drinking water supply from that canal. The Railway Minister and the officials should get this bridge constructed quickly. I request the Hon'ble Minister to pay attention towards this heed.

With this I conclude and thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Today lady Members are very good.

[Translation]

The Minister should do something for the ladies.

[English]

*SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY (Puri) : Sir, I am privileged to draw the attention of the House today to comment upon the Railway budget on behalf of my Party Biju Janata Dal. This is the second budget, which has been placed by the present Government and has attended towards the under developed areas of the country, while providing funds for new lines, track renewing, improving and survey of new areas. At the same time this year's budget has also looked into the interest of lower, middle class passengers and has not enhanced any railway fare. The tariff increased in goods train was long overdue. Last year the Minister had given relief and this year it has become essential. I would like to draw the attention of the House relating to the shift of transit of goods from rail towards road. Long ago it was decided as a policy that the goods which are being transported on road, a small amount from that income will be diverted from the Surface

* Laid on the Table.

Transport to Railway. But nothing has been done till date. If we want Indian railways to prosper we also look towards the interest of the railways.

South eastern railway is the most remunerated zone of Indian railways and out of it the traffic relating to mineral transport is high density in Orissa alone. As rapid progress is being done in establishing number of steel plants and Aluminium plants in and around Orissa and highly sophisticated machines, equipments being deployed in mine areas, there has been a tremendous pressure on the railways. Therefore, doubling of railway tracks and maintenance has become very much essential specially in Orissa. Because of non repairment and poor maintenance in railway track of Khurda Road Division, number of accidents, derailments has occurred within last one year causing huge loss of property. This needs special attention and provision of funds be made immediately for track renewal. Electrification work from Kharakpur to Bhubaneswar and from Bhubaneswar to Kharakwalasa is going on but the allocation for these electrification is not upto expectation. One would be surprised to know that this electrification work are started from both ends leaving Orissa in the middle. I am not aware when Orissa will have electrified railway track.

Doubling of railway line is being done from Talcher to Paradip and it also needs electrification for speedy transport of minerals from the mine head to the port. But work is sluggish and allocation of funds is also but meagre.

Puri town is a Holy place for crores of the people of this country. Every year crores and crores of people visit this holy town and during Rath Yatra time there is congregation of more than 10-15 lakhs of people. But I am constraint to say that there is only one single track from Khurda Road to Puri and it reached to a saturated point. After repeated request and assurances by many previous Railway Minister no survey has been conducted yet to have this track in double. Trains are now plying from Ahmadabad, Okha, Howrah, Delhi, Tirupati, Madras and there is also demand to connect Puri directly from other parts of the country, but it is not possible because of the saturation point.

Khurda Road-Puri which is only 43 kms. long is one of the earliest constructed railway line in Orissa and was commissioned on 1st August, 1897. Puri also is the connecting point to the world famous Konark Temple. Puri draws tourists from all over the world. Therefore, this time steps should be taken by the Railway Ministry to connect Puri with all major Cosmopolitan cities of the country. Hence, doubling of the Puri line is very much essential.

[Shri Braja Kishore Tripathy]

Survey work has already been completed to connect Puri with Konark and I urge upon the Minister to take appropriate steps at the earliest to provide funds for laying new track from Puri to Konark.

Creation of a new Zone was formulated during the United Front Ministry and "East Coast Zone" has come into existence in 1996, but it is yet to be full-fledged and administrative personnel still needed. Only one administrative office is functioning at Bhubaneswar and everything is under the direct control of the South Eastern Railway. I demand that East Coast Railway Zone be made fully operational with the creation of new divisions at Rourkela, Rayagada and Bhadrak.

Haridaspur-Paradeep railway line will be one of the remunerative railway line after it is completed. This year 5.00 crores have been provided in the budget. I would urge through you Hon'ble Speaker, Sir, that the railway Ministry should, impress upon the State Government to expedite the land acquisition and complete the same within this year so that earthing work and other necessary steps can be taken place at the earliest.

I would like to draw the attention of the Minister towards the doubling of railway track from Sambalpur to Balangir and Cuttack to Barang.

Construction of new line from Khurda Road to Balangir. Lanjigarh to Junagarh. Anugul to Sukhinda Road, Khoraput-Jajpur-Malkangiri-Kottemetta, Bhadrak to Dharma, Brahampur to Phulbani, Puri to Konark, Talchar to Gopalpur and Bargarh to Raipur via Nowapara should get immediate attention and adequate funds may be provided for the purpose.

Introduction of new trains is also one of the main item which demonstrates the attention railway gives the areas. I am pained to state that this year Orissa does not figure in the provision of new trains in the budget. Tapaswani Express which is plying from Sambalpur to Bhubaneswar may be extended upto Puri at the same time we need introduction of 1) Shatabdi Express from Bhubaneswar to Howrah early in the morning 2) One new Super fast train from Bhubaneswar to Bombay via Cuttack and Sambalpur 3) One DMU from Bhubaneswar to Brahampur leaving Bhubaneswar in the morning. 4) One New Express Train from Puri to Chennai. 5) Extension of newly introduced Bangalore-Vaizag weekly express train to Cuttack. 6) Rajdhani express plying from Delhi to Bhubaneswar be run all the days in the week.

I must thank the railway Minister for providing an increased amount of funds this year in comparison to the

last year but at the same time I must impress upon the Minister that due the fact that Orissa was denied for the last five decades it needs special attention from the present Ministry by providing allocation of more funds to compensate the negligence of the past.

I extend my full support to the Railway budget on my behalf and on behalf of the party Biju Janata Dal.

[Translation]

*SHRIMATI JAYABEN BHARATKUMAR THAKKAR (Vadodara) : Sir, I thank you for your kind consent to express my opinion on the Railway-Budget. I support the Railway-Budget presented by the Railways Minister Shri Nitish Kumar. The Indian Railways, which is playing a captain's role in the field of travel, transportation and goods carriage. This government has completed its one year. In the meantime, Shri Nitishji has presented before the Parliament a status-paper and a white-paper on the Indian Railways by which, many issues have been dealt with solid steps thereupon, despite the Railways facing many challenges and hardships and also the problems of finance and utilisation of funds.

Thanks for expressing your will to not only improve the passenger-services into creditable and better ones but also to provide them with better services including easy-reservation on the eve of declaring the year 1999-2000 as 'Passengers Year'.

As you have declared to upgrade atleast one station in every zone as 'Model Station' during this year. So let me demand to take up my constituency's Vadodara Station under this.

Vadodara is a city of industries, culture and historical importance and a source place, for many trains running from South to North.

All these trains pass by from the village Bajua (which is under Vadodara Zone) of my constituency. And, due to the location and field impacts of industries like Gujarat Refinery, Gujrat State Fertilizers and Indian Petrochemicals and also for their heavy goods-transportation and carriage, Bajua railway-crossing gets blocked for more than 20-25 minutes after a span of every ten minutes. I had spoken about this point already last year.

I extend my thanks to you. The Ministry for Railways and the officials of the Railway Board for the devent approach to work as you have shown a kind gesture to solve my local problem having conducted a survey in a very short span of time. And, please oblige by approving the Bajua under pass. Also thanks for your empathy for the beautification of the Vadodara station.

* Laid on the Table.

Under the first phase of the implementation of the decision for the betterment of passenger. Services, pantry and maintenance-services, the improvement effected in the Rajdhani Shatabdi and 30 other Mail and Express trains deserve attention and thanks.

Vadodara Station is one of those 44 stations, which have been equipped with 'Interactive and Voice Response system' to provide the information about Arrivals-Departures of important trains to the passengers. I thank you on behalf of the people from my constituency for this.

There is a demand to introduce the 'National Enquiry System' as early as possible, though it is due for the next year. It will provide relief to the passengers off the painstaking experiences of hours-long wait at stations due to lack of proper information about the position of the trains.

Thanks for the 'Tatkal Reservation' Scheme introduced in respect of more than 100 long distance trains. But I would like to suggest something for giving priority-reservation to very sick and old people.

Lastly, since the year 1999-2000 has been declared as 'Passengers Years' so, I, on behalf of passengers from all over India and travel agencies, demand to run as many as holiday-Trains for the tourism and pilgrim places, which will, in turn, be adding to the revenue and passengers enthuse.

Chhani (Vadodara) located in my constituency, is under Vadodara Zone and there is a local demand to construct a level crossing and overbridge. We have informed the Government of Gujrat about this. They have permitted the construction of the level-crossing and the overbridge at Chhani considering the need and the demand. Therefor I request the hon'ble Railway Minister that his Ministry may please allocate the required amount to help construct the road and the overbridge. This has also been given consent by the Finance Minister himself.

Finally, thanks for deciding to start a EMU in place of DMU railbus on Mehsana-Taranga Hill (meter-line) and fulfilling the demand.

Hon'ble Minister, Sir, you are pleased to change the name of 'Sports Control Board' into 'Railway Sports Promotion Board' under which, promising players will be given an opportunity to get recruitments into Railways through advertisements under sports-quota. For this, please consider my this suggestion that the eligibility-age for women may be extended from 23 years to 25 or 27 years. Beside this, the players from Railways who have performed excellently in the Asian Games held at Bangkok recently and have contributed for 5 gold-medals out of the

total 7 won by India, I extend my felicitations and good wishes to them for bringing honour to the country.

Indian Railways are quite vigilant to promote the environment. In this regard, the Railway Minister, realising the responsibility has prohibited the sale of cigarettes, bidis etc. in the passenger trains and at railway station on the very date 5th June 1999, the 'Environment Day'. Many appreciations for this historical decision which shows his concern for the environment and health care.

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ (Moradabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to raise some points regarding my constituency Moradabad as well as my home town Sambhal. There is a railway branch line where train passes once a day and earlier. The train passes from there for four to six times. This is the reason of backwardness of Sambhal. Mulayam Singh ji has been elected from Sambhal parliamentary constituency. He said nothing about it but I am advocating this issue on his behalf. I wish that Sambhal may be connected with Gajraula main line via Hasanpur. Sambhal is a big commercial centre having more than three lakh population. People are facing lot of difficulties there. I raised this issue in 1997 during discussion on budget and its reply had been sent to me on 18th of April, 1997 by the then Minister that orders to conduct survey had been issued. But neither any survey nor any development work has been done so far. I therefore, would like to request to Nitish ji, to make arrangements to connect Sambhal with main line.

Secondly, it is essential to extend or run some trains in my constituency Moradabad. The frequency of Aala Hajrat Express train from Ajmer Sharif to Bareilly, recently running once in a week, may be increased by running at least three times a week. Since there is a big rush of people travelling on this route.

In Sambhal district, Moradabad a unmanned cabin is situated at Sirsi crossing and major rail accident can occur at any time. Kundarki is in my constituency having 40-50 thousand population. But unfortunately, no train passing along this route stops there and people of this area are deprived of this facility.

There is an Allahabad-bound link Express 4114 coming from Dehradoon which goes to Aligarh via Moradabad, Kundarki and Billari-Chandausi, but it has no stoppage at Kundarki. Hence it may be stopped there. An another Bareilly bound train-Bareilly Express 4556-coming from Moradabad goes to Bareilly via Kundarki-Chandausi. It may also be stopped at Kundarki so that the people of this area could travel by trains comfortably. It is should be stopped at Kundarki. I would like to request that the single rail track from Ghaziabad to Bareilly via Moradabad may

[Dr. Shafiqur Rahman Barq]

be doubled so that electric trains and long distance trains could be run on this route. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please conclude.

DR. SHAFIQR RAHMAN BARQ : I have not been given sufficient time. But I would like to say that in the country the railway network which is 30 per cent and 7 per cent of the population is still not getting its benefit.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I would also like to say that the Ala Hajrat Express train, which is running from Bareilly to Ajmer Sharif via Moradabad once a week, may run three times a week.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, with these words I conclude my speech and with your kind permission I put whatever records I have on the floor of the House. Please include them in my speech.

SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN (Khurja) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I wish to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

MR. SPEAKER You, just conclude within two minutes.

SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Sir, I shall read out half of my speech and submit half of it on the table of the House. Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am support the rail budget which has been presented by the hon'ble Railways Minister with great zeal under the leadership of hon'ble Prime Minister. I would like to draw the attention of the hon'ble Minister towards just two or four problems of my constituency. My Parliamentary Constituency Khurja is famous for its pottery items not only in the country but also all over the world. Bussinesmen visit here from the every part of the world . . . (Interruptions)

AN HON'BLE MEMBER : First you present a pottery item to the Minister.

SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : I shall present pottery items to the Minister later on, first let me tell him my problems. Not a single express train halts at Khurja. I would request to the hon'ble Minister to note down my some points. If he makes a stoppage of even one or two trains halts at Khurja city, it would be beneficial for a large section of the people and even to those bussinesmen who are visiting from every part of the world. A shuttle starts from Khurja Junction, may be started from Khurja city, it would be a great benefit for the people.

Mr. Speaker Sir, I have been raising the same problem here for since many years. Even in 1996 I have raised it in the Lok Sabha. A train may be started from our district

head-quarter Bulandshahar to the state capital, Lucknow. I want to raise a demand of western Uttar Pradesh. If Delhi-Kanpur-Lucknow Shatabdi Express halts at Ghaziabad, the entire section of western Uttar Pradesh would be benefitted by it. Therefore, this train may be given one more halt at Ghaziabad.

Mr. Speaker Sir, in my parliamentary constituency Noida, Greater Noida and Dadri are famous not only all over the country but also all over the world. They are big industrial centres having so many multi-national companies. Noida and Greater Noida are the earner of maximum revenue in Uttar Pradesh.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Pradhan, please conclude your speech within one minute.

SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN : Sir, I conclude it within one minute. Sir, in Noida and Greater Noida train facility is not available. I want these two to be connected with Metro Network as is proposed to be started in Delhi. I had raised this issue in the 11th Lok Sabha and I was told at that time that the survey-work has already been started. I would request the hon'ble Minister to look into this matter and make arrangements in this regard for convenience of the people.

Mr. Speaker Sir, apart from it, there is no overbridge at Dadri station for which hundreds of casualties have taken place so far.

Mr. Speaker Sir, every day accident occurred there. Recently an accident occurred there. So, I would like to submit to construct an overbridge at Dadri station.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, once again I demand that the express trains should be provided a stoppage at Khurja. If it is done so, it would be a great beneficial to us. With these words I support the rail budget and thanks the hon'ble Railways Minister for it.

*Mr. Speaker, Sir, we appreciate the rail budget presented in this House by Hon. Rail Minister of the B.J.P led Government and extend our heartiest congratulations to the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji and Hon. Minister of Railways Shri Nitish Kumar ji for it. This rail budget will not only benefit some sections of people but common people will also get relief.

I am happy that I have been given the opportunity to speak in the discussions of the rail budget. I would like to draw the attention of The Hon. Minister of Railways to certain important issues of my constituency and request him to solve them.

* Laid on the Table.

My Parliamentary constituency Khurja is very close to Delhi. People in large number commute to Delhi from my constituency by train keeping this in view people from my area have been demanding that all express trains should stop at Khurja city and Delhi shuttle trains from Khurja city in play of Khurja Junction should be started but there is no concrete development in this regard till now.

I demand the Government to take effective measures at the earliest to provide stoppage for all mail trains at Khurja city and run Delhi Shuttle from Khurja city. Hon. Rail Minister Sir, Khurja has got the pride of an important place in pottery export not only in India but also in the world, Traders from different parts of the country and foreign come to Khurja and therefore, Please ensure the extension and beautification of Khurja station. It will not only benefit Khurja, but the country will also get the foreign currency.

People from my constituency have been demanding for the quite a long time to introduce a direct rail service from Bulandshahar/Khurja upto Lucknow and I have raised their demand many times in this House but this demand has not been accepted and it has created resentment in the people of my constituency as they have to either Hapur or Delhi to board a train for Lucknow and it creates financial loss and wastage of time. Therefore Hon. Rail Minister, it is very necessary to consider this important demand sympathetically and take concrete steps to link Lucknow with Bulandshahar/Khurja directly.

Survey has been completed to connect Noida/Greater Noida which falls under my parliamentary constituency, through railway network and the survey report is under the consideration of the Government. But people are facing inconveniences due to unnecessary delay. I demand the Government to act immediately on this survey report and by connecting Noida/Greater Noida and Dadri with railway network Ring railway and metro railway like Delhi should be provided there.

Survey has been conducted to lay new rail line for Meerut Bulandshahar, Khurja, Jewar and Palwal but no progress has been made so far after the survey and the Hon. Minister has not mentioned it in the budget. I demand the Government to take proper steps to lay the above rail line at the earliest.

An overbridge at Dadri station should be built as soon as possible because thousands of passengers commute from there and many accidents have taken place there the people there demand to construct it soon. I request the Hon. Minister to try to open a computerised reservation centre in Greater Noida. If you pay attention to this neglected area and fulfill my these demands raised by the people, the credibility of the Government will strength in the masses of the area.

Hon. Railway Minister, an rail accident took place near Astouli village, a little distant away from Dankaur station on 5/3/99. Four or five people died in that accident due to the error of railway employees. Please ensure compensation and employment to the next of the kin of the killed at the earliest. There is no facility of ticket distribution at Khanpur railway station which falls under my parliamentary constituency Khurja and rail passengers are facing great inconvenience due to it. Hon. Railway Minister, Please ensure the facility of ticket distribution at Khanpur railway station at the earliest.

District Bulandshahar of my parliamentary constituency Khurja is the largest milk producer district of the country. Milk is supplied in large quantity to Delhi from this district but there is no proper availability of trains for Delhi from this district. If Chola station is made Junction and new trains are introduced for Delhi for milk producers, it will not only facilitate proper milk supply to Delhi, but also the milk producers of my parliamentary constituency Khurja of Bulandshahar will also get great relief.

Now I would like to congratulate once again the B.J.P Government on presenting a good a rail budget by Hon. Railway Minister of the B.J.P led Government. I sincerely hope that problems brought into the notice of the Hon. Railway Minister would be considered sympathetically and redressed.

Me and the people of my constituency will be grateful to the B.J.P Government for it.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Now the Minister will reply

(Interruptions)

MR. P. SHIV SHANKAR (Tenali) : Sir, there are a few Members left on our side. Kindly allow them to speak for one minute each. . . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. LAXMINARAYAN PANDEY (Mandsaur) : Mr. Speaker Sir, there were many Members from our side to speak, but we requested them not to speak and they acceded it. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL (Varanasi) : Mr Speaker Sir, it will not be like this. . . (Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Okey, I will allow only one minute each . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You can lay your speeches on the table.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Okay, Shri Shankar Prasad Jaiswal.

[Translation]

SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for honouring the sentiment of Hon. Members. I have stood to support the rail budget presented by Hon. Railway Minister. It is true that the whole House is unanimous over the honesty and transparency of our Hon. Railway Minister and the Minister of State for Railways in the Last 50 years, but it does not mean that corruption is eliminated from their Ministry. I would like to say that corruption is every where in the Ministry of Railways and they should have a strict vigil to eradicate corruption.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, on the occasion of 'travel year' I would like to say that at the time of last budget speech the Hon. Minister had assured to increase the bogies in second class but there is no progress so far in this regard. I would like to request to increase the second class bogies in this travel year. Before I speak about my constituency I, through you want to draw the attention of the august House and the Hon. Minister towards the negligence of Uttar Pradesh specially eastern Uttar Pradesh in this budget. Varanasi is the cultural capital of India and an important religious place.

Sarnathji is the religious place of the Buddhists. I would like to throw light on the injustice done to it. The Rajdhani train which starts from Patna used to halt at Banaras. The Railway Minister has diverted it from via Mughalsarai in place of via Banaras. This has caused wide spread resentment among the people of Banaras and Eastern Uttar Pradesh. I request that the Rajdhani should run from Patna via Banaras. I had made suggestion at the time of the last railway budget also. I had said that no such train is available to the public and the businessmen of Banaras for their journey to Delhi, which start from there at night and reach Delhi by the morning and vice-versa. I had made suggestion last year also that if the Hon'ble Minister does not want to provide a new train, Prayagraj Express can be extended upto Banaras. That may go to Banaras and from Banaras it may reach here via Prayagraj what problem the Railway Department has in doing so? I request that this suggestion should be accepted.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to say that Laxmi Express Train should also be halted at Sarnath because the Member of Parliament from our area Shri Anand Ratna Maurya had many a times requested the Hon,ble Minister in this regard. Sarnath is the religious place of the Buddhists A large number of Buddhists pilgrims will be benefitted by the halt of this train there.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, Please conclude.

SHRI SHANKER PRASAD JAISWAL : Concluding, I want to give two-three suggestions. The provision of permanent Office of Railway claim Tribunal was made in 1989 but the office of that tribunal was established at Gorakhpur under the pressure of some people whereas 60 per cent of the claims dealt with by this office pertain to Varanasi and the nearby districts. Through you, Sir, I would request the hon'ble Railway Minister that permanent office of the Railway claim Tribunal be established within Varanasi.

Along with this, I want to say that the electrification of the line from Mughalsarai to Varanasi-Allahabad is required. During the last 50 years, a number of routes has been electrified. But Mughalsarai and Allahabad which services as a connecting link with the cultural city like Varanasi was deprived of electrification.

At last, I want to say that the Varanasi Platform is required to be expanded. There are a number of problems about parcel. The expansion of platform will provide many facilities. Appreciating this Budget. I conclude with these words.

[English]

SHRI RANJIB BISWAL (Jagatsinghpur): Thank you Mr. Speaker. I will not take much of your time. . . . (Interruptions) I would like to remind the hon. Railway Minister that when we met last year, he had promised that Rajdhani Express to Bhubaneshwar would run on regular basis and he would introduce a Shatabdi Express from Calcutta to Puri. Then, he had said that he would introduce a Sabari Express from Konark to Bhubaneshwar and a DMU from Paradeep to Bhubaneshwar, and Paradeep railway station would be upgraded. These things have not been done.

I would like to draw your attention towards the Railway Minister's large-heartedness towards Orissa railway. For gauge conversion of Naupada-Gunupur line, which has got the latest anticipated cost of Rs. 46 crore, the Railway Ministry has given Rs. 1,000 only to start this project. . . . (Interruptions) For another Rajathgarh-Barang project, the anticipated cost is Rs. 166 crore and the Railway Ministry has given Rs. 10,000 only. Probably, the Minister wants to take up Orissa railway in a greater way.

I would also like to say that for Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh project, the anticipated cost is Rs. 100 crore and it has been given Rs. 2 crore only this year. The same thing has happened with Rahama-Paradeep route which is yet to see the light of the day. . . . (Interruptions) If you give permission, I will lay it now. I was about to tell about

the large-heartedness of the Railway Minister, but you are now allowing me. I was telling about the benefits he has given to Orissa. The Minister himself has told that he has done justice to Orissa. That is why, I was telling them.

MR. SPEAKER: You can lay it on the Table.

*SHRI RANJIB BISWAL : Sir, I rise to oppose the Railway Budget 1999-2000. It is anti-people and inflationary which will hit the commonman. The Railway Minister has only conceded to the pressmens of the warring allies. There is a steep hike of passenger fare in all classes barring the second class. Hardly there is one coach attached in every train for second class passengers who travel without reservation. The number of such people are very less. The hike has been made varying in degrees right from Sleeper Class to AC classes. These days, people are not sitting at home. They travel from place to place in connection with their service and business. Since Railways is the principal mode of transport they prefer to go by train. But the steep hike in fares will pinch their pocket too much and the four percent hike in freight rate will lead to price rise. All classes of people will be adversely affected by fair and freight hike including parcels and luggage. This Railway Budget is anti-people Budget.

Sir, the Railway Budget will create regional imbalance as equal attention has not been paid to each state in sanctioning new projects. My state Orissa is particularly neglected by Railway Ministry. Sir, there are states like Orissa which are giving maximum revenues to the Centre. But, South Eastern Railways in general and Orissa State in particular has always been neglected: A century back, the railway lines were laid between Calcutta and Madras. But these lines have just touched the hinges of Orissa.

Today the rail route length in Orissa is only 2814 kilometres which is 12.86 per thousand square kilometres where as the national average is 19 kilometres per thousand square kilometres.

Sir, the Railways proposed to introduce 14 new trains during 1999-2000. But, it is unfortunate that not a single new train will go to Orissa. Similar is in the case of frequency. The Rajdhani Express trains were introduced as Super-fast trains to connect the capital of India. Two weekly Rajdhani Express trains were introduced on the same date a few years ago between New Delhi and Bhubaneswar and New Delhi and Guwahati. Subsequently the Bhubaneswar Rajdhani has been made by bi-weekly whereas Guwahati Rajdhani has been made four days a week. In addition to that one more bi-weekly Rajdhani Express has been introduced between New Delhi and Guwahati. I fail to understand why Orissa is being

neglected by Railways. As you know the demand for Bhubaneswar Rajdhani Express has been increasing ever since the train has been introduced. I therefore, urge upon the Railway Minister to make the Bhubaneswar Rajdhani a daily train. It is now running twice a week via Howrah. It should be run via Asansole and Khargpur on the remaining five days. The Minister last year promised "Sabari Express connecting Koroput to BBSR which has not been included this year.

I also demand the introduction of a Shatabdi Express train between Howrah and Puri. This will give a boost to tourism. I am happy that Hirakund Express has been extended upto Bhubaneswar. It should also be made a daily train and atleast two A.C. 3 tier coaches should be attached to that train. Coming to ongoing projects, First of all I would like to emphasize on 78 km Haridaspur Paradeep line in Orissa. The latest anticipated cost of this line is 3,40,97,30 out of which 12,75,22 was provided in 1998-99. Now only 50,000 of outlay has been proposed for 1999-2000. An additional amount of Rs. 323,22,08 would be required for the completion of this line. Sir, this is a great injustice done in the fund allocation for this line. It will take many more years for the completion of this line if this kind of attitude is adopted by Railways. I urge upon the Honourable Railway Minister to reappropriate and modify the fund allocation for this project.

Secondly, I would like to lay emphasis on Rahama-Paradeep line. The anticipated cost of this line in 1997-98 was fixed at 37.35 crores out of which the provision was made for 0.01 crore only. Sir, last year also while speaking on Railway Budget I had highlighted this point. So, the govt. subsequently reappropriated 0.08 crore which was again modified to 0.07 crore. This amount was spent in that year. The latest anticipated cost fixed at 43,52,78 in 1998-99. In that line out of which an outlay of Rs. 90,727/- has only been made available for that project so far. In 1999-2000 only Rs. 14,00,000 has been proposed for that line.

Now, balance as 20,4551 will be required for the completion of this line. I request the Hon. Minister to modify the allocation for 1999-2000 and see that the remaining amount of Rs. 20,4551 should also be made available for that project so that it is completed before the end of the century. Similarly, Sir, I would like to repeat my demand which I had made during my last year's railway speech about the doubling of Raghunathpur-Gorakhnath-Raham a portion of Cuttack-Paradeep rail link, for which only Rs. 6 lakhs was proposed in 1998-99 out of which Rs. 4,78,530 was allocated in the current year. Then only Rs. 50000/- has been proposed for 1999-2000. If the balance amount of Rs. 7,14,70/- more required for the completion of the doubling work is appropriated during 1999-2000

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Ranjib Biswal]

financial year the doubling work will be completed during the 19th century. So, I request the Hon. Minister to look into this demand.

Sir, last year I had pointed out about the need to allocate adequate fund for the second bridges being constructed over the river Birupa and Mahanadi on Talcher-Cuttack-Paradeep line. I demand that appropriate allocation should be made so that these rail bridges are constructed and completed during 1999-2000.

Sir, I would like to reiterate my demand of last year for the completion of Daitari-Banspani line which was started more than two decades ago. This is a very important and economically viable line. This will give 26% profit per annum and within four to five years this route can pay back the entire investment. Unfortunately, the Railways has been making a very low amount of allocation for this line on the plea of constraint of resources. This line, once completed, will facilitate the transportation of iron ore, manganese and other high grade export quality minerals to Paradip Port on the direct and shortest route instead of transporting on the present route which covers about 500 kms. in the three States of Orissa, Bihar and West Bengal before it finally reaches Paradeep Port. This will save time and reduce the transport cost. So, in the national interest this 155 Daitari Banspani line should be completed before the target date which is refixed as 21st December 2003. The present level of export of iron ore, bauxite, manganese and import of coal justify the early completion of this line. Therefore, I demand that adequate fund should be allocated for this line so that there should not be any further delay in the completion of the line.

Sir, a word about the new lines unfortunately no new line has been considered for Orissa. Preliminary survey of the new railway lines namely Talcher-Gopalpur, Rayagada-Gopalpur and Jeypur-Malkanagiri was completed by Orissa Remote Sensing and Application Centre a decade ago. But no further action has been initiated thereafter. I urge upon the Honourable Minister of Railway to give priority on the construction of these lines during 9th Plan.

Sir, adequate fund has not been provided for East to West Khurdha Road Balangir line. The Govt. of Orissa is ready to give land. The land acquisition process should be started immediately and construction should be followed. Besides this line will connect western Orissa's some of the predominately tribal populated backward districts with the State Capital Bhubaneswar. It will establish imotional integration between coastal and western Orissa. Therefore, the provision of adequate Central allocation should be made for this line.

Sir, the previous Govt. had realised the long pending demand of Orissa and created a separate zone for Orissa namely East Coast zone. But it has not been fully restructured and not made fully functional. I demand that this East Coast Zone should be re-organised and made fully functional at the earliest.

Sir, lastly I shall be failing in my duty if I do not mention about sports. Being a sportsman, I congratulate the Hon. Minister to pay attention for the promotion of sports. It is good that the Railway Sports Central Board has been renamed as Rail Sports Promotion Board. I also thank the Minister for streamlining the recruitment procedure for sportmen in railways. Last year, while participating in the discussion on Railway Budget, I had requested the Minister to make adequate fund provision for sports. This time I reiterate the same demand and I hope the Minister will look into it.

With these words, I thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to participate in the Railway Budget discussion and conclude my speech.

[Translation]

SHRI HIRA LAL ROY (Chhapra) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, there are some problems of my area which are essential to be brought to the notice of 14 hon'ble Minister. He has introduced the Rajdhani train this very month and this train comes twice a week to Delhi from Guwahati. The stoppage of this train has not been provided at Chhapra which should be provided at Chhapra, which is the district of Dr. Rajendra Prasad and it is the district of Babu Jai Prakash. The people of this district are serving in almost all parts of the world and the country. They live in every corner of the country-Punjab, Haryana and Delhi. A Guwahati train has been introduced there but this train does not stop there.

The Minister is not here. I would request the hon'ble Minister of State for Railways that this is a very considerable subject. This will do justice to Chhapra because the people of Chhapra live throughout the world and every corner this country. I want to say one thing more that the people of North-East now not only live at Calcutta alone but also at Punjab, Haryana and Delhi as has just been pointed out by Shri Prabhunath Babu, Shri Raghuvansh Babu and Shri Mohan Babu.

A large number of people travel to and fro this place. You would have seen throughout India that the second class in trains is always jam-packed, A.C. trains are jam-packed. But if there is any area where the roofs are also jam-packed, that is the area of North-Bihar. Thousand of poor people go to Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Mumbai, Gujarat etc. from here in search of employment. So, I would

request the hon'ble Railway Minister that a train without any A.C. Coach which is only Janta type train, should be connected to Barauni and it should be extended up to Delhi or Jalandhar . . . (Interruptions)

One of my area has been rendered crippled. Two-three steamers of the Railway used to operate. North and South Bihar were connected with Patna. During the tenured Shri Deve Gowda and the succeeding Railway Minister, this need was always felt that a railway bridge should be built between Sonpur and Patna to compensate for the . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Now, please conclude.

SHRI HIRA LAL ROY : I am concluding within half a minute.

A survey was conducted for the construction of that railway bridge. The foundation was laid but no money is being spent on it. Sonpur city, the only place of railways of North Bihar, where there is abundant staff and land of railways, trains always used to come there but it was made unpopular because of two reasons. That city is still lying unutilised, the staff from there is being transferred to Barauni and other places but no efforts are being made for the establishment there itself. There, the locoshed is closed, where can be easily converted into diesel shed. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Now, please conclude.

(Interruptions)

SHRI HIRA LAL ROY : No attention is paid by the Railway administration. Some ordinary officer has been posted there and a joke is played in the name of Zonal office and in which crores of rupees are involved.

[English]

SHRI SUNIL KHAN (Durgapur) : Hon. Speaker, Sir, hon. Cabinet and State Ministers of Railways, Members of this august House, officers of the Railways, writers of minutes and Press :

I stand to oppose the Budget because of freight hike of four per cent which, in turn, raised the prices of essential commodities. It will effect the poorest of the poor. My appeal to the hon. Minister is to withdraw the freight charges of four per cent. In your Budget speech, you have kept 450 million tonnes as the loading target. But if you do not change the freight changes, then the road transport will carry more. You are aware that you are taking 100 kilometres freight charges in lieu of 24 kilometres from Vizag Port to Vizag Steel Plant. Similarly, for carrying iron ore from Bailadila Mines to Vizag Port, you are taking extra

100 kilometres freight charges, which is more than the actual distance. The owners of private sector in Western India have decided to carry iron ore through pipelines. The Passenger Amenities Committee recommended that the vendors, who are vending in the trains, should be provided with identity cards. . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You can lay your speech on the Table of the House.

SHRI SUNIL KHAN : I beg to lay my speech on the Table.

*They should be provided with Identity Card with licence fee so that they can be regularised. Thousands are engaged in vending. They earn their livelihood for their families.

Sir, Durgapur is my constituency in West Bengal. Durgapur is known as 'Rush' area of Eastern India for its present industrial network. Naturally particular attention should be given for building up necessary infrastructure facilities so that a new train should be introduced either from Durgapur or from Asansol to Howrah. You have already renamed Asansol-Howrah Exp. as 'Agnibina' for honour of Kabi Nazrul for his birth centenary. I would like to say due to heavy rush of passengers, please introduce 'Agnibina' as a new train in regard to Kaji Najrul Islam and Burdwan-Asansol should be declared as suburban area.

I congratulate you for conversion of B.D.R. but you have not sanctioned extension upto Chachai in chord lines. If extension is not provided then it will not be viable. You have allocated only Rs. 5 crore which is very less. So you are requested to please extend upto Chachai and increase budgetary support and start work immediately. I hope the PSU IRCON should be given priority as they have completed electrification before schedule. And again remind you for long pending demands like Digha-Jamluk, Howrah-Amta, Ekksthi Bulurghat and extend from Dum Dum to Barrackpore metro rail.

Sir, D.Y.F.I. Bankura unit took a resolution at a convention of all political parties regarding their seven demands of railway projects out of which one is BDR, you have sanctioned. I thrust out of six that is Raniganj-Bankura rail service. From Raniganj to Durlarpur railway track already completed if you extend (M.T.P.S.) 20 K.M. more to link with Bankura Station and if it is done not only poor district Bankura will save but Midnapur and Burdwan will get some facilities. It will be the shortest route to carry coal to Petrochemical Projects of Midnapur.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Sunil Khan]

Day by day you are decreasing manpower. Before twenty years, 22 lakhs were the manpower. Now it became 10 lakhs and 3 lakh requirement are pending. In twenty year track were increased, trains were increased, you have no declared no die-in-harness will be allowed, recruitment will be stopped, then accident will happen more and more, no checker is there specially Sealdah Section as a result passengers fare are not be collected properly that should be looked into. You have to pay attention to the passengers amenities. Staffs are being pressurised due to shortage of staff. Drivers are bound to do extra hour for which they mentally harassed as a result accident occur. So it should be looked into.

[Translation]

SHRI H.P. SINGH (Arrah) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I stand here to support the Railway budget. I belong to Arrah Parliamentary Constituency in Bihar which is the head quarters of old Shahabad district . . . (Interruptions) I would like to draw the attention of Hon'ble Minister of Railways towards the important issues relating to my constituency which has been neglected so far development of railways since independence is concerned . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Please lay your speech on the table . (Interruptions)

SHRI H.P. SINGH : Considering the historical importance of the Ara railway station, I would request you to instruct the officers concerned to take appropriate steps for the beautification of this railway station and make it a model station. . . . (Interruptions)

21.00 hrs.

I would congratulate the Hon'ble Minister of Railways for the fact that he has made all arrangements to convert the narrow gauge rail line of Arrah Sasaram into the broad gauge. He has made arrangements to stop the Purva and Deluxe Express trains. There were some Halts on this route and action was pending since long. He has decided to activate these halts. I congratulate him for giving approval for the introduction of computerised reservation facility at Ara railway station.

MR. SPEAKER : Please lay your speech on the table.

SHRI H.P. SINGH : Since this railway budget is beneficial for the poor, therefore, I on behalf of myself and Samta Party, congratulate the Hon'ble Railway Minister and you too.

*SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM (Palamu) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support the railway budget presented by our Hon'ble Minister of Railways and I would like to congratulate him for providing basic amenities and facilities to the common passengers of this country even in the tight economic circumstances. I strongly support this railway budget and I would like to offer some suggestions to the Hon'ble Minister of Railways. On my behalf, I represent Palamu Lok Sabha Parliamentary Constituency of Bihar which is the most backward district of the Bihar State and is under full grip of terrorism. For the last many years, this district has remained under the grip of terrorism for years long. As a result almost no development activity has been undertaken in this district.

Therefore, permission may be granted to lay the speech of Railway Budget and I do hope that Palamu and Garhwa districts which are dominated by people belonging to scheduled castes, tribals and backward class people are very much logging behind towards progress and development. This region shall get benefit of extensive development with extension of railways and thus the area's destiny shall show up. The Tiri Railway station of Palamu district which comes under the jurisdiction of Dhanbad division, requires the extension of pedestrian bridge, since this bridge falls between the two platforms and after this there is a bauxite loading space for Birla company. A goods train stands there for loading and one has to pass through under the goods train. This poses a constant threat of accidents there. Therefore it is very essential to construct an over bridge. On this station to save the people from becoming the victims of accidents. The illegal coal theft is going on for the last many years at Husenabad railway station of Palamu district involving mafia persons. I have informed about the thefts to the officials concerned but no action has been taken so far in this regard and the coal thefts are still going on. This is going on with the connivance of the officers of Railways and the Police Department and the railways are increasing heavy losses. This should be investigated into and action should be taken against the persons found guilty.

Firstly, I would like to express my gratitude to you for giving me an opportunity to express my views on railway budget. I support the railway budget. First of all, I would like to congratulate the Hon'ble Minister of Railways for presenting such a straight forward budget under tight economic conditions. I would like to compliment the Hon'ble Minister of Railways for taking due consideration towards Vanachal region. I would like to submit some suggestions to Hon'ble Minister of Railways which are the main demands of my constituency and some of the projects which were undertaken during the British rule have not

* Laid on the Table.

been completed even after the Congress rule of last 50 years. The survey work of Barwadih-Chirimiri railway line, which was targeted to be completed by 31st March, 1999, has yet not been completed. However, the construction work from Vishrampur to Chiribhiri on the same route has been completed. The distance between Barwadih to Vishrampur is 202 Kms. and he has proposed to commence the construction work of 30 kms of railway line from Vishrampur to Aimbikapur. Now the construction work of only about 172 kms railway line has been left. The construction work of this railway line was undertaken during the English rule. A no. of bridges and culverts were constructed at some station but now they stand demolished. At many places piles of stones agreements were stored. At many places, earth work was started but even after the rule of congress party for more than 50 years, the construction work is still to be completed. The land has also been acquired for this purpose. With the construction of this railway line the distance of Mumbai will be reduced by about 500 kms thereby making the journey convenient for the residents of Vananchal. So far as I remember, when in 1977 Hon'ble George Fernandes was the Minister of Railways, he had ordered survey of this railway line but the construction work of this rail line could not be completed due to the early fall of the Government. This railway line links Palamu of Bihar with Sarguja district of Madhya Pradesh. These are the most backward district of both the states. Palamu is badly affected by Naxalite activities. Thousands of tribals and people of scheduled castes will be specially benefitted by this rail line. Coal is found in abundance under this rail line and the railways is likely to earn huge profit in future.

I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister that as he has made a proposal to link Vishrampur with Ambikapur, it would equally be highly appreciated if the proposal to link the remaining part of this railway line from Barwadih to Ambikapur is included in this railway budget itself. I have been elected from this Lok Sabha constituency consecutively for the second time and have also represented Latehar legislative assembly in Bihar and time to time I have given assurance to the people of my constituency to the effect that no sooner than our government is formed, I shall get the construction work of this railway line commenced once again. If this proposal is not included in this rail budget, what would be my position amongst the people of my constituency. Therefore, I once again appeal that the sanction pertaining to the completion of this rail line may be accorded.

In addition to this, a double railway line from Garhiva Road to Chopan and its electrification is very essential since Veddhenia Bihar caustic and chemical and limestone and Dolomite Mines of SAIL, Bhavnathpur are located in

this area. Bauxite is transported to HINDALCO from Palamu and Lohardaga areas by this very line.

In addition to this the railway line between Barkakana to Dehri on-Sone has been electrified. Therefore, considering the necessities of the people, an E.M.U. passenger train should be commensed between Barkakana to Dehri-on-Sone.

The Daltonganj Railway Station needs to be computerised at the earliest. Daltonganj is a Divisional headquarter and about 800 to 900 tickets are sold from this station daily and about 100 people get their tickets reserved from this station daily. Sanction should be accorded to this work. Retiring room facility should be provided at Daltonganj Railway Station and Garhwa Railway Station and approval should be given for setting up of S.T.D. Booths at Tori, Barwadih, Daltonganj, Garhwa Road Railway Stations. In addition to this the Garhwa Road Dehri Gaya Passenger train should be extended upto Barwadih. I would like to appeal the Hon'ble Minister of Railways to pay a visit of Daltonganj and redress the problems of the people living there after hearing them since he is well-versed with the problems of Bihar.

In addition to this I would demand that a Rajdhani Express should be started from Delhi to Ranchi via Dehri-on-Sone, Daltonganj since Ranchi is shortly likely to be the capital of Vanachal.

*SHRI RAJ NARAIN PASSI (Bansgaon) : Sir, I support the Railway Budget. In addition to this, I would like to bring to your knowledge that there is no railway line in my area. Therefore I humbly submit.

A new railway line should be laid from Dohri Ghat to Sahjanva and from Dhansara Maharajganj to Chhitoni.

A train should be started from Gorakhpur to New Delhi.

A railway line from Lucknow to Gorakhpur should be doubled.

The railway line from Lucknow to Gorakhpur should be electrified.

The Gorakhnath Mail should be once again started from Gorakhpur to Lucknow.

[English]

DR. RAVI MALLU (Nagar Kurnool) : Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, Sir, for giving me a chance to participate in the debate on the Railway Budget. I rise to oppose the Railway Budget because it has disappointed me a lot.

* Laid on the Table.

[Dr. Ravi Mallu]

In the last year's Railway Budget, hon. Nitish Kumar introduced the concept of most backward areas and said that he will be taking railway lines to most backward areas even though they are commercially nonviable in the survey. He had also brought out a Status Paper on Railways last year giving the details of the railway infrastructure and the ways to improve it. After seeing all these things I expected a Railway Budget which would have taken care of the most backward areas and ensured continuous development in those areas. Unfortunately, it has not happened.

I have been given making representations for the last seven years regarding a gauge conversion project from Raichur to Macherla. There is a line which is sanctioned from Macherla to Gadwal. You have sanctioned a line from Raichur to Gadwal. I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister to extend this new line from Gadwal to Macherla. This line is pending since before the Independence and even during Nizam times this was proposed. Under the concept of railway line for most backward areas, the Minister has sanctioned a new railway line for his own constituency even though it is not commercially viable, saying that it is a backward area.

There is another line which is proposed for a long time, that is from Vikarabad . . . (*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER : You have good support in the House. Please wind up.

DR. RAVI MALLU : Sir, this line is pending for long. I request the hon. Railway Minister to order a survey into it and allot Budget for it in the Supplementary Demands for Grants so that work can be taken up. I would also like to mention that reservation for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Backward Castes and other Backward Classes should be strictly followed.

MR. SPEAKER : You can lay the rest of your speech on the Table.

DR. RAVI MALLU : Sir, with your permission, I lay the rest of my speech on the Table of the House. ~

*Thank you very much for giving a chance to speak on the Railway Budget. This Railway Budget is a most routine Budget and has got neither direction nor concepts. This Railway Budget is prepared not on the basis of any concepts but only to satisfy the political persons, groups and to favour certain individuals only. The Hon'ble Railway Minister Mr. Nitish Kumar while submitting the last year budget has told in this house that he is a different Railway

* Laid on the Table.

Minister who wants to rationlise the Railway Budget on certain concepts. He also submitted a status paper on Railways last year in this house showing lot of concern to the most backward areas and also the status of various Railway projects on hand. During that time Railway Minister has promised this house that he is going to accord justice to the most backward areas eventhough the survey reports of Railway Department are not feasible, commercially the Hon'ble Minister told that he will sanction new railway lines in those most backward areas only with a view to bring back the backward areas to the other parts of India. He also told that he will try to complete the pending project works on hand than taking up the newprojects. Most surprisingly the Hon'ble Railway Minister as presented this year Railway Budget to the contrary of what he has told in the last year in the same house. Hon'ble Mr. Nitish Kumar has sanctioned one new railway line in the most backward area in his own Constituency in the last year Budget though the survey reports say the new Railway line was not feasabile commercially. Then I requested for a new Railway line through my most backward Nagar Kurnool Parliamentary Constituency i.e. from Macherla to Raichur via Nagarkurnool. A new Railway line is sanctioned from Raichur to Gadwal. Now I want this new Railway line may be extended up to Macherla via Nagarkurnool, so that the most backward areas of Nagarkurnool, Kalwakurthy, Achampet will be developed in all other fields. This Railway line will not only give transportation facilities to the people, but also bring civiligation and development to this most backward area. This new Railway line proposal is pending even from before Independence. I request the Hon'ble Railway Minister to immediately order for a special srurvey of the above said new Railway line from Gadwal to Macherla via Nagarkurnool and allot funds for taking of this new Railway line in the suplimentary Railway Budget. An other new Railway line proposal is also pending in Ministry of Railways i.e. from Vikarabad to Krishna River which again in the backward area. Funds may be sanctioned for taking of the latest survey and sanction the new Railway line in the suplimentary Budget. Hon'ble Railway Minister though personally intrested to develop the backward areas he has been pressrised by various political groups suporting the ruling party, for number of pakages to their States. This type of considerations are to be stoped further for development of the Railways in backward areas. Now coming to general amminities provided to the passengers are at the same place there is no improvement in the general sanitation of the compartment, no improvement of Drinking' water facility, no propostional improvement of facilities to the passengers in the Railway Stations. The number of General compartments must be increased to meet the demand of un reserved class passengers. The steps taken to prevent accidents in Railways or not at all sufficient.

I demand the Hon'ble Minister to take Short term and Long term measures to prevent frequent Railway accidents. The Reservation policy and the service conditions of SC, ST and OBC to be improved for overall development of Railways functioning. A commission may be specially appointed to see the implementation of reservations and improvement of efficiency of SC, ST and OBC employees. The increased freighter charges may be or to be reduced as the alter native transportation is increasing by road. In 9th plan there is a proposal only laying for 861 K.m. New lines throughout the country which is very much less to the requirement of the country.

In countries like China about 10,000 k.m. new lines are planned we are not concentrating in our country for new Railway lines. It is not good for the over all development of the country.

Has there is no time I would like to come to my Parliamentary Constituency regarding stopage of Bangalore express at Shadnagar and also increase of berths from 2 to 6 berths at Jedcherla in Bangalore Train. I also request the Hon'ble Minister to increase the number of berths in Venkatadri express in Shadnagar and Jedcherla. A passenger train may be started from Mahaboobnagar to Secenderabad, which starts at 11.30 a.m. from Mahaboobnagar a proposal has been already sent by the G.M. South central Railway to the Railway Board. This may be cleared immediately Second platform must be constructed at Jedcherla with a foot over Bridge.

The under line Bridge at Jedcherla station may be allowed for using the traffic. The un maned Railway gates must be posted with men, who can save the lives of innocent people from rural areas with those few words I conclude my speech with a demand to the Railway Minister to be fair and practical to the backward areas.

SHRI S. GANGADHAR (Hindupur) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Minister to an area called Rayalaseema. It is a very backward area. A part of this area is droubt-prone and a dessert development area. All the Rayalaseema Members of Parliament have been agitating for gauge conversion of Dharmavaram-Pakala section and a rail link from Madakasira-Kalyandurg areas of Ananthapur District to Tumkur, Hyderabad and Bangalore. People of this area have not seen a train at all till today. Proposal for a road over bridge at local crossing No. 58 between Hindupur and Soandepalli is pending since 1994. I beg to lay on the Table the rest of speech.

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Minister may speak now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West) : I have been sitting here since morning. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : What have you been sitting for?

(Interruptions)

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : For participating in the debate.

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Mohan Rawale has already spoken from your party.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : Is it that only one person will speak from one party? If you do not give me a chance, the only alternative I am left with is to walk out. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : There is no need for that. If you want, you can lay your speech on the Table.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : But I have to mention it at least. Otherwise, how will it be recorded. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : You can mention it. In the morning itself the Chair had given the ruling that those who want to lay their speeches on the Table can do so.

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : But this is not the way. . . . (Interruptions)

*SHRI S. GANGADHAR (Hindupur) : Sir, Most of the decisions of Railways are based on commercial consideration. It is my humble request in this August House to the honourable Rail Minister to pay more attention to backward, under developed drought, prone IDDP areas. The theme of social sector should immediately be adopted by Railways. This will generate most needed employment for the poor people of those areas. A vast population in such areas are living below poverty line even to day due to lack of opportunity. I therefore suggest that a task force be set up immediately in Railways on social consideration. This should be assigned the reponsibility of identifying new projects in backward under developes areas and draw plans for their implementation. Time bound targets should be set. Such Projects should begin on over riding priority. All projects like New Rail Lines, Gauge conversion, doubling, setting up of production, units, upgradation of existing Railway stations, over bridge Foot over manning of Railway crossings etc. etc. should be completely covered. We know that the task is massive. Let us begin it sincerely and pursue vigorously so that coming years will bring happiness to poor people.

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri S. Gangadhar]

During the interim period N.G.O.s (Voluntary organisations) of such areas should be encouraged by Railways. They should be given priority and involved in "Environment" related projects. Award of contracts for catering or any other area seeking involvement of Private agencies like parking places, up-keep of building, Platforms, Tracks etc. and also vendors services should consider giving preference to eligible NGO.

Sir, it is a matter of grave concern that there is a downfall in efficiency level in all areas of Railways.

The word "Passenger-satisfaction" is not known in Railways they face harassment, discomfort through out the entire system. Travelling by train is a punishment up keep of platforms, coaches are poor. Catering are poor. Reservation systems are source of harassment. Public address systems maintenance are poor. Railway enquiry telephone systems are not good. Railways have forgotten that they are Duty bound to run trains punctually. Passengers and other concerned suffer inconvenience, Business losses as Railways fail in maintaining punctuality. People miss connecting flights. Their safety is not adequate. Anti-social elements are so active in some areas like Railway tenders that they do not allow any other person to even think of competing with them.

Sir with your kind permission and through your good office I wish to draw your kind attention of Honourable Rail Minister to "Rayalseema" area. The area is backward. Part is drought prone under DD vast population live below poverty line. A special and immediate attention to a few specific projects out of many is the dire need. They are

Gauge coversion of Dharmavaram - Pakala Section.

Doubling - Ranigunta to Tirupati.

Connect Madaksira and Kalyan Durg areas of Ananthapur district to Tumkur, Hyderabad and Bangalore by rail. People of this area have not seen a train till today.

Road over Bridge at level crossing No. 58, between Hindupur and Samandipalli. This proposal is pending since 1994.

Face lift of Ponukanda Railway Station, construction of high level platform.

Introduction of direct train from Ananthapur-Kochi-Mangalore.

Construction of high level platform at Hindupur Railway Station.

Manning of Railway crossings in Dharmavaram, Nallamada areas of Hindupur constituency.

Allotment of seat quota in AC - 2 tier, AC 3 tier in all trains at Dharmavaram, Hindupur and Penukonda railway stations.

[Translation]

*SHRI SOHANVEER SINGH (Muzaffarnagar) : Sir, common masses are not burdened for the first time in the rail budget. Union Government and Rail Minister deserve congratulations for it. And I support this rail budget.

I through you want to draw the attention of Rail Minister towards the railway problems of my area. It does not matter whether you increase number of trains or construct roads, population should be under control at any cost immediately according to the proposals passed regarding population in the golden jubilee session. It is the responsibility of both ruling party and opposition to fulfill the promises to the nation on the occasion of golden jubilee.

- In equality should be eradicated. On the one hand A.C. coaches on the other passengers travel on the vologies in the shivering nights of January.
- Facilities for fifty crore of population are most important for the country facilities will be provided in the railway also but it can not be unlimited.
- Sakoti bridge in district Meerut should be constructed. Earlier it was state highway now it is national highway therefore it is now the responsibility of the centre to build the bridge. The work of land acquisition is completed, bridge should be open soon.
- Link Express should stop at Khatouli. Largest sugar factory of Asia is located here.
- Two D.M.U. trains should run upto Delhi from Muzaffarnagar in the morning and both should return also. Not a single Passenger train has been added since long trains are over crowdy.

Two more passenger trains between Saharanpur and Delhi via Muzaffarnagar should be introduced.

- Ludhiyana-Saharanpur-Muzaffarnagar-Delhi Express train does not return Muzaffarnagar from Delhi at right time and it causes inconvenience to passengers. It should return from Delhi in time.

* Laid on the Table.

- Shatabdi Express which runs between Delhi and Dehradun should stop at Muzaffarnagar. It is the largest sugarcane producing district and largest Joggery mandi is also situated here.

Traders have to go out. The stoppage of Shatabdi is necessary in view of the security for traders while they go out.

Double rail line has been constructed upto Muradnagar from Delhi and the work is going on upto Merrut. It is necessary to lay the double lines from Merrut to Tapari Saharanpur via, Muzaffarnagar because the largest Jagger mandi of Asia is located here.

- Reservation facility has been provided at Muzaffarnagar railway station. But this facility is not operational due to power cut. Diesel should be made available so that reservation could be possible.
- The bridge being constructed from Mandi side on platform no. 1 does not cross the whole line. Police harasses passengers while they come to on platform No. 1 bridge should be constructed in a manner that police could not harasses the passengers while they cross the platform.
- A small bridge should be constructed for passengers to cross the line towards Bhopa Bridge.

*SHRI BAIJNATH RAWAT (Barabanki) : Sir, I express my gratitude for giving me the opportunity to speak in the support of the Rail Budget. Despite the bad shape of railways in last 50 years, your planning in the budget in less than a year is praise worthy. The tenure of less than a year can not be said the touch stone of any individual or Government. This budget is aimed at providing relief to poor. Provision has been made to give facility and provide relief to handicapped for the first time.

I have been elected for first time from Barabanki Lok Sabha constituency. There are some problems related to Railways in my district. I have drawn the attention of Rail Ministry from time to time. Today I am repeating them. Level crossing no. 180A of Northern railway should be built on Lucknow-Barabanki national highway no. 28 in Barabanki. Uttar Pradesh Government had given its approval on 5-11-97 by its letter 639/23-9-97/17 R-96. Please ensure the construction work by making available fund in this regard.

Reservation facility is not available at Barabanki railway station. Passengers of this station get their tickets

reserved either from Lucknow or Gorakhpur. They have to struggle with the crowd by wasting unnecessary labour, time and money. Since Barabanki is not very far from Lucknow therefore this work could be done at less expenditure. Even I have to get my tickets reserved either from Gorakhpur or Lucknow and due to it many times we did not get reservation even after information. I have lodged written complaint to your office about it.

Coal is unloaded at Barabanki railway station which is in the civil line Basti. And Carbon particles flee in the air and affects public health. Therefore coal should be unloaded outside the city.

I had written to the railway Minister in this regard. Malgodam road which goes to Tehsil Fatehpur railway station belongs to the department of railways. It should be repaired. I have drawn the attention of the department towards it.

An order should be passed to stop all trains which pass Barabanki railway station. Seat/Berth quota should be allocated in them. Passengers are facing difficulties due to the lack of reservation facility and stoppage. I request you to ensure the stoppage of trains and seat allocation as per letters written to you.

The bridge which links platforms at Barabanki railway station was broken unnecessarily. Passengers are facing difficulties due to it. Shramjeevi Express and Sadbhawana Express should stop at Hydergarh railway station and quota of seats should be allocated. Hydergarh is the nearest railway station but no express train stops there.

I face difficulties due to it. If I have to get, reservation for at Delhi. I have to get it either from Lucknow, which is 80-90 km far from here or from Gorakhpur. Therefore I request you to make the stoppage of Shramjeevi Express and Sadbhawana Express at Hydergarh and allocate berth quota.

First-Aid facility should be made available in long distance. Express and superfast trains. Sometimes passengers suffer from headache, bodyache, vomiting, toothache but they can not get medicine. Medical stores should be opened at stations and this facility should be made available in trains also.

Number of general bogies should be increased for poor as their small kids get ill due to heat. Sometimes so happen that the passengers holding the tickets are unable to board the train and have to wait for the next train for many hours to reach the destination. Sometimes seats in the A.C I and A.C II tier remain vacant. Provisions should be made to fill them. So that revenue of the department could be raised. There are certain measures for this. Vacant seats can be allocated to wait listed passengers of next stations.

* Laid on the Table.

[English]

SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR (Mumbai North-West): Mr. Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity. But as far as laying of the document on the Table of the House is concerned, unless and until it is mentioned or is recorded by the Member concerned, nobody is supposed to treat his document on record. Otherwise, what is the record that we have submitted our papers? I look at it from this angle, and further, it is necessary that one should mention about the laying of his document. Thereafter, he should lay it.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, at the outset I congratulate Shri Nitish Kumar and Shri Ram Naik, the hon. Ministers for Railways for presenting a good and very balanced Budget for the year 1999-2000. I am supporting it.

In fact, I wanted to participate in this deliberation but even after sitting here for about 12 hours, no opportunity was given to us. Therefore now, I am laying my speech on the Table of the House so that at least, the hon. Ministers will take cognizance of it and our view points. Thank you very much.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the hon. Minister.

(Interruptions)

*SHRI MADHUKAR SIRPOTDAR : As directed by your Honour I am laying my speech on the table of the House. Infact, I wanted to participate in the discussion on Railway Budget. After having seen the time consumed by the participants upto 1600 hours. I thought, it would be proper to place my views on the table of the House. At the outset I congratulate Shri Nitish Kumar and Shri Ram Naik for presenting a good and well balanced budget for the year 1999-2000. I support it.

It is very ambitious budget, hence in order to achieve the results, strict discipline, administration and will to get the result is absolutely necessary. Number of schemes have been introduced (1) "Passenger Year", by providing various amenities to the passengers. To begin with it has been suggested to have a customer care institute in order to improve the politeness and courtesy in the behaviour of railway staff. (2) Passenger Reservation Systems (PRS) at Delhi, Secunderabad, Calcutta and Mumbai have been linked with the net work, with the establishment of 'Rail' (net) 150 stations have been provided with computers to monitor passengers complaints. There are some more schemes such as Nation Train Enquiry System, Tele Booking, Web page, are likely to be introduced.

As far as the safety in the railway is concerned the top most priority is to be given in view of number of

accidents took place during last couple of years. The latest unprecedented accident at Khanna has shaken the confidence of railway commuters. This accident raised several aspects of Railway safety. (3) It is good that walkie talkie sets are likely to be provided in passenger trains to the Guards and Drives before 31st March 1999. In most of the accident the Human error was only instrumental and responsible which one should not forget. It is good that ultra sonic flow directors (UFD) will be used for intensive checking. Railway Safety review Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri H.R. Khanna Retd. Justice of Supreme Court is functioning. Number of unmanned level crossing causing number of accidents of which railway are fully awairs. Certain suggestion are given by the railway to over-come this problem. The fund which are made available under the MPLADS Scheme can also be utilised for this purpose however, I do not know as to how effectively this proposal will work.

Although there are number of other points on which I would like to put emphasis, considering the length of my speech I have decided to put some more light upon the following.

Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation (MPVC)

New Mumbai doubling of Belapore Panvel line.

Construction of Thane Nerul, Vashi, suburban Corridor Santacruse Borivali fifth line.

The work of second phase of 5th and 6th line between Kurla Thane are awaiting necessary clearance.

It was commitment of Railway authorities to clear the railway bridges from the encroachment and clutches of illegal hawkers.

The necessary action was taken by the railway but to our Utter surprise all have reoccupied the bridges.

Since last couple of years I have been requesting for a price of land on the eastern side of Bandra railway station for the purpose of broading of A.K. Kanekar Marg. This road is mainly used by the railway commutes so that railway should take initiative to solve this problem on top priority.

Infrastructure facility for the newly constructed railway station at Bandra terminus.

Time and again the matter pertaining to hutments on the railway land has been discussed however in order to demolish the hutments the railway authorities has adopted crule methods although hutment dwelling are staying at their respective places for more than thirty to forty years. I will urge upon the railway administration to look into this

* Laid on the Table.

matter on legal and humanitarian grounds and refrain adopting in-human methods of evacuation. I have visited number of western/central railway station and experience, that I had, recorded it by virtue of various letters to the Ministers, however it has been given an impression of close eyes and deaf year.

The Konkan Railway was the dream of four district of Konkan of Maharashtra State, as well as Goa. Now this Dream has come true number of poor farmers and the residents of Konkan have sacrificed their valuable land trees of various valuable and dwelling places, however most of them have totally neglected. No proper compensation was paid nor employment was given to the suffers. We have seen receiving number of complaints in this respect.

The Konkan railway authorities while selecting the places for Railway station, what factor were taken into account that we are not aware. The convenience of the commuters, infrastructure the distance from the city near by highways were not taken into account as a result of which people of Konkan after spending their fortune are incurring the railways, to perhaps that must be the reasons for incurring losses initiavely.

Regarding industrial relation I would like to urge upon the Minister to have an open mind for the redressal of the grievances of Railway employees in general and railway motor men, Mumbai in particular. Whatever wage rise have been considered by the railway should have linkage with productivity.

I support the motion of the Railway Budget.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMESH CHANDRA DWIVEDI (Banda) : Hon'ble Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to participate in the discussion on the Rail Budget and through you, I strongly demand the hon'ble Railway Minister for establishing a 'Rail Yatri Niwas' at Chitrakootdham station, a famous place of pilgrimage of Uttar Pradesh.

*SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL (Ahmed Nagar) : Sir, I would like to express my thanks for giving me time to express my views.

I welcome the hon'ble Railway Minister Shri Nitish Kumar who has presented a very balanced budget which will take the country towards development amidst the most critical circumstances. He has taken new initiatives despite the lack of funds.

You have allowed the railway porter to travel with his wife from the station he is working at to throughout the

country. I demand for the free journey for them. What will be the benefit of taking one-third fare? Of course, they are poor but they are hard working. They come from distant villages. It is necessary to give them relief after exempting them from paying this one-third fare also. All other servants of the railways travel free of fare. The facility of free journey to the porter should be given so that he can go with his spouse to any place in the country.

I am thankful to you and the Railway Minister for the State Shri Ram Naik that you have accepted my demand and the demand of the people of that department. You have sanctioned the electrification of Daud-Manmaad railway line besides starting the survey of doubling this line. This will help in expediting the development of this area. It will be beneficial for the agriculture production also.

The contractor stopped the work at four railway stations of this line. I have written about it separately to you. The contractor is willing to start work at labour or Startport society. The names of the stations are -Nategaon, Taklibhim Dehre, Pargaon Sudrik.

Our second important demand is that we have collectively requested you that the train running between Manmaad-Daund and Pune must be extended to Mumbai. This is the strong demand of the farmers and the people belonging to the field of industry and commerce. We do not have any proper train from Ahmadnagar to Mumbai. For this reason, no industry is entering there. This is causing heavy loss to fruits and vegetables of farmers. The Railway also may have to face difficulties there, but there must be a way out. The people are much agitated there.

Third point is that the Puntamber-Shirdi rail is very necessary. The entire irrigated land of the peasants will have to be overtaken for the line from Kopergaon to Shirdi. There has caused resentment among the peasants. It is not so in the case of Purtemba-Shirdi-Purtemba is an old railway junction. The crops of pomegranates are very little there and the expenditure is also less than half.

The industrialisation of Nasik is taking place very rapidly. In the vicinity of Nasik near Sinnar Gaon, the work of setting up a five-starred industrial estate is in progress. This is the demand of the people that there must be a local train from Nasik to Mumbai. The transportation has increased. The people are facing a lot of problems. It is essential to start local trains from Nasik to Mumbai like the local trains from Pune to Mumbai. Please consider this point.

Mumbai-Nagar-Parli Vajinath-Beed railway line needs more funds and the Government of Maharashtra is ready to help in this regard. There is lack of money this year. The second point is that Manmaad railway station and

* Laid on the Table.

[Shri Balasaheb Vikhe Patil]

Daund railway station are being vastly extended. Workshop is also being set up there. Terminal is also there, but the conveniences are nominal. Passengers are facing difficulties at both the places. Our hon'ble Shri Ram Naik ji is fully aware of this. I hope that a lot of improvement should take place at both of the junctions.

A third line from Mumbai to Igatpuri has been ready. It is my suggestion and request that a third line be soon laid from Igatpuri to Nasik-Manmaad and from Lonawalla to Pune, It is very essential. There is great lack of track.

This will provide employment in the rural areas, industrialisation will be promoted, agriculture will be benefitted. The work has already been sanctioned. We have to expedite the work by giving more money. This is being made in a backward area.

Aakhri-Ahmadnagar railway station is an important station. Military is there, industry is there. In the rainy season, the cement, goods, fertiliser are destroyed in the water. The facilities are essential at Ahmadnagar station.

The shades are not available at both the sides of the station for the passengers. The facility of drinking water is also not there. The facilities are nominal in the retiring room. The efforts for the improvement of this station are very essential. I request you to direct both the railway divisions to improve this railway station. I am thankful to you that you give me permission to speak here. At last, I am giving two new suggestions :

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. Ahmadnagar-Pune | Their survey must be undertaken. |
| 2. Pune-Nasik | |

Expediting the work in the sanctioned line especially from Mumbai to Ahmadnagar will help in increasing the speed of development. I accept that the demand is more and the money is less. The railway can be improved if it is run in the way corporate is run.

At last, before concluding I cannot help appreciating the Minister of Railways for States Shri Ram Naik ji and the employees working in different railway companies. All of your railway companies have earned the profit. You gave the dividend of Rs. 60 crores. There is no need of disinvestment. Do the favour of giving it maximum autonomy and allow it to run in the corporate line. The Government companies have also displayed good results in comparison to private ones. I feel that they need a boost up; them. I again request you to save the railway companies from disinvestment. The situations are worse now a days. Even then, they have showed good results. I, therefore, thank and welcome you, your colleagues and the entire railways.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : Hon. Speaker Sir, first of all I thank all the hon. Members.

MR. SPEAKER : Would you also lay your answer on the table of the House.

[English]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I am ready, Sir. If you are so willing, I can lay it also . . . (Interruptions) . . . If you so desire, I can lay it . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI P. UPENDRA (Vijayawada) : Sir, he should bring out a White Paper in reply to all the demands made by the hon. Members. That will satisfy all . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI K. H. MUNIYAPPA (Kolar) : Sir, when I was participating, the hon. Minister did not listen. . . . (Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : We will take cognizance of all the papers.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : You have already participated, that too in your mother tongue. Why are you disturbing now? . . . (Interruptions) . . . We have taken all your papers.

SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA : Half the work is over and the remaining half of the work is pending, Sir. That is why I am asking this. . . (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : First of all, I would like to thank all the hon. Members who have participated in the debate. Those hon. Members who have laid their written speeches on the table of the house in order to save time deserve more thanks you have given one time exception, therefore, the Ministry would certainly reply to the Members concerned after studying the views expressed in their speeches, spoken or laid on the table of the house.

Hon. Speaker Sir, many hon. Members have broadly raised certain points on the Railway budget that has been presented. I would put forward my views on it briefly. It has been mentioned that four percent increase have been made in freight rates and no concession has been given in this regard. Therefore, prices of commodities would increase and it would reflect in the increase in the rate of inflation. As you know that this is the second railway budget that we have presented. We had not increased the freight rates at all in our first budget. Only four per cent increase have been made this time. If we go through the increase in the rates of inflation and the increase in cost

of operation due to other reasons that are likely to effects the operations of the Railways, then we would find that the Railways have absorbed the major share of it in its system. We want to get a small share through this increase, we want to compensate it, therefore we have given many concessions with a view to overcome it and attract freight carriage through out the year especially for the core sector. If we go through these concessions it is evident that the increase of four per cent would not remain so but be even less, when there concessions are continuing.

Now the views that have been expressed about foodgrains and other items, the increase that the Government have made in freight carriage is not going to affect the common man in any way because we have not increased the rates on other items, Shri Barnalaji is present here. It would not be proper if we could not absorb the minimal increase that has been made. We want to save the time of the House. If we go through the years before we took over, the increase made was ten or even twelve per cent, and if we look at the whole decade, Shri Shiv Shankar ji is present here. The increase during the congress rule was thirteen per cent. If you go through the decade of the nineties, we had made zero per cent increase in our first budget, and four per cent increase in the second one which is the lowest of the decade. So it would be unjustified to say that it would had to increase in inflation and peoples suffering. I think that there is nothing in the Railway budget presented by us which demands criticism but since the opposition has to play its role, some reactions on it are bound to come from them, we accept it in the same spirit. . . . (Interruptions) We have spent most of our time sitting in the opposition so we are not going to protest over it in any manner.

This is your right and I am happy that only few people have expressed their comments, otherwise, generally people have praised this Budget for which I express my thanks to all of them.

Secondly, we have not effected any increase in the second class fare. Nearly ninety per cent passengers travel in second class but we have not increased their fare, rather we have rationalised it. If somebody travels in IInd class general compartment and is charged only Rs. 100 as his fare then the same person will be required to pay Rs. 155 in case he prefers to travel in a sleeper class as it will include the reservation charges. Thus, there is no fare hike for this class people. There are various sections in which we have not hiked any fare. Likewise, we have rationalised other higher class fares also. For example, if somebody travels in the IInd class general compartment, he is charged Rs. 100 and if he travels in IInd class sleeper, he is required to pay Rs. 155. For A.C. chair car this amount will be Rs. 300 and for AC Three tier it would

increase further to Rs. 450/-. For first class journey this amount will be Rs. 525 and if he undertakes his journey in the AC two tier or AC first class then he has to pay Rs. 720 and Rs. 1440 respectively. Earlier it was so and certain distortions were witnessed some times back. But we thought to get it rationalised and we did so and, as I have told, there are various routes on which we have not increased any amount. We have got wide support on this rationalisation proposal of railways. You are well aware of the economic condition of the railways and we have made a mention in this regard in our Budget. We have not concealed any thing when we took over the charge of the railways the first work, we did, was that we issued a status paper on the position of railways.

Further, we issued a white paper on various railway projects in the last week of the last Budget session and by doing so, we placed the real picture before people. Now you have to think and decide as to what we should do further. After the Budget session, we undertook the prioritisation of projects. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs prioritised the projects and on the basis of that prioritisation, we would be making financial allocation. We decided to complete those on going projects first which are on the verge of completion. We also decided to give priority to those projects which can be completed during the period of 9th plan. Efforts should be made to meet the operational requirement and adequate allocations should be made to the important projects aimed at the development of backward areas. We have placed these projects under various sections. You are aware of our financial constraints. We want to extend our thanks to the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister for increasing the Budgetary allocations. There was a time when Budgetary assistance used to be to the tune of 75 per cent which went on decreasing year after year and finally came down to 17 per cent. This time it has again gone up a little bit and the trend is continuing. I have requested the Finance Minister in my Budget speech to give us Rs. two hundred crore or more. On his part, he has extended his assistance to the railways. A part of the Diesel cess would come to the railways also. The hon'ble Members in their speeches have raised the demand for road over bridges in their respective constituencies. In this context I want to assure all of you and you know we undertake the construction of a road over bridge only when the state government concerned is prepared to bear half of its total expenditure. When the State Government agree that they would close the level crossing and approach portion will be built by them only then we bear the expenditure likely to incur on the bridge portion. This time in our Budget we, on our part, have given approval to all the projects received from the state governments. One of our colleagues from Kerala was complaining that we have

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given them only Rs. one lakh. But we want to assure him that we will not allow any financial constraints to come in the way of the completion of projects. Following the announcement made by the hon. Finance Minister, there will be no shortage of money under this head. Whatever amount is required to complete the construction of the road over-bridge, we will provide that money. I, therefore, request you people to sit with your state governments and use your influence to prevail upon them so that they start the work on approach portion without any further delay. On our part, we can assure you that there will be no shortage of money in this regard and we will also very soon start and complete the work on construction of bridge portion. Don't think of the amount provided be it one lakh or whatsoever.

Sir, as all of you know, this time when we made efforts to enhance the plan size, we were criticised for having withdrawn money from the reserved fund. But, you should understand our compulsion behind this withdrawal. We were helpless.

If we do not increase the size of plan and do not maintain it then the aspirations of the people cannot be fulfilled. India strongly withstood if there was a slight weakening of economic position, recession or some other atmosphere, but we had the impact of it all. If we want to come out of it speedily, we will have to make further investments in the infrastructure sector. Therefore, we cannot reduce the funds, for the Railways and its expansion. Our Government is going to spend on a large scale on express highways and housing. Likewise, if more and more investment is made in the field of infrastructure and housing, the economic position will become stronger. Therefore, the plan size has to be seen from this angle also. People have the aspirations, the Railways themselves have their requirements, and the plan size was to be increased under all circumstances to improve the economic condition; and if it was to be increased then we were helpless to draw from the reserved funds. We did not want to draw but what would we have done? Every Government department has been burdened after implementation, of the recommendations of the Fifth Pay Commission. Railways are the biggest employer to bear the burden most. There has been burden on the pension hand. The burden has been more than what we had expected, that is why it became our helplessness and we had to draw from the reserved funds.

Criticism is there, what can we do? We saw the post-budget reactions, the comments that are there in the newspapers. It was criticized at many places as to why 14 trains were run when there was lack of line capacity

in the Railways. Then, I read in the newspapers as to why only 14 trains were being run. Everybody reacts in his own way to analyse the things. Railways have the double responsibility, on the one hand, it has to generate the internal resources, earn profit and extend itself, and on the other it has to keep the feelings of the people in mind. Railway is a service shouldering the social responsibility as well. Last time, I had said that subsidization should be lessened. We kept on giving to the passenger side what we earned from the freight side, this will not go on now, it should be discussed here. Last year we had increased the passenger fare. We wanted to have a national debate in this regard.

We also feel as to what is secret there in the Railway budget. If the Railway freight is to be increased, a date is fixed for that, all are aware that there is a tradition of presenting Railway budget separately. Shri P. Upendra ji has an old relation with the Railways in many ways. A separate budget has this benefit that its decisions can be taken within less time and independently, and the Government also have benefits from the Railways. Railways pay dividend to the general exchaquer. Many people have worked in the Railway Convention Committee, Shri P. Upendra ji has also worked in it and Manoranjan Bhakta ji was its Chairman in 1996, So all know about it that there is a tradition of keeping a separate Railway budget. Some decisions are taken, but broadly, it is related to the economic condition of the country. By providing funds for the development of backward areas, the Railways fulfil their social duty as well.

Now, the situation that has come up should be discussed. People have the habit from the very beginning to pay the minimum fare. How long will it continue? The data that I have seen, more than Rs. three thousand crore deficit is there in passenger traffic, it is a matter of consideration. Suppose we had increased the passenger fare a little, Shri P. Upendra ji and Shiv Shanker ji - you only would have reacted to it most. Our leftist brothers sitting over here did not appreciate us for not having increased the second class passenger fare, but after the increase in freight by 4 per cent they are after us that inflation has increased. How long will it continue? We have put it up through the status paper. Many people questioned as to why you stopped the process that had been started. We said that last time passenger fare was increased, freight was not increased and this time we have increased the freight a little. We would convey our views to the public and they will be able to understand us, there is no need to administer a hard dose. This rationality is there in the passenger fare. All may think it over and discuss it throughout the year, therefore, we have put it up before you. More than Rs. 3000 crore deficit is there in the

passenger trains, people may think about it as to how long this process can continue. All should think that if we travel, we should also be ready to pay a little more. For this, mental preparation should be there from the beginning and there should not be any partisan reaction at least with regard to the Railways.

If you really want that Railways stands for National integrity it will be necessary to think above party line. It is true that when there is discussion on Railway Budget, the atmosphere of this House remains amicable. The quantity of politics is very less in it and if there is something, that's natural.

If I do not criticise here the people will ask outside, therefore, some what criticism is good. I will request that you must think over it and there should be unanimity.

Here so many hon. Members have discussed about problems, of their constituencies. I want to tell them that there are our own limitations. A provision has been made of Rs. 600 crore for new lines. A provision of Rs. 645 crore for gauge conversion, Rs. 625 crore for doubling, Rs. 350 crore for electrification has been made. We have raised money for signalling. An amount of Rs. 1500 crore for track renewal and an amount of Rs. 130 crore for passengers/amenities have been raised. You should understand its limitations. Everyone needs rail line. Their demand is right too. Money is also allocated accordingly. I would like to mention two places particularly. Mr. Soz discussed about Kashmir. A friend from Orissa Mr. Malik was speaking something. He sat on dharna yesterday. When he was speaking, I remembered my old friend Mr. Munda.

AN HON. MEMBER : He is no more now.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : He also used to speak spiritedly like this. One should put up his matter boldly. You must care about the truth. I have got it prepared for your convenience. You know it well that Railways are divided in zones. Documents are according to their respective zones, not according to states, but slowly a tradition has been developed to speak in the terms of states. Yesterday, when you sat on dharna, people came to me also for my reaction. I have seen all data after collecting them from a Pink Book. I got those data collected from the year of 1994-95. There was your government in 1994-95. I got prepared an out lay for 4-5 items regarding new railway line, gauge conversion, doubling, electrification and road over bridges because these are discussed more and more. I have collected all these data from Pink Book. The name of the projects are there in them, therefore, there can be no wrong with data but the scale is the same. One project may be in more than our state. To the best of my knowledge and understanding collecting data like this way on state level is neither possible nor

it is correct. Railways should be kept up in Zone. It should be attached with states. If you start analysing on this basis, the thing which stands for Railways will not possibly be aptly suited to it. When you sat on dharna I thought it befitting to collect data. In the year of 1994-95, there was total outlay of Rs. 93.94 crore. At that time you were in power. In 1995-96 total outlay was Rs. 99.32 crore. At that time you were also in power. Government was being run with your support in 1996-97. For sometime your government was there for some time and for sometime it was your supported government. At that time total outlay was of Rs. 112.08 crores. In 1997-98 government was being run with your support and at that time total outlay was Rs. 146.03 crore, After that I presented Railway Budget in 1998-99. Total outlay was Rs. 226.558 crore. We again maintained that level this year also. You can get it from Pink Book. A provision for an amount of Rs. 227.091 crore has been made in this budget. You criticise outside, do criticise it, because this is an election year, do play politics also but don't forget the facts. I have tried my best. If there is any complaint that will also be reduced by sitting with M.P.'s and having a discussion with them. When we take any decision we do not do it on the basis of political discrimination. We take decisions by keeping in mind the matter of development. You had an opinion that we are ignoring the interest of Orissa, now you should change your opinion when you play politics, the people of this side will also reply you by giving facts, therefore I realise that this matter should be hushed up here and all of us should think together as to what better and more can be done than this and that thing would be better.

I had given a word to Mr. Soz that I would certainly tell you about Kashmir because there is a special situation of Kashmir. There are two railway projects for Kashmir. Firstly, a railway project from Jammu Tawi to Udhampur has been going on since a very long time. There has been considerable delay in this but we are trying to expedite this work. We have discussed about this and according to that discussion, this project should be completed in the financial year of 2000-2001. I want to assure you that provision for expenditure likely to be incurred this year has been made. You know that contractor faced so many problem in between and he had to terminate this contract.

At one place problem concerning design was encountered. Tunnel work is going on a pace. So is the work relating to the bridge and other works. This project which began during the 1980s would certainly be completed in the new millennium.

SHRI CHAMAN LAL GUPTA (Udhampur) : I want to know whether the tender for the work relating to tunnel work at Udhampur has been finalised. Because for the last one and-a-half year no contractor was finalised.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Now it has been finalised. We had the problems regarding designing and contractor. From the experiences we have learnt that one can benefit from challenges. The cabinet decided to award the contract for the new rail project from Udhampur to Baramulla on the Single Tender Basis to IRCON, which is an organisation of the railways. Decision has been taken to provide incentives to the employees of this company. We want the work to progress speedily and the IRCON has been instructed to engage to the locals for the purpose. Work, needing expertise can be done by experts only. And in works such as earthwork, minor bridges etc., which do not require expertise can be done by the locals. The directives to this effect has been issued to them. This would enable the locals to get employment.

Udhampur-Baramulla railway project is divided into three phases viz Udhampur to Katra, Katra to Kajigund and from Kajigund to Baramulla. A meeting under the Chairmanship of the Home Minister was held at Srinagar, in which I was also invited. The Chief Minister of the state was also present besides other Ministers. Three scenarios were outlined regarding this project, which have to be completed. Ultimately, the consensus emerged that according to the first scenario, the work on Udhampur-Katra and Kajigund-Baramulla could be completed by 2002. And the difficult Katra-Kajigund terrain could be completed by 2007. But for this, funds are essential. For the second scenario, in my capacity as a Member, my view is that, the basic question is that . . .

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ (Baramulla) : I only want to say that your aim is to link Udhampur and Srinagar by rail. There is not confined to linking Baramulla to Kajigund only. We do not want rail link to the valley. We want to take the railways towards the valley.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I have placed three facts before you, so that the entire House and through it, the nation can be informed. As this terrain is difficult, the cost of this project is Rs. 2500 crores. I have informed about the resources crunch. If the railway is to fund it from its own resources, it would take time. Therefore, we have made a provision of Rs. 120 crores in our budget. We have provided Rs. 100 crores for this project. However, expected progress is only possible if additional financial assistance is provided from outside the (railway) budget. This view will have to be accepted. Government is also seized of this matter. And, on behalf of the railways I have placed this view at the appropriate forum.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : I thank you for making a provision in the budget. But, as long as you do not have funds and you do not form Kashmir Express Corporation, rail to there is not possible.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I am coming to that only. You have asked about the expenditure details. I will tell you in one minute. Rs. 37 crore were spend in acquiring the land from Udhampur to Katra junction. On earthwork and minor bridge work Rs. 2.25 crores were spent. Rs. 27 lakh has been spent on major bridge initially. Rs. 39.52 crore have already been spent and target for Rs. 25 crore has been fixed for further expenditure. About Rs. 69 crores will be spent on land item in Kajigund-Baramulla rail segment by the end of this financial year and next year it will be to the tune of Rs. 60 crores for the same. . . .
(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Shri Nitish Ji I think there would be no problem if you address the chair and do not address Soz ji.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : At the very beginning I have stated that Kashmir enjoys, a special status and so the same has been given to Shri Soz ji also.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : Kashmir must figure in the rail map. That's why I am sayings it.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : If you are not satisfied with what I have pointed out so much. What can I do?

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : I am expressing my satisfactions.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : This time we will spend Rs. 75 crore. You have demanded for setting up Kashmir Railway Express Corporation like Konkan. Konkan Corporation was set up very quickly by collecting money from private sectors. Four states, apart from Centre, participated in it and people bought bonds to raise funds for its completion. Money was collected from all sides and thus, the work was completed in a few years. But now we have to pay back that money now. It doesn't matter whether you invest money on your own or you invest it by borrowing it from the market. If you do borrowing, it means, you must have to pay back it sooner or later. Sometimes it becomes somewhat difficult to pay back if since we are getting money from the market at the exorbitant rate of interest. Therefore, it would be better if we consider the matter very seriously. You are well aware of one section of the Konkan railway. Its other section was completed soon. In the mean time industry could not be installed there and it is not the fault of railways at all. Now railways are facing and bearing all the burden cropped up during that completion. And so far as your demand is concerned no consideration has been made yet about corporation. If you say, we will examine and explore the possibilities in this connection. But you, tell me who will buy the bonds, to where the money will come from and how the schedule will be made for repayment?

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ : If your intention is clear do collect the money and extend the railways to Kashmir.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Now we will send the written answers to the questions to all those Members who have raised regarding their respective constituencies. I would conclude my speech mentioning merely two or three things.

Our first attempt would be to attract other goods traffic and the second one would be to check leakages. We will also endeavour to gather more resources by some other means. Keeping this thing into mind we are going to give on lease the front S.L.R. of the luggage carriers of the passenger trains through which the income of the railways will go up. This will enable Railways to earn revenues. Thus, we are going to take so many steps like introducing parcel trains and so on. As I have already stated that we are trying to attract other goods traffic by initiating some many such measures.

We will also try to attract traffic through aggressive marketing. If any shortcomings prevail in the core sectors, we are hopeful that economy will continue to pick up them and we would succeed in achieving the target of transportation of goods.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, many hon'ble Members have discussed flaws. It is no denying that the scope of flaws and draw backs exists in railways and it is going on frequently. First of all flaws are in weigh bridges. As per record railways get low carriage charges against heavy weight goods by manipulating weight during the course of luggage bookings. Low weight is shown in records. These all misappropriations and manipulations are draw-backs to which we need to pay attention and on which we have also held discussions. We are going to set electronic machines for this purpose. The number of weigh bridges is more in the in private sectors that that of in railways.

We are going to take a decision on that. We will construct more way-bridges to check it midway, so that points of leakage may be rectified.

The other case pertains to scrap-disposal. I have asked the officials of the Railway-Board to discuss about it. Generally, such complaints are made and the hon'ble Members also ask . . . (Interruptions) you have just said and you have kept on saying it repeatedly already. We will try to step forward to stop the leakage in the case of scrap disposal. We want this leakage should stop and we will seriously consider the suggestions from the Hon'ble Members on this matter. It is imperative for us to think, how to stop this leakage.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, the defamatory corrupt-practices are being put to an end. Many Hon'ble Members talked of recruitment. We have brought out reformation in recruitment of group-C. We can now claim through the experience of about a year that now there is no possibility of blunders or mismanagements in the written examination and we have got success in our experiment. A part of the duplicate carbon copy of the examination answer-sheet is sent to the Railway Recruitment Board, Delhi. We have provided right to the applicants to register their complaints. If some complaint is lodged, we can manage to get the copies checked here also. Therefore, due to this arrangement we have not received any complaints as yet in pertinence to irregularities in the written-examination. Nevertheless, if any complaints are registered, if any unfair means is adopted at any centre, we strictly manage even to cancel the examination. By this, we are getting successful in the crusade against irregularities in the written examination.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, as far as the question of conducting interviews is concerned, I assure that a clerk to work needs no interviews. We have provided a 15% part but still it is a subjective evaluation, it has no objectivity. You may like anyone, I someone else. One might like it anyway one prefers it or one may be made to do so. Then, we see that neither we would ever let this happen nor the officer of railways in Chairman's seat . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK (Jaipur) : What about medical examination?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : How can we give up medical examination? Medical test is a must. They have to give medical test.

[Translation]

Apart from the personality test, we have made a ruling accordingly in most of the other categories. For the safety categories, psychological test is essential and so that is very much there; yet we have abolished the interview-pattern where there it is not generally necessary. But medical test is a must. There is no question about it, no appointment without it. When we succeeded in the field of Group-C then we tried to handle Group-D. In this Group-D, Hon'ble Members used to write letters to us and we responded. But we watched that vacancies and demands were not suitably met with the proper appointments. Railways-officials were also telling about many applications and troubles, we also considered it and decided to sort Group-D out from the realm of zonal Railways and command it to the Railway Recruitment Board by

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establishing a cell for it in the latter. This cell would continue to work for years for the appointments in Group-D. It will also be entitled to publish advertisements for vacancies in the 'Employment News' and other bulletins. It will hold an examination as similar to say, eighth standard or like that and that will be abided by the consistent medical fitness. For instance, for recruitment for the post of a gangman. The applicant must have to over slippers it is but natural to the demand of the duty. So, the eligibilities for the medical recruitment would be fulfilled. The result of the written-examination would be prepared on the basis of merit and the appointment will be direct. We have taken decisions to strike off any possibility of any kind of favouritism of irregularities in the recruitments under Group-D. The guidelines in this matter are shortly going to be issued.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, in this way we are trying to reform the procedure of recruitment. Those persons who top the sports activities, who are winners or secure top positions in the national games, we offer them jobs. Besides this, the remaining quota of sports is filled by way of open competition arranged among the sportsmen. The recruitments on the compassionate-grounds, are solely made on the basis of compassion only. Those aforesaid ones are not included in this. We are reviewing this also.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon'ble Minister has not made any inclusion of Kho-Kho in this. Kho-Kho is a national game.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : It will be done.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : When? We have had a discussion on that. A decision was taken two years ago that it would be included, but it was not done. Please include it.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I feel that Mr. Rawale rarely lives at Delhi and more at Mumbai. I, therefore, request him to come to me during his stay at Delhi. It will be done then.

SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Sir, please include it in that.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : You meet me. I have understood the thing. I will find out for the matter.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, some more issues have been raised here. One of them is wagon-procurement. The Standards set for wagon-procurement last time, it has come to our notice that they are not fetching the expected loading output and because of it we have gone into a position of less earning-higher expenses. Not at my level, but at their

own level the Railway Board defined a cut in that. When it came to me, I renewed it and decided that the cut effected into the wagon-procurement process, will be controlled by using the option-clause and the previous orders shall be restored. This will result in the form of line of supply-against the order, in the new financial-year. But we have a slightly lower rate in the new tender. The payment will be made against the aforesaid rate and in the new year. We have taken this decision as I have mentioned, and are going to restore the order in regard to wagon-procurement. The payment will be made in the financial year. Thus, we are going to restore the orders in the matter of wagon-procurement.

Mr. Speaker Sir, apart from the development schemes mentioned in the budget; we have sanctioned many other new projects. We try to make efforts to work according to the right procedure. But, for certain reason, we have had to include some projects in this year's budget too. Still, some main projects like doubling the gauge and electrification, are inseparable. They are already pending, so I have sanctioned them through the appropriate authority itself. In some cases, all this is possible at the Ministerial level and sometimes, at Cabinet-level. In this way, we have sanctioned 16 projects of new lines, 6 of gauge-conversion, 1 of doubling and 3 projects of electrification in a limited time-frame. Some projects have already been there for a long period, about which the hon'ble Members have pointed out that Rs. 1000 crores have been sanctioned. We can not spend a single paise without Cabinet's approval. So, we have forwarded them for approval. The sign of asterisk printed along which shows the complications are there and we are trying to solve out those complications.

[English]

SHRI RAMACHANDRA MALLICK : Mr. Minister just now you said that you cannot give a single pie. That being so, how can you give rupees one thousand?

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Because it is not a clear project. Therefore we have sanctioned one thousand rupees. We have acknowledged that in the white paper. Read it thoroughly.

[English]

SHRI RAMACHANDRA MALLICK : I know about it. I am a Senior Member.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I would like you to please ask Shiv Shanker ji and Manoranjan Bhaktaji about this, who

are sitting by you. It is not appropriate to ask out everything standing in order to register one's presence in records . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI DATTA MEGHE (Wardha) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the farmers of Narkhera and Amrawati have yet not got their money . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Speaker, Sir, many Honourable Members demand of Trains stoppages. If you stop a train for two minutes at a station, it prolonge its running-time by 8 to 10 minutes.

Many Members have complained that earlier the train used to reach in so and so time but now the trains take much time to reach the destinations. But both things are not possible at the same time. Either you take stoppage of the train or the arrival at destination in short time. Both things are not possible at the same time. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI DATTA MEGHE : All people demand that the trains do not stop for long distance in the district places. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Those who want stoppage ask to give stoppage. . . . (Interruptions)

[English]

DR. RAVI MALLU : Even if there is a little delay they must be stopped in the larger interests of the passengers. . . . (Interruptions)

SHRI RAMA CHANDRA MALLICK : Rajdhani Express starts from Bhubaneshwar, with one stop at Cuttack and finally terminates at Howrah.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Why are you standing again and again when I have mentioned your problem while referring your name. Those who have to travel long distance object as to why so much time is taken. Both these aspects have contradictions. In spite of that, stoppages are being given and are given on the demand of M.Ps but you should not criticise about the increase in the time taken by trains because the time taken increases due to it.

This year has been declared as 'The Passengers Year'. We are making plan for it so that passenger services could be improved. As I have mentioned that thirty selected trains would be so upgraded that there may not be left any complaint pertaining to food and refreshment or anything else. We are making arrangements for it. We will make an model station in every division so that the people feel that all types of facilities are available from passenger amenities point of view. This way I am about to do many types of work in the passenger year. A great decision has

been taken. In the first stage, we would make four metropolitan cities free from touts. It is not an ordinary step. For it, moral support and cooperation from all people would be needed because the image of the railways is bad. I would like to serve the passengers in the passenger year effectively. I am happy to tell that I had made many announcements last year and I am approaching in a position towards implementing them. Last time, I had made an announcement about use of handloom Khadi and Kullad. I am reaching in a position to implement it. Many a Members had told me that polythene is still in use but for it complete preparation has to be done and options have to be found out. For this, I am doing every thing. Besides, I will not stop here. Bidi and Cigarettes would not be available for sale on the railway platform from 5th June.

So far as cleanliness is concerned, it is also a point to be decided. Firstly, a major part to this work was privatised later on it was stopped. It is being seen now that those who do not want to work, are appointed safai Karamcharis. They get Safai work done by somebody else. Once again a decision would have to be taken because it will be a hard decision. Again many allegations will be levelled against me. I, therefore, want to take any decision by taking you into my confidence. You think seriously as to what should be done in this matter? When this matter will go to the standing Committee and reach back and when the budget will be passed in the second and final stage, I will get some feed back from your side on these subjects at that time. We will then be able to take some decision in regard to the cleanliness policy because the railways is facing problems. Neither any recruitment is being done nor it is being got done privately. As a result cleanliness is suffering. We are feeling that every body is facing trouble. I had reviewed it because it is passenger year. We want that every thing should run smoothly and we want to go ahead. Bio-degradable and other such material should be used in the railways so that the people could get work. The persons of K.V.I.C. are coming to give presentation on 17th March. The persons from Khadi and Village Industry are coming. We are trying to call the persons of handloom sector on the same day so that they could give their presentation. Besides, I have got an opportunity to go abroad. I got an opportunity to see the railways there. I saw in Switzerland a jute curtain in the train. We are producing jute and it is being used as curtain in Switzerland. We imitate. We have seen there that a thing produced here is being used there. We have asked the officers of the railway board that we should learn something from them.

If we use such things then jute growers will be benefitted and jute based small scale industry will get an impetus. Bamboo is grown in the eastern region in

[Shri Nitish Kumar]

abundance. There is no need to use plastic baskets. People will get employment if bamboo baskets are used in the offices. We want to take such steps and we are hopeful of your co-operation, in this endeavour. We are thankful to you for your cooperation, support and love. The problems of all the hon. Members . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali) : Why didn't you tell about Vaishali?

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Mr. Raghuvansh, you have already said half of the thing. The survey at Vaishali is in progress and infact Buddhist circuit cannot be completed without Vaishali. I accept this thing. . . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : It is a historical place for three reasons.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I accept this that Buddhist circuit cannot be completed without Vaishali. Therefore, I have ordered a survey to connect it from less distance. Its report has been submitted or is about to submit. We would move forward in the direction of its processing. . . *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : Leave aside, what is going to happen.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : We take up those projects which we have mentioned and we do not talk about other projects.

[English]

SHRI RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH : If there is a will, there is a railway.

[Translation]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I respect the feelings of Mr. Manoranjan Bhakta. We will thouroughly review it. I would also like to travel with you to Andamans. Railway officials will also accompany to have on the spot assessment of the difficulties. Your demand is genuine. Andaman is a part of our country and rail facilities should be provided there also. Your opinion is quite correct. . . . *(Interruptions)* Questions have been raised about the zone and the contradictory statements have been outpoured. So, I would not like to react in this respect. The decisions pending about the jurisdiction of the zones are emotional questions. The questions related to the headquarters and jurisdiction of a zone are emotional questions. Everything has to be taken care of before taking any decision. This has resulted in delay about the jurisdiction of the zones. It will be our endeavour to see that the questions related to its fixation and other issues are settled soon.

A few Members have raised the issue of Salem Division. The proposal of formation of Salem Division alongwith three-four other divisions is under active consideration of the Railways. The decision has not been taken so far. It will be possible to take any decision on these issues after dwelling upon everything. Therefore, I am not in position to tell you anything in final at present. I conclude with these words thanking the Members participating in the debate.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Resolution regarding approval of recommendations made in the Second Report of the Railway Convention Committee, 1998, moved by Shri Nitish Kumar to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That this House approves the recommendations made in Paragraphs 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42 contained in the Second Report of the Railway Convention Committee 1998 appointed to review the rate of dividend payable by the Railway Undertaking to General Revenues etc., which was presented in Lok Sabha on 24.2.1998, with modifications as proposed in the Revised Estimates of 1998-99 to the appropriations to the Depreciation Reserve Fund and Pension Fund, covered by Paragraphs 38 and 39 of the recommendations."

The motion was adopted.

✓ MR. SPEAKER : Shall now put the Demands for Grants on Account (Railways) for 1999-2000 to the vote of the House.

The question is :

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India, on account, for or towards defraying the charges during the year ending the 31st day of March, 2000, in respect of the heads of demands entered in the second column thereof against Demand Nos. 1 to 16."

The motion was adopted.

22.00 hrs.

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1998-99 to vote :

"That the Supplementary sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the

Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1999, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the second column thereof.

Demand Nos. 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13 and 16."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : I shall now put the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) for 1996-97 to vote :

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1997, in respect of the following Demands entered in the second column thereof :

Demand Nos. 4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13 and 16."

The motion was adopted.

22.01 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) VOTE
ON ACCOUNT BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the consolidated Fund of India for the services of a part of the financial year 1999-2000 for the purposes of Railways.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of a part of the financial year 1999-2000 for the purposes of Railways."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I introduce the Bill.**

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India

for the services of a part of the financial year 1999-2000 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of a part of the financial year 1999-2000 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the House shall take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is :

"That Clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That Clause 1, the enacting Formula and the Title Stand Part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

22.04 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 2 BILL*

[English]

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1998-99 for the purposes of Railways.

* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II Section-2 dated 13.3.99.

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II Section-2 dated 13.3.99.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1998-99 for the purposes of Railways."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I introduce the Bill.**

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1998-99 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain further sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1998-99 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : Now, the House shall take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is :

"That Clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title Stand Part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : Sir, I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

22.07 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) BILL*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR) : I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 1997 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 1997 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I introduce the Bill.**

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I beg to move :

"That the Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 1997 in excess of the amounts granted for those services and for that year, be taken into consideration."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the Bill to provide for the authorisation of appropriation of moneys out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the amounts spent on certain services for the purposes of Railways during the financial year ended on the 31st day of March, 1997 in excess of

* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary Part-II Section-2 dated 13.3.99.

**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

the amounts granted for those services and for that year, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : The House will now take up clause-by-clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is :

"That Clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill.

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

The Schedule was added to the Bill.

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title Stand Part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI NITISH KUMAR : I beg to move :

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. SPEAKER : The question is :

"That the bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

MR. SPEAKER : The House stands adjourned to meet again on Monday, the 15th March, 1999 at 11.00 a.m.

22.09 hrs.

*The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Monday, 15th March, 1999/
Phalgun 24, 1920 (Saka)*