

tution of learning equal in status with other universities in the country.

The Committee that was constituted by the University Grants Commission for examining the Jamia Millia's demand for recognition as a full-fledged University has rightly recommended that the Jamia Millia Islamia should be given the status of a full-fledged University.

I would, therefore, urge the Union Minister of Human Resource Development to take immediate steps to grant the status of a full-fledged University to Jamia Millia Islamia. Needless to say that recognition of Jamia Millia Islamia as a full-fledged University will by itself be a tribute to the memory of its founding-fathers and it will also be a step towards strengthening nationalist and secularist traditions.

Thank you.

12.18 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET 1988-89—
GENERAL DISCUSSION

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The House will now take up the next item—General Discussion on the Budget (Railways) for 1988-89. I want to inform the House that the time allotted for this item is 8 hours. Since most of the Members of this House would be interested to participate in the debate, I request the Members to be very brief in making their speeches. They can make the relevant points....

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You please restrict your Party Members according to the time allotted.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : All the Parties have their own time.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please you stick according to that. Don't demand more time. That is the thing.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Therefore, I request you to restrict your Members according to the time allotted.

Now, Dr D N. Reddy to speak.

SHRI D.N REDDY (Cuddapah) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister for Railways, the other day, took the House by storm by an unprecedented imposts to yield Rs 622 crores and Rs. 358 crores from passenger traffic, and Rs. 264 crores from freight charges. A steep increase in passenger traffic charges in all classes and in freight rates has been proposed in the budget for the year 1988-89. In sharp contrast to last year's hikeless exercise, this budget proposes an increase of 10% and 6% in both the resources of passenger and freight charges, higher reservation rates and 50 N.P. raise in the cost of even platform tickets. The announcement of fare increase by the hon. Minister came, somewhat, as an anti-climax after the House had been provided with glowing tributes to the Department's performance during the current year. The Government has been insensitive increasing the railway passenger fares and freight rates...

SHRI H.A DORA (Srikakulam) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, his name is Dr. D N. Reddy. But in the Television, it is shown as "B N. Reddy". Another Member by name of Shri B. N. Reddy is there in the C.P I. (M) Party.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : That will be corrected. Don't worry.

SHRI D. N. REDDY : May I intervene? It has been committed so many times. I have written a personal letter to the Secretary-General about that and I hope it will be corrected. (Interruptions). The same mistake is being repeated often and often.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : That will be corrected. I have already told you about it. Don't worry.

SHRI D.N. REDDY : Sir, the announcement of fare increase by the hon. Minister came as an anti-climax after the House had been provided with glowing tributes to the Department's performance in the current year. The Government has been insensitive to the increasing railway passenger fares and freight rates at a time when the rate of inflation is already high. How else can one explain the onslaught of the Hon. Minister on various users and even on raising the platform ticket charges and not excluding those who go to station to see off or receive their kith and kin?

The Indian Railways are the biggest public enterprise in the country, Asia's largest and the second largest in the whole world managed by single management. It plays a vital role in the economic development of the country and improvement of industries. Every man and woman, rich or poor, is affected by how the Railway Department performs in the country.

The Railway's share in the various plan outlays dropped from 15% in the Second and Third Plan to 5.23% in the Sixth Plan. It was only in the Seventh Plan that the Government recognised the importance and raised it to 6.9%. This should be increased further. We have been asking for it every year when the Budget is presented to the House, that the plan outlay must be increased.

During the last 25 years, the gross traffic receipts increased from Rs. 547 crores in 1960-61 to Rs. 6,428 crores in 1985-86, or on an average of 11.2% per annum. On the other hand, the working expenses went up at a faster pace from Rs. 358 crores to Rs. 5,823 crores in 1985-86 at the rate of 11.8% per annum during the same period. During the decade ending 1978-79, the increase in fares and freight averaged Rs. 39 crores per year. In the subsequent eight years ending 1986-87, this average worked out to over Rs. 320 crores.

Yet, year after year, in every successive budgets, the respective Railway Ministers have substantially raised the passenger fares and freight charges except during 1977-78, 1978-79 and 1987-88 to mobilise additional resources.

The manner in which the Government was trying to mobilise resources indicated that we are going to be in a perpetual state of resource gap and the higher the increase in prices, the higher will be the resource mobilisation. It will further place the industry in a most disadvantageous position. The growth rate targets of export will suffer. In the domestic market too, it will go against the interest of the indigenous industries having multiplier effect in escalating the cost. The Railway Minister's claim that relief is given to the weaker sections and exemption for some essential commodities is of peripheral nature only. The overall effect of freight increase is bound to be felt by the weaker sections in general. That the Railway Minister has exempted some articles is poor consolation, as these are already bearing fairly heavy freight charges.

The budget figures for the railways provided by the Hon. Minister showed the surplus of Rs. 101.99 crores. In 1987-88, it showed a surplus of Rs. 69 crores and in 1988-89, it showed a surplus of Rs. 28 crores. Sir, if the figures are wrong, I stand to be rectified. The Hon. Minister may correct me. Thus, there is a surplus budget on the one hand, and increasing the burden on the people on the other. May I ask, how are you justified in showing the surplus budget on one hand, and increased freight charges on the other. Why should you raise the price of commonman's fares and freight?

We are informed that the Railway Finance Corporation has raised a loan of Rs. 730 crores in the open market in 1987-88. This would be about Rs. 800 crores in 1988-89. It is not a fact that nearly half of this budget goes to the management of the staff? We do not grudge for paying for their welfare activities. But there is over-staffing, misuse of funds, human negligence and absolutely no response to the repeated requests to make better the passenger amenities and reduce the fares, so that it is within the reach of the commonman. What is questionable about the regular increases that we see in the costs of services provided by the Government and its agencies to the people is not the increase in themselves. People would be willing to pay all that is really needed

to obtain the needed services of the highest possible quality. After all, we must pay for all that we consume and use. The real problem is that the Government controlling as it does the main levers of economy, feels free to increase rates, prices and taxes as and when it chooses. It does not ask itself whether everything possible has been done to improve productivity and effectiveness of a service provided before increasing its cost to the consumer. They find the easy way out to increase the prices.

Year after year in general there has been a deficit financing, increase of prices of steel and iron, indiscriminate external and internal borrowing and taxes on the middle class. The economy is not improved by vast flight of capital to other countries, parallel economy with the help of black money in the country and evasion of taxes by big business houses. These things have all already affected the economy and led to inflation. As a compulsive borrower, the Government is mortgaging the economic future of the country.

Upon this I would like to elucidate that next year our country is going to pay the interest for the external and internal borrowings upto Rs. 14000 crores—more than what we are spending on the Defence in one year. By the end of the century the Government will have to pay Rs. 50000 crores as the interest on the amount borrowed externally and internally. It is not my figures, it has been given by the Reserve Bank of India after making a survey. So, we can take it as the authentic figures. With this indiscriminate borrowing, a stage may come when to pay the interest we have to borrow from others! That is termed as debt trap.

The Hon. Minister of this Government are leading us to a debt trap by the time this country will go into the 21st century. They are saying that by 21st century there will be health for all, food for all and everything for all, but this is what they are doing. Unfortunately very few of our countrymen know the exact economic situation of the Government. Just a perk here and there, they are fully satisfied. And always the Government has an eye on the next election, so they give a little

perk here and there. But what has the Government to say about these debts? Who is going to pay the interest—Rs. 50000 crores by the time when we set into the 21st century? How can you pay back the whole amount? So, we are already in a debt trap and they are going to trap the whole country in the course of a few years.

The Government, between November and January, raised the prices of quite a number of prime materials to collect around Rs. 1500 crores of additional resources. And now comes the hike in Railway prices. Instead of cutting down unnecessary and extravagant expenditure and using properly the funds, the Government is resorting to inflationary measures in the name of modernisation. The excuse given for cruelly plundering the people through these inflationary measures is the drought which has been there in various parts of the country. Natural calamities are a very common feature in our country and in every budget year after year the Government has met them with wholesome plunder of the people. The real misdeeds of spending the poor people's money are missed.

The recent rise in the cost of coal and steel has been reported as responsible for the increase in maintenance of railways which has in turn necessitated increased fares. This clearly shows that it is a vicious circle round and round affecting the common man. The present hikes will further demand increase of DA to its employees. While the organised sector will get the increased cost of living neutralised by DA and other perks, the unorganised sector in our country stands to suffer and they form more than 90% of the people. Has the Hon. Minister thought about all these things before he announced hikes in the rates in the last budget?

The Railways can easily get a sizeable revenue if they were to tone up the administration, cut down wasteful expenditure and eliminate human negligence—the cause of many an accident. Instead of taking steps in this direction the hon. Minister has chosen to throttle the poor passengers—a case of robbing the Peter and paying to Paul. We do not mind paying D.A. or other welfare amenities to the

[Shri D.N. Reddy]

staff and I must congratulate the hon. Minister for giving some benefits, for example to the brave boys and poor widows of soldiers. We do not mind paying a little provided relative amenities are provided. Things have not improved absolutely. Travel is very uncomfortable. I have been a member of the Railways Consultative Committee and we used to discuss with the hon. Minister quite often and I have been in correspondence with him also. We have been at a great disadvantage. Scindiaji has a very nice way of dealing with things and the letters also are written in a very very cordial way. It is very difficult to get annoyed with him. He has a very innocent smile and very few complain against him.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : Our Deputy Minister has also a very sweet smile.

SHRI D.N. REDDY : Naturally we have been at a disadvantage all these days but hereafter we have to get annoyed with him and take a more stiff stand both in the meetings and in our correspondence on account of recent budget proposals. So I am only requesting him to bear with us and see things are taken more seriously because there are so many difficulties that the country is facing.

This attitude of plundering the passengers and paying to the staff must stop and there must be a way out so that both should live in peace.

Another glaring factor is that Southern States are ignored in many respects. I am saying it with a heavy heart and I do not want to encourage regionalism but still it is so glaring that it is very difficult to ignore it and, as such, I have to say it on the Floor of the House. While new railway lines are opened and new trains are introduced in the North some of the existing services in the South are cancelled for one reason or the other. I am a member of the Estimates Committee. The Estimates Committee has taken two subjects for discussion this year—one is passenger

amenities and the other is working of the nationalised banks. As far as passengers amenities are concerned we had an opportunity to visit many of the railway stations both in the North and South.

AN HON. MEMBER : He cannot disclose the proceedings of the Estimates Committee. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI D.N. REDDY : I have great respect for my hon. colleague. He is also a member of the Estimates Committee. I am not going to disclose any proceedings of the Estimates Committee. Please bear with me for a minute (*Interruptions*)

We visited many places and to tell you the truth there is such a lot of difference in the upkeep of the railway stations, their management and passenger amenities. I do not grudge. You must make it very well but my only request is that you must look after other regions also. I do not say Andhra especially but in the South we have not seen even one railway station which equals the upkeep of these stations like Gwalior, Bhopal, Bombay or Varanasi.

AN HON. MEMBER : It is Railway Minister's station.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Would you like to add Gorakhpur now ?

SHRI D N. REDDY : Gorakhpur probably. I am just now coming You can expect it. I am only looking forward to get a representative in our Ministry from the South. Unfortunately it is not happening. As a matter of fact, there have been some complaints also when respective Ministers were in charge of the Department, for example, Malda. I am not attributing any motives at all. Probably anybody on our side in their place would have done the same thing. So, I am just citing an example. Why other stations should not be kept so clean and so developed ? (*Interruptions*).

We do not grudge a good railway system in the North. But we plead that equal attention should be given to the other regions of the country.

Now, I have got a number of demands that have been discussed and promised on the floor of the House or on the floor of the Consultative Committee but they have not been taken care of. I would request the hon. Minister to look into this so that effective action may be taken.

One is Vizag-Delhi direct fast train. It is a long-felt need I think, the hon. Minister has already promised I only want to know from which date he is going to start this new train.

A super fast train connecting Coimbatore and Bangalore is needed. I am sure my hon. colleagues from Tamil Nadu will be very happy—whether they are in Jayalalitha group or Janaki group, I don't mind—with me for raising this issue on their behalf, (*Interruptions*) They have been demanding for this place for quite a long time. Still it is not yet taken up.

Then a super fast train connecting Bangalore and Vizag running via Guntakal, Cuddapah, Nellore and Vijayawada. I personally have often raised this issue. I got a reply also from the hon. Minister, either 'no funds' or 'no coaches'. It is a very common point which I receive in the correspondence every time I raise a point.

In my constituency, between Yerraguntla, that is about 20 miles from Cuddapah, to Nandyal in Kurnool district, a railway line was surveyed about 15 years ago when the present Governor of Karnataka was Minister or Minister of State or some such thing here. It was surveyed at that time. We had great hopes that it would be taken up. But that has been shelved completely. I would request the Minister to please look into it so that it is taken up.

The Bangalore-Hyderabad line must be completely converted into broad-gauge.

The Guntakal-Secunderabad express now starts from Guntakal at about, I think, 8 P.M. and reaches Hyderabad at about 5.30 in the morning. It can as well start from Dharmavaram or Hindupur in the heart of Anantapur district so that half of the district is also benefited by that. It is a

very easy thing, Sir. This is a very important point I would request the hon. Minister to look into this. The train can reach Hyderabad at the same time. In Guntakal, there are a number of railway people including the General Branch Manager. They are blocking this change so that they have the benefit of all the reservations. The hon. Minister will have to take a personal interest and see that the train starts from the heart of Anantapur and not at the fringe of the district.

The delay in laying a second railway line between Renigunta and Guntakal in the South-Central Railways is there. It was initiated about 15 years back—a distance of about 309 kilometres—at an estimated cost of Rs. 40 crores. It was expected to be completed within 5 years from 1973. However, the work has not progressed for want of allocation of funds resulting in the escalation of costs. If the present situation continues, the double line may not be completed for another ten years. This is an example of how the South is not taken care of. Why should it take 15 years to complete a double line of about 300 kms ?

The Navajivan Express through Cuddapah which has been diverted via Khajipet should be restored via Cuddapah. A number of letters have been received by me from my constituency. I have also written to the Railway Minister and the reply was as usual, a very very courteous note with no result. I would request him that Navajivan Express should pass through Cuddapah.

In East Godavari, regarding revival of Kakinada-Kotipalli railway line, the infrastructure is ready and everything is there. ONGC drilling in Krishna-Godavari basin is going on and hence the importance of this line. If it is allowed, it will not only be beneficial to the public but also to the drilling authorities.

Hundreds of employees working in the wagon repair shop in Guntapalli near Vijayawada are suffering for want of city compensatory allowance. This should be attended to.

[Shri D.N. Reddy]

No. 17/18 Madras-Delhi-Jammu Janata Express and No. 37/38 Madras-Calcutta Express, now running twice weekly, should be made into a daily train. In addition to this, two or three trains have been completely abolished. I would like the hon. Minister to see to it.

Last year, Rs. 17.43 crores was spent on passenger amenities. This year about Rs. 18 crores will be spent. Yet, overcrowding in reserved compartments, non-punctuality of trains, lack of proper service is the result.

We are informed in the Budget Speech that a Directorate of Passenger amenities will be formed. This may not be of much help. A Railway Reforms Committee was formed and recommended some points for implementation. We do not know either the composition of the Committee or the points recommended and whether they are implemented or not. I want that the Report of Reforms Committee to be laid on the Table.

After all, the taxes are borne by the public, the Centre wants that the States should bear the expenditure on suburban trains, over-bridges and new railway lines and the shifting of railway gate in Kamalapuram, i.e., my constituency—I had written a letter to the hon. Minister and I have got the reply with me here and I will hand it over to him at the end of the speech. It is very small problem. The public want that the railway gate should be shifted towards the platform, that is, in front of the signal and probably, it may not cost more than a few thousands. Even for that, I have received a reply that the State should have to bear the expenditure. I will pass on the letter to you. I request you to look into it.

Railway economy is not sound. You are mainly depending upon external and internal borrowings and raising freights and passenger services periodically. There is no determined effort by the Government to check wastage and extravagance. On the contrary, over the last eight years, the Central Government's non-plan expendi-

ture had increased at an annual compound rate of 18 per cent. They have been preaching to all the States to contain expenditure and yet the Central Government has been increasing the non-plan expenditure at the rate of 18 per cent.

The hike in the rate of platform tickets and season tickets affect the poorest of the poor. You must withdraw these immediately. I am not talking of the first class passengers or the AC passengers. One complaint which my colleague was just now telling is that the first class coaches are very dirty and the toilet conditions are very bad. In all the meetings we have been pressing for cleanliness, but no attention seems to have been paid to it. On the other hand, charges are going higher and higher. The reason why I am not speaking about the first class and ACC is that if I cannot afford to travel by those classes, I can travel by second class. As a matter of fact, I feel more comfortable and more homely in the second class. But if I cannot afford even to travel by second class, where am I to go! My emphasis, therefore is that you must look to the amenities for the second class passengers first, whether it is toilet, food or other things.

Then, the platform ticket has been raised from Re 1 to Rs 1.50; fifty per cent increase. You have absolutely no justification for this. It must be reduced immediately.

Lastly, I have only to repeat what Mahatma said during the pre-independence days when the Congress party came to rule some of the States. He wrote in Harijan that whenever we have to pass a legislation or an Act, we must see how far it benefits and affects the poorest of the poor people and then go ahead. Of course, Mahatma and his principles have been forgotten by the present rulers. I do not think in Doon school they teach Mahatma or his principles. The great democrat of our country, Jawaharlal Nehru, proudly called himself as the first servant of India. Here, what do we see? They are not rulers but super rulers. Most of the things they say or do not show that they are the first servants of our country; they are super rulers of our country.

I would like to sound a note of warning to them. Unless they wake up now, they are going to take this country towards a disaster, as I told you earlier. By the end of the century, you have to pay Rs. 50000 crores as interest. It is not a debt trap, but a country trap.

I strongly object to the proposals made by the hon. Railway Minister. I do not support them and completely oppose the same.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to give some suggestions on the Railway Budget presented in the House by hon. Minister of Railways. My hon friend has just said and I would also like to say that public will not like the increase in the platform ticket from Rs. one to Rs. one and fifty paise. I would urge upon the hon. Minister to withdraw it forthwith and declare it while replying to the discussion. This is a fact that 90 percent population travel in passenger trains. The fare of these passenger trains have also been increased by three rupees which should not have been done. He says that this fare has not been increased for the last seven years but what was the need to increase it at all. In the present times, when the cost of living has become so high and the general public is facing so many problems, it would not be proper to overburden them. We welcome the decision to continue sur-charge with regard to First class. The fare for the second class has been increased from Rs. two to Rs. fifteen. It would be proper to increase the fare of Second Class Mail/Passenger Trains from Rs. 2/- to Rs. 8/- instead of increasing it upto rupees fifteen. We welcome the increase of fare in Air conditioned Chair car and First Class because only rich class would be affected by this. The rates of Parcels, Luggage and Goods Traffic have also been increased by six per cent. These were increased in the last yer Budget also. If the Government is to increase these rates at all, then these should be increased by three per cent only instead six percent because it causes price rise. Now, I would like to say something about my own region. With regard to the Recommendations of the

Reforms Committee, I would like to say that the Meter Gauge Zone, particularly the North Zone should be divided in two Zones.

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Sir, that required money and he is opposed to all resource generation.

[Translation]

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN : As far as money is concerned, I shall suggest to the Government that how money can be better utilised. A decision should definitely be taken on the recommendations of the Reforms Committee. This has been pending for the last five years. There should be two zones by which our area can develop and progress. He has said a word about the modernisation. In this connection, I would like to inform the House that Railway Station of Barmer is fifty years old and except some minor changes, it is almost in the same position. Previously, trains used to run from Barmer to Karachi. There is need for its modernisation. The Government has made a provision for airconditioning of some trains including the Jodhpur Mail, I welcome this decision. Mandora Express runs in time, therefore, airconditioned coaches should be attached with this train also. Rajasthan is such a state where there is no broad gauge line from Jaipur except Meter Gauge Lines. Survey has been completed in this regard but no concrete steps have been taken. There is a need to take concrete steps in this connection. The number of coaches have been fixed in the trains which run from Bikaner to Ahmedabad and from Barmer to Agra Fort but the number of coaches fixed for these trains are not added, therefore, the passengers have to face lot of problems. Therefore, I would like to request that apart from attaching the fixed coaches in these trains there is also a need to increase more Meter Gauge coaches. There is also a need of manufacturing these coaches. We have previously also demanded that a Coach factory may be set up in Jodhpur, Ajmer or anywhere. We have also got an assurance to this effect but no step has been taken in this regard,

[Shri Virdhi Chander Jain]

I would like to say something about Railway Crossings. In this connection, some steps have been taken in our region also and we have been benefited. The arrangements should be made for the maintenance of all these crossings. When I met the hon. Minister, I told him that there are many Sand Duens from Barmer to Balotra but there are no Sand Duens from Balotra to Jodhpur. In the summer season when the dust storms start, these trains cannot move for two-three days. I had requested him to get these Sand Duens removed by Bulldozers and chalk out a programme to plant trees as a result of which there will be greenery, and there would be no sand in that area. Due to sand, the journey from Barmer to Balotra becomes very difficult and therefore, concrete steps should be taken in this regard.

We and our Government have been trying to reopen the Munavan-Khokhrapar route to fulfil the long standing demand of the hon. Members, but the Government of Pakistan is opposed to it. I request the hon. Minister to make the position clear and let us know the latest position about this route in his reply. The reopening of this route will not only benefit the people of Rajasthan, but will also mitigate the difficulties of the people of Maharashtra, Gujarat and many other States. The Government is requested to give due attention to this.

I am concerned about the coal used by the Railways, as a major part of it is pilfered to be used in the homes of Railway Officials. To a large extent only the Railway employees are responsible for the pilferage of coal. If an enquiry is held, the hon. Minister will find that railway coal is used for private purposes by employees and officers. Strict steps need to be taken to check coal pilferage. Unless strict steps are taken against erring officials, the pilferage of railway coal will continue.

I have been noticing for the last eight years that first class coaches added to the trains running between Delhi and Ahmedabad are so old that they give severe jerks to passengers travelling by them. In this

connection, I have written several letters and have also raised the matter in this august House, but till date nothing has been done to remedy the situation and old coaches continue to be used. The hon. Minister should pay attention towards replacement of these coaches and arrange good coaches for these trains without delay for the comfort of these passengers. It is good if they can be repaired, otherwise new coaches should be made available for these trains.

The condition of first class coaches is worse than the condition of second class coaches added to the trains running towards Barmer and Jodhpur. Even window panes are missing from the trains. Railway employees not only pilfer coal from the trains but also remove window panes. I request that keeping in view the climate of Rajasthan, arrangement should be made for fixing window panes in all the trains for the comfort of passengers.

Summer season has already commenced. Therefore, provision of drinking water should be there at every station for the comfort of passengers. I know this facility is available at many important stations but the same is missing at many other stations. Water should also be made available for the comfort of passengers at these stations also.

While concluding, I may request the hon. Minister that till recently a coach was added between Barmer and Rajasthan and the same has been discontinued now. In the larger interest of the people I request that this facility should be restored. With these words I support the Railway Budget.

[English]

PROF. K. V. THOMAS (Ernakulam) : I rise to support the Railway Budget. I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister Shri Madhavrao Scindia and his colleague for running the biggest public sector undertaking in this country very effectively and efficiently.

There was a time when the Indian Railways was called a white elephant eating the national exchequer. Now it has

changed and has become a *Kamadhenu*. The statement of the hon. Minister says that there will be a surplus of Rs 69 crores for 1987-88 after paying Rs 540 crores to the general revenues and after meeting the rise in cost due to post budgeting factors. It shows clearly that Indian Railways is moving fast. The development of Indian Railways also gives an indication as to how fast our nation has moved ahead. A comparison of the picture of Indian Railways as it was in 1940-41 and 1950-51, and as it is now, will show that we have made a tremendous progress.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Prof Thomas, you can continue after lunch-break. We adjourn for lunch now, and will re-assemble at 2 p m.

13.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha adjourned for lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

The Lok Sabha re assembled after Lunch at six minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

{MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER, *in the Chair*}

RAILWAY BUDGET, 1988-89 GENERAL DISCUSSION—Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Prof K V. Thomas can continue. Try to be very brief.

PROF. K.V. THOMAS : Sir, a comparison of Indian Railways between 1940-41 and 1986-87 shows how tremendous growth we have made in Railways. In 1940-41, there were 40,477 miles of running tracks and now it is 61,813 kilo metres. The number of passengers originating in 1940-41 was 623 million and now it has increased to 3,580 million. Sir, everybody wants that there should be expansion and modernisation in Railways. This can be achieved if we get more revenue

The increase of six per cent freight rates is quite reasonable. It has not affected the farmers and the common man as exemptions are given for the transportation of fertilizers, foodgrains, pulses, salt, etc. Similarly, the increase in pas-

senger fares is also very reasonable. For a season ticket holder, the increase is between four and eight rupees. For a second class mail express, upto fifty kilo metres distance, the increase is two rupees and beyond seven hundred and fifty one kilo metres, the increase is just fifteen rupees, i.e. for a passenger who travels from New Delhi to Trivandrum in second class train, the increase is just fifteen rupees. A number of concessions are being given to the recipients of the National Awards, teachers, farmers, sportsmen and so on.

Sr, I would like to make certain suggestions. A new directorate of passenger amenities has been formed. Now the catering service in our passenger trains has to be improved. The quality has already been improved, but more attention should be given to it.

PROF. P J. KURIEN (Idukki) : Sir, in the short circuit TV, it is shown that Mr. Thampan Thomas is speaking. Here, it is Prof. K.V. Thomas speaking. What is the difference? (*Interruptions*)

AN HON MEMBER : 'Thomas' is common.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : From Kerala State, we have got two 'Thomas'es. Their demand may be the same. Whatever Mr Thampan Thomas is going to speak, Mr. K V. Thomas is going to say. It would not make any difference to the Railway Budget discussion.

PROF. K. V. THOMAS : Along with increase in the quality of catering service, the prices also should be controlled at reasonable rates. The toilets both at railway stations as well as in coaches have to be kept clean. The protection that is given to the passengers as well as goods now is not at all satisfactory. It is the Railway Protection Force and the State Police which look after the law and order situation in our railway stations and in trains. But very often, we get news that passengers are being looted and railway goods and property are being looted. A proper examination has to be made how we can have an effective police force comprising of Railway Protection Force as well as State police.

[Prof. K.V. Thomas]

Regarding the season tickets, now the Railway Department has restricted the distance. With the introduction of super-fast and fast trains, the passengers can travel a greater distance. For example, from my constituency, everyday, people go to Trivandrum and come back. They have to take three season tickets. This gives an opportunity to them to resort to illegal ways. As you have introduced new superfast and fast trains, there should not be restriction of distance

States are losing a lot of revenue because sales tax is avoided on goods moved by trains, because there is no proper checking by the concerned States and it is very difficult also.

Coming back to my State Kerala, we have always been neglected. This year out of Rs. 3050 crores, Kerala has got only Rs. 15 crores. Many of the on-going projects are being delayed. Ernakulam-Alleppy line whose estimate is Rs. 55 crores, has got Rs. 7 crores only this year. An amount of Rs. 12 crores is required to be allotted to complete this project. Similarly, for Alleppy-Kayamkular line, which is a very prestigious project, we need about Rs. 23 crores more. For Trichur-Guruvayur broad-gauge line we are given only Rs. 2 crores. A further sum of Rs. 14 crores is needed to complete this project. For many of the on-going projects in Kerala we need more assistance from the Railway Ministry. Similarly, there are some of the works that are taking place in my own constituency. Staff quarters have been allotted for Ernakulam junction. The total cost of the project is Rs. 86 lakhs. But this year only Rs. 15 lakhs have been allotted.

There is a very prestigious train—Himsagar Express—connecting the Himalayas and Cape Comarin. This has been stopped all of a sudden. We do not know how and why it was stopped. No new train in place of Mangla Express has been started. Half of Kerala is living outside Kerala. A large number of people are going outside Kerala and coming to Kerala. But no new trains are being introduced. My humble request to the hon. Minister

is that the problems of my State should be seriously looked into and we should be given proper assistance.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I do not mind any increase in the fares of the second-class passengers but when even basic amenities are not being provided to the second-class passengers, why should there be such a hike in the fares, particularly of the second-class passengers? The Minister has no experience of travelling by train. He rarely travels by train. Even the members of the Railway Board and even the General Manager also travel by plane, not by train. So, they do not have the experience of the hardships being faced by the second-class passengers. All the over-aged coaches are being used. Even those coaches which are without fans and light and without minimum sanitary arrangement are being used today. Since 1952, the passenger traffic has increased by 167 per cent whereas the passenger coaches have been increased only by 125 per cent. So, there is over-crowding in each and every train.

The Railway Ministry now wants to implement the recommendation of the Planning Commission. In their reappraisal, they have suggested to the Railways to shift from passenger traffic to freight traffic and also to exercise restraint in introducing passenger trains so that the valuable fleet of the Railways is able to meet the growing requirements of the freight traffic. The unanimous voice of this House is not reaching the Yojna Bhavan. Every year we have been demanding more allocation for Railways. You can see from the figures that the percentage for Railways is gradually reducing, though in the Seventh Five Year Plan, there is a little increase. While in the First Five Year Plan 11.05 per cent was allocated for Railways and in the Second and the Third Five Year Plans, 15.43 and 15.45 per cent respectively were allocated, in the Seventh Five Year Plan it is only 6.9 per cent. Railways is one of the important infrastructures. Construction of a railway line not only facilitates communication but also generates economic activities in the area where the railway line is constructed. A hundred

years ago, Karl Marx said: "Praise Britishers for one thing—for construction of railway line in India." So, if sufficient allocation is made by the Planning Commission for construction of railway lines, it will not only facilitate communication and transport, but will also generate other economic activities.

There are a number of on-going projects. I do not know how long will these projects remain as on-going projects. There are some projects, of which the foundation stone was laid by the Prime Minister... (*Interruptions*). Not by Jawaharlal Nehru, by Indira Gandhi. For Howrah-Amra and Bargachia-Champadanga railway lines, foundation stone was laid in 1974. The construction of railway line was started and the first phase was completed for Howrah-Amra railway line. The second phase has not been taken up. This year, only one crore rupees as token money have been sanctioned. I don't know why this project has been abandoned? First this project was sanctioned and the first phase of construction work was started and completed. But no further construction work has taken place.

Similarly, for the construction of Balurghat-Eklakhi railway line, the foundation stone was laid by the former Railway Minister, Shri Ghani Khan Chowdhary. The anticipated cost was Rs. 77 crores. This year only Rs. 3 crores have been sanctioned for this project. I do not know after how many years this project will be completed. In the same way, for the construction of Diga-Tamluk railway line, the estimated cost was worked out to Rs. 75 crores. But this year only Rs. 2.90 crores have been allocated. In this way, if the allocation is made, I do not know in how many years these projects will be completed.

DR. PHULRENU GUHA (Contai) : I have calculated it. It will take 22 years.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Then the anticipated cost will escalate and it would be more than Rs 150 crores. Sir, for the construction of Calcutta Metro Railway, foundation stone was laid in the

year 1972 by the late Prime Minister, Shrimati Indira Gandhi. At that time, the estimated cost was worked out to Rs. 142 crores. But already Rs. 450 crores have been spent for this project. This year we expected that some more money would be sanctioned for these projects. But only Rs. 77 crores have been sanctioned. I do not know whether the Calcutta Metro Railway will be completed within the target date fixed.

Sir, six railway projects were sanctioned in the North-Eastern States. None of these projects has been completed so far. In the last Tripura election, the hon. Prime Minister had said in his speech that not only Dharmanghat-Kumarghat railway line construction will be taken up but this will be extended upto Agartala. He did not mention in which year this will be completed. For this railway line, the foundation stone was laid in 1980 by the Prime Minister and for these three projects Rs. 350 crores will be required. This amount of Rs. 350 crores was the total allocation for the new railway lines during the Seventh Five Year Plan. To complete all these on-going projects—there are 20 to 25 on-going projects—about Rs. 2000 crores will be required. I would therefore request the hon. Minister kindly to ask for more fund allocation from the Planning Commission, at least to complete the on-going projects and then take up the construction of new lines.

Sir, the Government of India has made a policy to phase out all the steam locomotives. When the country will enter the 21st century, not a single steel locomotive will be seen on the railway track. But what is the position of the pace of electrification? Only 7000 and odd kilometres of track so far has been electrified out of the 61,000 kilometres of railway track. And I do not know whether the target of the Seventh Five-Year Plan for electrification of 3,500 kilometres with this slow pace of electrification can be achieved.

Sir, the Sixth Five-Year Plan was called a rehabilitation plan and all the over-aged rolling stock and sick railway track were to be replaced by new rolling stock and

[Shri Basudev Acharia]

by track renewals. So, when this rehabilitation plan, the Sixth Five Year Plan of the Railways was started, 14,000 kilometres of track was sick and when this rehabilitation plan of Railways ended, it increased to 21,000 kilometres. When this rehabilitation plan, the Sixth Five-Year Plan of the Railways was started, there were 2,500 railway fractures. When this rehabilitation plan ended, these railway fractures increased to 4,500. And though the target is to wipe out all the sick tracks, to renew all the sick tracks ..

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : If the hon. Member will look to the first three years of the Seventh Plan, he will find that there has been improvement in all these areas.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Yes, I am coming to the Seventh Five-Year Plan. There was some increase in allocation because it was also recommended by the Railway Reforms Committee. They also recommended for more allocation for Depreciation Reserve Fund. The Railway Convention Committee also recommended for more allocation for the Depreciation Reserve Fund and there is some little increase in the Depreciation Reserve Fund, but I cannot say whether during this Seventh Five-Year Plan all this sick track, all this overaged rolling stock can be replaced and you can see in the last two or three years the accidents due to mechanical failures have been increased. The accidents due to human failure have been reduced, but the accidents due to mechanical failure have been increased because of using of overaged rolling stock, using of the sick track

SHRI AZIZ QURESHI (Satna) : And sabotage also,

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : And sabotage also to some extent, but mechanical failure is not because of sabotage.

Sir, already a few thousand steam locomotives have been phased out, have

been abandoned and a number of steam loco sheds have been closed down, which have rendered thousands of workers jobless. Those workers who have been working for 15 or 20 or even 25 years have been doing perennial nature of jobs, though they are contract workers, coal and ash handling workers and transshipment workers. They may be contract workers, but they have been doing perennial nature of jobs for 15 or 20 or 25 years and they belong to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes community. With the phasing out of these steam locomotives, with the closing down of the steam loco sheds, thousands of these workers have become jobless, have been thrown out of employment. I have written several letters to the Minister to absorb them because they have been doing the perennial nature of jobs, the same type of jobs. They are coal and ash handling workers. Now they have been thrown out of employment, with the phasing out of steam locomotive. Since 1972, not a single steam engine has been produced by our locomotive factory.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : You have got three minutes more.

SHRI SAIFUDDIN CHOWDHARY (Katwa) : Why are you so particular ?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : In the Railway Budget especially, the punctuality has to be maintained

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Why don't you bring punctuality in Railways. (*Interruptions*).

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Safety rules have been violated. Today even trains are allowed to go without proper break power, even without break-van and without guards. There are several recommendations, several observations and comments made by the Railway Safety Commission which are not binding on the Railway administration or Railway Board. There are 3 or 4 enquiry committees like Sikri Committee, Kunzru committee etc. They have also made several recommendations. These recommendations have not yet been implemented. Even hundreds of recommendations made by the Railway

Reforms Committee have not been implemented to wipe out or minimise the railway accidents which are still taking place.

The industrial-labour relation is far from satisfactory. Why should there be two recognised union? There should be one union and that should be decided by the secret ballot by the Railway employees. There is no verification of membership of these two unions. It never takes place. These two unions do not represent majority of the Railway employees. There are number of categorical associations. Even there are categorical associations which represent 90% of the members of that category like loco running staff association. Previously the Minister also used to meet the representatives of All India Railway Employees Confederation which is an umbrella organisation of all these so-called unrecognised categorical associations although these unions represent majority of the Railway employees. So, there should be one recognised union and that should be decided by secret ballot. There should not be two unions.

The 10-hour duty for the loco running staff was decided long back. This was stated in this very House by the late Shri Lalit Narain Misra on 13th August, 1973: 10-hour duty would be implemented from signing on to signing off, not from train departure to train arrival. The loco running staff had to wait for 8 long years for its implementation. Then, they started agitation in the year 1981 in January. They went on strike. When this was not implemented, though there was written agreement for 10-hour duty for loco running staff from signing-on to signing-off and not from train departure to train arrival, they were compelled to go on strike. Thousands of these workers were dismissed under 14(2). Break-in service was imposed. Several High Courts of our country passed judgments that before dismissal of an employee, inquiry should be held. The Central Industrial Tribunals of Gauhati, Calcutta, Hyderabad, Bhubaneswar and Ernakulam have maintained that before dismissal, inquiry should be held but no inquiry was held and thousands of workers have been dismissed and railway administration is now preferring appeals in the Supreme Court.

When the running staff ask for relief after ten hours, they are being charge-sheeted. You know there was a serious accident in Morjya Express last year. The driver of the particular train was forced to work for 17 hours although he asked for relief after 10 hours. He was forced to work for 22 hours and there was a serious accident in which about 100 passengers were killed. (Interruptions).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Take rest now. Don't talk too much because you will be tired. Try to be brief. Don't make any accident here also ! Try to wind up.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : I have been asking for the last 4 to 5 years that a train between Dhanbad and Tatanagar to connect a coal town with a steel town should be introduced. There is no direct train from Dhanbad to Tatanagar. I am pleading for Bihar. There is a railway track via Pathardih and Sudamdih and 90% of the track is electrified. With a little investment, a passenger train can be introduced to connect the coal town with the steel town of Bihar. With a small investment that can be done.

As regards Purulia-Kotshila narrow gauge, for how many years I will have to ask for conversion of this narrow gauge line into broad gauge? How much money will be required? Only Rs. 6 crores.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : Until the end of this century.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : When this will be converted into broad gauge, then Purulia will be connected with Bokaro. The return will be 12%. It will be viable if you spend only Rs. 6 crores. This narrow gauge line Purulia-Kotshila which is only 30 KM can be converted into broad gauge and this line can be viable. A number of important trains were withdrawn last year in the month of January and a few were restored after six months when there was some agitation. But a number of trains which were withdrawn have not yet been restored, for example, Mangla Express. Similarly, there was a train connecting Varanasi with Tatanagar via Adra. It was a weekly

[Shri Basudeb Acharia]

Express. It used to pass through Adra. This train was withdrawn and has not yet been restored. Then, the Bankura-Damodar River (BDR) Railwayline was taken over by the Government of India but it has not yet been nationalised. These railwaylines pass through the rural Bengal like Bankura and Burdwan. These railwaylines connect Bankura with Burdwan. Therefore, this should be nationalised. If you cannot convert this into broad-gauge, you can dieselise. The trains can be hauled by diesel-engines. Then, there is a *Bandel-Katwa* double-line which is pending. It should be completed and electrified. Also, there is the *Burdwan-Katwa* narrow-gauge line. The train service on this line should be regulated. If they cannot be converted into broad-gauge, atleast the trains can be hauled by diesel-engines.

Now the problem of casual workers. In the year 1980, Pandit Kamalpathi Tripathi made a commitment here in this House that all casual labourers/workers in the Railways will be regularised. After seven years, still two lakh and twenty thousand casual workers are waiting for regularisation. I do not know for how many years they will have to wait.

I think there is no justification for the hike in the passenger fares and freight charges. In the year 1986, in the month of December, the taper was flattened to collect about Rs. 700 crores. So, I oppose this unjustified hike and I demand that more funds should be allocated by the Planning Commission for the construction of railwaylines and for the completion of on-going projects.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE : Please make the Kanchenjunga Express a daily service.

SHRI BASUDEV ACHARIA : With these words I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI ARVIND TULSHIRAM KAMBLE (Osmanabad) : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I support the Railway Budget presen-

ted by the hon. Railway Minister. I would like to congratulate him for presenting the railway budget keeping in mind the interests of the common man. Railways have not increased the second class fares for the last three years, only now slight increase which does not effect the masses has been made. In the General Budget also taxes have not been levied on the goods used by common man and generally common man has not been affected. The increase in railway freight will not affect the common man. While speaking on the railway budget in this august House, I would like to bring few points to the notice of the hon. Minister. Maharashtra is considered to be a developed State, but I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister towards few undeveloped regions of the State. They remain undeveloped because they are not connected by railway lines. I am trying to explain to the august House that when we approach the Railway Ministry for laying railway lines in the area and tell them that development of railway network in the area is imperative for the development of the region, the reply given by the Railway Ministry is that laying of railway lines is not feasible as there is no industry in these areas. On the other hand when we approach the Industry Ministry to set up industries in our area the reply given is that industries cannot be set up in the absence of railway lines. We are caught in the dilemma and do not know, what to do. In view of this I request the hon. Minister to take step to lay railway lines in the Marathwada region so that it could also be developed. After independence, a total of 62 thousand kilometre of railway line has been laid in other parts of the country, but if we look at the statistics of Marathwada, we find that only 37 km. of railway line has been laid there. The people of Marathwada region feel perturbed and agitated. They think that justice has not been done to them and believe that Government have not done anything till date for their welfare. Although government have accepted the long standing demand of the people of Marathwada region and sanctioned four railway lines for the region, one of them from Manmad-Aurangabad-Parbhani-Parli Baijnath but

the amount provided for these railway lines was Rs. 138 crore, 89 lakh and 95 thousand whereas the amount actually spent till date is only Rs. 9 crore, 60 lakhs. Work on these lines was started in 1978 and now it is 1988 that means during the last 10 years only Rs. 9 crore and 60 lakh have been spent on the construction of these railway lines. A provision of only Rs. 5 crore has been made in this year's budget for this purpose. If construction work progresses at this pace then it will take several years in completing the job. Moreover we are not demanding any new railway line for the benefit of lakhs of people of our region, only conversion of line is being asked for. I request the hon. Minister to allocate maximum amount for the early completion of these railway lines, then only quick development of our region would be possible.

Another line has to be constructed from Parbhani to Purna via Mudkher upto Adilabad at an expected cost of Rs. 106 crore and 62 lakh but the amount spent till now is only Rs. 26 lakh and 3 thousand. In the current year's budget also only Rupees one thousand has been allocated for this line. We feel as if hon. Minister is not interested in construction of this line, that is why a provision of Rupees one thousand only has been made for its construction. Another line runs from Latur to Miraj via Kururavadi. This is a narrow gauge line and it was announced in 1973 by the former Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi when she visited the Latur district club that this railway line will be got constructed at an early date. But nothing has been done till date for laying this railway line and new railway line from Parli to Ahmednagar via Birx has been proposed this year and its survey will be done next year. I hope the hon. Minister will allocate more money for early completion of these four railway lines demanded by the people of Marathurada.

Another point I would like to emphasise is that Ministry of Railways has issued first class passes for one year to freedom fighters of the country. They can go to any part of the country with

one companion. But I would like to know from the hon. Minister of Railways, do we respect our elders for only one year in Indian culture? If the expenditure in the opinion of the Railways is going to increase too much, then my suggestion would be that the freedom fighters because of whom we are here in this august House and the respect given by the Ministry of Railways to them, this facility should be made permanent. If desired, few limitations can be prescribed, but passes should be given on a permanent basis. Instead of two allow one, even then they will be happy and their dignity will be maintained.

With these words I support the railway budget presented by the hon. Minister for Railways in this august House.

[English]

SHRI N. DENNIS (Nagercoil): Sir, while supporting the Railway Budget, I wish to make a few points. It is a balanced budget which is the best that could be done under the prevailing circumstances. The Minister is able to present a surplus budget even after paying full dividends of Rs. 736 crores to the general exchequer. The budget is for all round development.

I wish to make a few suggestions. More and more I Class coaches should be converted into II AC Sleeper coaches because they accommodate more people, fetch more income and they are more convenient and also kept neat and clean. Now there is no shower bath facility in the II AC compartments, that should be provided.

When implementing projects, removal of regional imbalance should be kept in mind. Some areas are neglected and on some other areas there is overspending. Metropolitan cities and towns are taken as central points while implementing projects. That should be given up and every district should be provided with the railway facility. Backward areas and the rural areas should be given more importance in the execution of projects.

Casual labourers who have put in service of more than one year should not

[Shri N. Dennis]

be relieved. If they are working in one project, after the work in that particular project is over, they should be provided with job opportunities in some other project. If there is no possibility of accommodating them in some other project, they should be given protection of job security lay providing them with some other work, instead of recruiting new persons as labourers.

Bridges and tracks which require immediate change should be attended to immediately. Compensation to the victims of railway accidents should be given immediately. The compensation amount which the victims of the railway accidents get is lower than the compensation given to the victims of air crash. The compensation amount should be enhanced. Punctuality of trains should also be maintained. The condition of second-class coaches should be improved. These compartments are not clean. Of course, obligation is on the part of the passengers also to keep the compartments clean and neat. There is no regular supply of water and there is failure of lights also. There is over-crowding in second-class compartments. Unreserved ordinary passengers enter into the reserved compartments. This causes inconvenience to women and children and other passengers which result into frequent quarrels also. So the conductors should be vigilant to check this practice.

To prevent accidents level crossing in rural areas should also be manned. Regarding construction of over-bridges it appears that the amount is not fully utilised. One of the reason is that the State Governments are reluctant to provide adequate amount of contribution for the construction of over-bridges. Therefore, I suggest that contribution of States in this regard be reduced.

It is a welcome sign that Directorate of Passenger Amenities has been set-up but the allotment made for passenger amenities is very low. It should be enhanced. As far as Tamil Nadu is concerned, there is a big let down in the Railway budget for 1988-89, No adequate

allocation has been made for the on-going projects. Karur-Dindigal project has been allocated with only Rs. 5 crores whereas the demand was for Rs. 15-20 crores. Further the next phase providing parallel BG line between Dindigal-Madurai and the final phase for the extension of the line to Tuticoran has to be carried out without delay. It should not stop at Dindigal.

Sir, Kanyakumari is the southern most part. Thousands of National and International tourists visit this spot daily to see the sunset, sunrise, Vivekananda rock and the meeting place of three seas. To promote national integration a direct express train services to different parts should be operated from Kanyakumari. On the other hand we find that instead of providing more and more trains to Kanyakumari even the trains which operated from there have been cancelled.

15.00 hrs

I would like to point out that the railway line was opened in the year 1979. Now there is only one direct express train No. 81/82 operating from Kanyakumari to Bombay. That is the only direct express train operating from Kanyakumari.

Train No. 907/908 (Himsagar Express) operating from Kanyakumari to Jammu Tawi was stopped recently. It was a prestigious train. To promote national integration, this train should have been continued to operate. It was operating from one end of the country (Kanyakumari) to the other end (Kashmir) touching 11 States and 5 military cantonments. I would like to stress that this train 907/908 should be made to operate again for promoting national integration. It is a train of national importance.

Train No. 47/48, Cannanore Express, operating between Kanyakumari and Cannanore is also stopped. Then again train No 25/26, Island Express from Kanyakumari to Bangalore has also been stopped. The railway authorities would say that these two trains were operating as ordinary passenger trains between Trivandrum and Kanyakumari. But the

same trains were going as Express train from Trivandrum to Bangalore and Cannanore continuously. These trains should also be made to operate from Kanyakumari again.

Extension of Madras-Trivandrum train No. 19/20 Mail to Kanyakumari was included in the railway time-table.

Kanyakumari is in Tamil Nadu. The train passengers from Kanyakumari cannot go to the capital of Tamil Nadu by a direct train though there is a railway line. This aspect has to be taken into consideration. So, 19/20 Mail has to be extended up to Cape Comorin. Kanyakumari is only 85 kilometres from Trivandrum.

Moreover, train No. 901/902 operated between Guwahati and Trivandrum. It was previously intended upto Kanyakumari and proposed to be named as Vivekananda Express indicating the Vivekananda rock and all connected memories of Swami Vivakananda. So also train No. 903/904, Trivandrum-Ahmedabad Express is scheduled to have its service up to Kanyakumari. This also did not materialise.

Now Kanyakumari terminal is under-utilised. The railway line between Trivandrum and Kanyakumari is also not adequately utilised though there is a railway line. Trivandrum is congested and overcrowded with trains. All the trains now terminating at Trivandrum should be extended up to Kanyakumari.

A coaching yard complex, costing about Rs. 5½ crores has been allotted for Nagercoil. It is a connecting junction between East Coast and West Coast traffic. It is said that there is a proposal to shift it to some other place. Here there is extensive land. About 98 acres of land is also available there. Water and electricity facilities are there. This coach yard complex, which was allotted to Nagercoil, should be provided to Nagercoil. Nagercoil junction should be provided with simultaneous reception and shunting facilities.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER
 (Bangalore South) : I rise to oppose the

Railway Budget. I thought that the Minister would receive the tributes this time but unfortunately, he has disappointed not only this House but the entire country. This is the fourth Railway Budget on which I am participating..... (Interruptions)....I was telling that the hon. Minister's Budget Speech had a mention of several records achieved by the Railway Ministry but he has forgotten to mention one record which he himself has established, that is, no other Railway Minister has levied such high imposts as the present, young Railway Minister. In a redeeming manner, in a diplomatic manner, he has mobilised resources for the Railways to the extent of Rs 1620 crores, Rs. 620 crores for the year 1988-89 and Rs. 1000 crores in 1986-87, the effect of which we are seeing in the inflation today. So, Sir, this is another record. I do not want to speak much since I have no time but it is my duty to bring a very serious matter to the notice of the hon. Minister.

Many States are being neglected as the Members were saying. I should say that Karnataka has been utterly neglected. The people of Karnataka are sober, they waited patiently for long. They have lost confidence not only in the Central Government but in the Members of Parliament also. Do you know what is going on in Karnataka? The hon. Minister must be knowing now about it. An agitation is going on to condemn this attitude of the Central Government. They say that the Central Government has pushed them to the path of confrontation. Even a senior leader, Mr. Ranga's friend, Mr. Nijilingappa was present and participated in the 'rail roko movement'. Such is the feeling of the people of Karnataka. It is not motivated by any political party.

15.08 hrs.

[SHRI SOMNATH RATH in the Chair]

The people have started the movement spontaneously. They are frustrated, the way in which Karnataka has been treated. I will tell you how it has been neglected. For the past several decades, Karnataka has been demanding that it should have a

[Shri V.S. Krishna Iyer]

separate zone for Karnataka. Now, Karnataka is served by three zones, the Southern Railway, the South-Central Railway and the Central Railway. There is no single Railway Zone to take care of the interest of Karnataka. The Southern Railway generally takes care of the interest of the State in which it is located. Similarly, the Central and South-Central Railway also. The Railway Advisory Committee has recommended as long back in 1982 that there should be a South-West zone with Bangalore as Headquarters. The previous Railway Ministers both, Mr. T.A. Pai and Mr. Jaffar Sharief stated that there will be three more zones and Bangalore will be the Headquarters of the South-Western Railway but unfortunately, there is no mention about it in the Minister's speech. The people of Karnataka are agitated. I request that the Minister should make an announcement, a categorical assurance that the proposed zone will be established very soon. It is very important. After independence, only one railway line, Bangalore-Hasan has been sanctioned for the State of Karnataka and not a centimetre of the other railway line is done. The one for which Mr. Jaffar Sharief was responsible, the Chitra Durga is going at a snail's speed and this year it is provided with Rs. 1 crore. It will take years and years for completion.

Then, let us take the Wheel and Steel Plant. It is my duty to bring to the notice of this House the feelings of the people there. In that Rs. 150 crore project, two thousand employees are working and not even twenty per cent of them are local people. Those people have lost their valuable lands, they are on the footpath and they got a very meagre compensation. We have got a Railway Recruitment Board at Bangalore. The Chairman of that Board does not know the local language and people from all parts of the country are being recruited by that Board. I do not grudge that, but what is the reaction of the local people. I do not advocate the theory of sons of the soil, but still you have to take into

account the aspirations of the local people. Even in the category of Class IV, sufficient number of local people is not there.

We were happy when the Minister announced last year that the K.K. Express would be a super fast train. But what has actually happened. Now it takes more than 42 hours. Previously it used to take 35 to 36 hours when it was running four times a week. Some of the bogies are also in a very bad condition. Previously, it had 24 bogies with two engines, but now it has 14 bogies with a single engine. Those who wanted to travel from Bangalore to Delhi used to travel by G.T. via Madras and five bogies were reserved for them. Even that has been discontinued. That is how Karnataka is being treated. I would urge upon the Railway Minister to restore the original speed and facilities for this train. Now it starts at 1130 p.m. Where do you get an auto-rickshaw at that time in Bangalore? The timings should be revised and the train should leave as it used to leave previously in the evening and reach Delhi in the morning on the third day

Then, the on-going projects. I do agree that the Planning Commission has failed the Railways. The Prime Minister was correct to say that the Planning Commission have to open their eyes and read the writings on the wall. We have been urging that more funds should be provided to Railways. But what has been happening? It has been going down. It was 15 per cent in the Third and Fourth Plans, and now it is only 6.9 per cent. I know that there is paucity of funds. We have been writing to the hon. Railway Minister and he has been replying and the reply is common that there is resource constraint. The Planning Commission should assess the realistic needs of the particular regions and provide funds accordingly. There can be no economic development unless railways are given sufficient funds.

I thank the hon. Minister for providing more funds for the Mysore-Bangalore gauge conversion, but how long will it take? It was started ten years ago. The original estimate was Rs. 30 crores and now it has gone up to Rs. 60 crores. Only

Rs. 10 crores have been spent so far. Now, security printing press is coming to Mysore. I would request the hon. Minister that he should see that this project is completed by the time the security printing press starts and that sufficient funds are provided. This must be completed within two years.

We were happy when the hon. Minister announced new trains to various places. I do not grudge it, but why has Bangalore been left? Bangalore city is the cultural capital, scientific capital, electronic capital of our country and various international conferences are being held there. You have not announced even a single fast train to end from Bangalore like Bangalore-Calcutta, Bangalore-Lucknow and other places, as Shri Reddy mentioned. Bangalore is a very important city and I would request the hon. Minister to pay due attention to it, specially when additional trains would not cost you much.

Another injustice that has been done to Karnataka is this. Sir, whenever it comes to the border of Karnataka, the railway stop there. Take the Bangalore-Bombay meter-gauge line. It is metre gauge between Bangalore and Miraj and beyond that it is broad-gauge. The Bangalore-Miraj line should be converted into Broad gauge.

Now, about the doubling of the line. What a great injustice has been done. You have stopped at Kuppam. It is very necessary, Sir, and you should see that the double line between White field and Kuppam is completed. The double line from the White field to Bangarapet should be completed first and then between Bangarapet and Kuppam.

So far as the electrification is concerned, I am glad that the Hon. Minister has to some extent complied with my pleadings. You should see that it is also taken up from both the sides. I am glad that the Konnan railway survey has been completed. Please see that it starts from the Mangalore so that it may connect Udappi and Karvar. While inaugurating the Seabed, the Prime Minister declared that the

Karvar will soon come in the railway map of India. But you have not provided anything at all for that. It is very necessary.

Similarly, we have been demanding for the new lines. Harihar-Kottur and then Satyamangla and Mettupalayan. Nothing has been done. Regarding the new lines you said that the current Plan provides only about Rs. 350 crores. On the contrary for the on-going projects you require Rs. 1200 crores. From where will you get the money? It all looks like a rosary of words. A young man is put in charge of the Railways but he is not provided with the necessary fund. You must fight with the Planning Commission.

Sir, he knows my constituency. He was present there recently. So, about Rapid Transit system you must make a beginning and speak to our Chief Minister. He is also very serious about it. You should at least take up the circular portion of it. At least that can be done by the Railways. That is very necessary. The circular Railway is part of the transit system.

The Second class ticket from Bangalore to Delhi costs a man Rs. 20/-extra. And what about those who travel in First class? It is almost equal to an Air fare nowadays. That is how you have increased the fares. 6 per cent increase in freight will certainly hit everybody. Even those who do not travel will also be affected. I request the Hon. Minister to have a second look at the whole thing. How the Finance Minister has managed the Budget this time? In the Budget of Rs. 70,000 crores, the imports are only about 500 or 600 crores. In your Budget of 9000 crores, the import is 620 crores. I request you to see that the hikes are revived. And I hope that with the same vigour you will see as to what is happening in Karnataka. I request the Hon. Minister that while replying he should give an assurance to the people of Karnataka that the State of Karnataka will not be neglected. I do not want you to neglect any other State for that matter.

[Translation]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhaujharpur):
 Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to speak

[Dr. G.S. Rajhans]

in brief. I want to praise Scindiaji. He is among those few Ministers, in whose Ministry work is done without any delay. The files in his Ministry move very quickly at the speed of a train. In my area whole of the railway line was destroyed due to floods but the hon. Minister got it repaired in two months by taking personal interest while the Railway Board was of the opinion that 2½ to 3 years will be required in repairing the same. This is not a small achievement, this is a big thing. The people of my area are very grateful to him for getting the railway line repaired in such a short time.

I have to state one thing. All the hon. Members of the Parliament from North Bihar have been demanding only conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga railway line from metre gauge to broad gauge. Unfortunately when this line was being converted into broad gauge, then for the reasons best known to the hon. Minister, this work was abandoned. The people of that region have only one demand, one point programme *viz* conversion of Samastipur Darbhanga line into broad gauge. I have discussed the matter with many officials of the Railway Board, they say another broad gauge railway line parallel to narrow gauge can be constructed. Then, let there be a parallel railway line but it should be laid.

This is the demand of the people of that area. Previously a railway line was going to be constructed there but later it was shifted to some other place. This was an injustice done to the people of that area. The hon. Minister is aware of this, so I do not want to repeat it in the House. I have talked with several industrialists. They are prepared to set up industries in Mithila. But what they want to know is how to manage the transportation of raw materials to that area and later the finished goods from that place. The distance between Samastipur and Darbhanga is not much, in fact it is a short distance. The entire picture of that area will be changed if a broad-gauge line is constructed there.

The hon. Minister would do well if he travels by train himself. It is true that he does travel by train sometimes. There is a train called Vaishali Express which runs between Delhi and Barauni. This train is always, unbelievably, crowded. All the compartments remain over crowded. This is a most profitable train. The hon. Minister should travel on this route himself to experience the horrible conditions. This line is the most profitable one. There was another train which used to run *via* Moradabad. Previously it was a daily service but now its frequency has been reduced to 3 days a week. I would request that the frequency of this train be increased to all the 7 days a week.

I want to submit one thing more. Jayanti Janta Express was re-named as Vaishali Express. Previously, there used to be paintings of Mithila in every compartment of this train. This was done with the sole objective of enlightening people on the culture of Mithila, as this train passes through Mithila region. Many foreigners still travel by this train to get a taste of the culture of Mithila. At present such paintings have been removed from this train. I request the hon. Minister to get the paintings fixed again in all the compartments of this train with scenes depicting the culture of Mithila.

Many reports are being received about the Jamalpur Railway Workshop. Previously this workshop used to manufacture steam engines. Now steam-engines are being gradually phased-out and in their place diesel engines are being manufactured. 14,000 workers are employed in this workshop. Now a rumour is being spread that at least 10-12 thousand of those 14,000 workers are about to face retrenchment. I cannot vouch for the veracity of this rumour. I want to say that some scheme should be chalked out to convert steam-engines into diesel-engines. If it is done, that would be better. Then other type of wagons can also be manufactured in this workshop. This is one of the biggest manufacturing units in that area. The hon. Minister has visited this workshop. This workshop provides livelihood to many people of

that area. So I humbly request the hon. Minister to give this matter serious thought. It is very important that this workshop is not closed down.

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA :
They are working on it.

DR. G. S. RAJHANS: Very nice of you.

[Translation]

Many thanks. I do not want to overstep in expressing my praise for you. Action is always taken whenever you send something in writing.

Lakhs of labourers from North Bihar travel to Delhi, Haryana and Punjab every week in search of livelihood. I request the hon. Minister to introduce a train specially for migrant labour from anywhere in North Bihar. The frequency of this train should be at least twice or thrice a week. A train facilitating return journey should also be introduced. This is because while coming from Punjab these people are forced to stay in Delhi for 6 to 8 days before getting a train to reach home. Even though the situation in Punjab is very much disturbed, still many people go there for the sake of livelihood.

I request that a tri-weekly mazdoor Express be introduced from whichever place in Bihar the hon. Minister considers proper. Mr. Chairman, Sir, a lot of things can be said on the Railway Budget. (Interruptions)

I shall say one thing more which should be considered seriously. Any person who adopts family planning methods after the birth of his first child should be allowed concession of half of the normal fare for travel to his home-town in a year. This would be a great incentive for the people who would adopt family planning methods to avail of facilities from the Government. Even otherwise something must be done to help people of poor classes who come from Faridabad, Ghaziabad, Delhi, U.P. and Bihar to earn a living. They must be given the

facility of returning home once every year. It will do them a lot of good if they are given concession in the fare for this purpose. If they can go to their homes once every year they can tell people about development in Punjab, Haryana etc. and how new ideas can be applied to their areas. The work of doubling the track between Patna and Sahibganj is going on at a very slow pace. Therefore I request that this work be speeded up.

In the end I want to say that Bihar does not have enough rail facilities. This can be discussed separately. I thank the hon. Minister for the efforts that he has put in.

[English]

SHRI D. K. NAIKAR (Dharwad North) : Before making any suggestions in the matter, I must support the Demands of the Minister of Railways.

Regarding the projects introduced by the hon. Minister, there are several new pairs of trains in different States. A number of trains have also been introduced in other States, and air-conditioned sleeper coaches have also been introduced. But so far as Karnataka is concerned, I do not know why this discrimination has been made by the hon. Minister. Is he aware that Karnataka is also there in the country? I fail to understand why this discrimination has been done, so far as Karnataka is concerned.

In this connection, I may bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that in Karnataka, only metre gauges are there, and no broad gauge. Since several years, we have been fighting for the conversion of these metre gauges. The hon. Minister has not given attention to this demand. I was also told that official enquiry committees were appointed to get reports. There are several reports, as I have been informed in this connection. But no action has been taken in this regard.

So, because of the discrimination made against Karnataka when this Railway Budget was presented, the people of Karnataka are rather frustrated, in my

[Shri D.K. Naikar]

opinion. I am constrained to say that they are wondering whether MPs of Karnataka have got any say in Parliament, or not.

The historical background is that the Department of Railways has been held only by Ministers from Karnataka—e.g. Dasappa, Poonacha, Hanumanthiah and T.A. Pai. Still, our metre gauges were not converted into broad gauge. Last time when Mr. Bansi Lal was holding charge of this Railways portfolio, I made a request in Parliament that he must come forward to give concessions at least to Karnataka, so as to earn a good name—especially when their own Ministers i.e. those from Karnataka did not do this work. That was the statement I had made. But, unfortunately, again the same conditions has been continuing.

This has happened because of the system of zones. In Hyderabad, they have got a zone; in Madras they have got a zonal office. But in Karnataka, there is no zonal office. Whenever projects are proposed, there is no processing done in Karnataka. Karnataka is divided into two parts, one part in Madras and another in Hyderabad. Therefore, I feel that I must request the hon. Minister to at least come forward to establish a zonal office in Karnataka so that we can get some railway amenities through that zonal office. This is the feeling of the people of Karnataka which I am ventilating in this Lok Sabha.

Another point is, the Prime Minister, if I am correct in reading the Press, at some inaugurating function, made a statement that the Karwar line will be taken up very soon and that Rs. 100 crores will be allocated for that. But I am very sorry to say that even the statement of the Prime Minister has not been honoured. I am extremely sorry. I was under the impression that this year in the Railway Budget we can get some funds for Karwar line. I do not know what prevented the hon. Railway Minister from sanctioning the Karwar-Hubli line because there are so many progressive activities in Karwar. A Naval base has been established and

there are so many important factories coming up which are of national importance. Also, the traffic is increasing. It is much more, about one hundred times more than what it was earlier. Therefore, I submit that at least during this period, whether there is a surplus or no surplus I do not mind, the Railway Minister should make up his mind to satisfy the people of Karnataka so that the people of Karnataka should not feel that the Members of Parliament of Karnataka—whatever Janata or Congress—have no say in the matter. Therefore, the hon. Minister should look to the interests of the MPs and protect the interests of the State also.

SHRI KADAMBUR JANARTHANAN (Tirunelveli): Mr Chairman, I rise to support this budget reluctantly, because last year our hon. Minister, Shri Scindia, submitted a people's budget but this year the budget is pinching the people. Therefore, we have to accept this.

In the tariff proposals the hon. Minister, has stated that since the last four years the II Class ordinary fares up to 50 kilometres have not been increased at all and that only for distances beyond 50 kilometres the fares were increased only once, and therefore he was increasing the fares now. But it is not a justifiable thing. Since the people have gone through a very severe drought during the last year it is not fair on the part of the Central Government to raise the fare of the class used by the common man to such an extent. Therefore, I request the Minister to re-think and re-consider, and at least to raise the fare of only distances above 75 or 100 kilometres. People travelling beyond 100 kilometres can pay more fare. That fare may be increased.

Coming to the platform ticket which has been increased from one rupee to Rs. 1.50 paise. I submit that it is not only harassing but it will lead people not to be bound by the law. Generally, if we see in our stations like Madurai and Madras a host of outsiders and guests coming to see off the people. In Tamil Nadu for Rs. 1.50 paise one can travel in the town bus for a distance of 20 kilometres. Previously for the next station the fare was

that much. By increasing the platform ticket to Rs. 1.50 paise we are showing a path and the people will not be bound by law. So, this steep rise from Re 1/- to Rs. 1.50 paise is stoutly opposed and I hope that the hon. Minister will think over and come to the rescue of common man and reduce it. Earlier even one rupee was very high. In the Janata Government it was 30 paise, then it was increased to 50 paise. In the small stations the railway authorities can harass the ryots and kisans—who come to the stations in large numbers—by demanding the platform tickets. As I have already mentioned, for Rs. 1.50 paise in Tamil Nadu, one can travel for 20 kilometres by town bus.

Regarding the season tickets we cannot say that only lower middle class people, labourers, kisans and students only travel. Those who earn their daily bread by travelling they will be hit. So, the rise in season tickets is also not justifiable. So, I request that atleast upto 50 KMs distance, the rate should not be raised. This is my humble request to the Government.

The increase in parcel and luggage fare, will not increase your volume of income and it will benefit only the private road transport people to amass wealth. Therefore, I request you to look into this matter.

In a way I thank the Minister for the Karur Dindigul broad gauge line, which is going to be completed within the financial year. I would like to inform that the original plan right from Kamarajar period, it was known as Karur-Dindigul-Tuticorin broad gauge line. It was never known for a Tamil Nadu man as Kurur-Dindigul broad gauge line. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to extend this broad gauge line upto Tuticorin within this financial year. If it is extended, it will be very nice and the people will be benefited. Further, when the Karur-Dindigul-Tuticorin broad gauge line project came into the scene, there was no formation of new districts. Now, during our honourable MGR's period, three new districts have been formed. Dindigul is the capital of Anna District ; Virudunagar

is the capital of Kamarajar District and Tuticorin is the capital of Chidambaranar District. Generally, the Planning Commission says that there is no new industrial access and therefore they are curtailing money. Therefore, we are stressing this point here that there is enough scope for new industries in Tuticorin and Tuticorin is improving very fast. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to extend the project upto Tuticorin and this line should come under the purview of the Planning Commission and the hon. Minister.

The goods train is now running between Milavittan and Tuticorin and it is only helping the two industries, namely SPIC and India Coments. The mixed gauge line laid from Milavittan to Tuticorin Harbour has not touched the Tuticorin harbour area, but has abruptly left in the middle of the Tuticorin Harbour at a distance of 113 KMs as against the full length of 18 KMs. If this incompleated work of broad gauge is taken up at least now and completed early, through broad gauge line communication connecting both the harbours Tuticorin and Cochin, can be achieved and the traffic can be accelerated. Sir, it is a very urgent matter. There can not be financial constraint for this as it is only seven kilometres. Considering the improvement of the area,—labour oriented area and salt producing area I request the hon. Minister to complete this line upto Tuticorin harbour. Further, between Milavittan and Tuticorin, now only the goods train is running. We have opened it in 1985 May and it is more than two years now. I hope the Minister will note down this point also.

Further, I am coming from a rural area—Kadambur, which is my native place. For the passenger train amenities, I am shouting in this Parliament for the past fourth time. My leader Shri Kolan-daivelu was kind enough for giving chances to speak about the Railway Budget. I am striving for the passenger train amenities.

Sir, give also me two more minutes. There is one Janata Express train from Villipuram to Tirunelveli. But it is running without much revenue. There is no

[Shri Kadambur Janarthanan]

passenger train for the local areas like Kuriarapuram, Kurunagri, Kadambur, Kavelangol, Naraikinar. I have been requesting for a Sethu Link Express for the last four years. I hope, the Minister will accede to my request for starting a passenger day train for this area with stoppages at the above places.

There is a great need for an over-bridge at Thachanallur, which is in my constituency. The broad-gauge and metre-gauge lines pass through this section. There is the required statistical point for the traffic. The traffic points have been approved by the Railway officials. To avoid congestion on NH 7 I request the hon. Minister to consider constructing an over-bridge there as the Tamil Nadu Government has also recommended it.

In the end, I again request the hon. Minister that the people's long pending demand of constructing Karur-Dindigul-Tuticorin broad-gauge line be taken up immediately. When constructed it will cut short the distance by 372 kms on long run length from Kashmir to southern-end of the country. I am all for integrity and unity of the country. Actually this not Karur-Dindigul line, but it was originally named during the period of Mr. Kamaraj and Mr. Alagesan as the Karur-Dindigul-Tuticorin broad-gauge line.

With these few words, on behalf of my party AIADMK faction loyal to MGR, I welcome the Railway Budget and support it.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN (Jabalpur) : I rise to support the Railway Budget and I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister for having shown progressive developments and improvements in the railways' amenities to passengers and other administrative and organisational works.

As a matter of fact, it is a matter of great satisfaction that not only the parliamentarians, all my respected colleagues here, but even the people and the press have been appreciative of his efforts and fruitful results in the railways. There is

no doubt that the increase in freight and fares has been unavoidable because of reasons beyond his control. It may be because of the implementation of the Fourth Pay Commission's recommendations or it may be due to various other hikes in fuel and various other things. But the fact is that the Railways have progressed and all credit must go not only to the Railway Minister but to the Board and the employees of Railways, who have been able to muster themselves into a team. A civil organisation has shown cohesion which we only find in the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. As a team, the Railways have done whatever is possible under the circumstances. I am aware of the fact that the increase in fares and tariff has hit a lot of people. But it has been unavoidable under the present circumstances and the schemes which he has undertaken to complete or progress in 1988-89.

The Minister has quite rightly, in his speech, taken the credit for continued improvement. But I would draw his kind attention to various growth and other targets which are first estimated. I would like him to have an appraisal whether the targets are being set less than what the capability of the Railways is because this tendency of showing the surpassing of the targets can be dangerous in the long run. He has also referred to various hikes which have been made, but the rate of growth in the revenue earning freight tariff has been steadily going down from 1986-87 to 1988-89. If he compares the targets set down for 1987-88 and 1988-89 which the target set for 1986-87, it has been progressively set down. This tendency, year after year, is generating a feeling of over-fulfilment of targets. I am sure he is aware of this and he will keep this in mind.

In this speech, the Railway Minister has mentioned that a very large sum of Rs. 182 crores has been put as 'other miscellaneous factors'. This is about the legitimate expenditure when he was listing them. I would urge the hon. Minister to give the break up of this figure in his reply because leaving such a large amount as Rs. 182 crores aggregated into 'miscellaneous factors' is not very fair.

What he particularly deserves to be congratulated for is the decrease in the accident rate. The accident rate has been lowered not only because of very outstanding work done by the Railways under him, but also because of the developmental work and the replacement work of the tracks. But what is surprising is the amount which has been kept. He also mentioned in his speech that nearly 13 per cent of the railways are metre gauge or narrow gauge. But the amount which they have kept for replacement or for improvement or for converting the narrow gauge lines into metre gauge lines and the metre gauge lines into broad gauge lines, is minimal. I would suggest that keeping in view a very old and very serious accident in Madhya Pradesh in 1982, when nearly 200 people had died between Jabalpur and Godhra, a larger amount should be kept for these lines on which nearly 30 per cent of traffic goes. This will positively bring the accident rate still lower. So, I would urge upon him to reconsider the allocation for improvements. If it is seen that the conversion into a higher gauge is economical but not viable under the present financial circumstances, then at least improvement should be done of tracks, bridges, culverts, nullahs and the communication system. On some of these metre and narrow gauge railways, the communication system is still primitive. Either they can take in hand the conversion of the track, improvement of the track, or they can at least modernise the communication system between two stations.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, six per cent increase in freights has been recommended by the hon. Railway Minister. The prices of coal, diesel, etc. have recently increased. This is one of the reasons for the increase in freights, besides the developmental projects. But I would urge upon the hon. Railway Minister that for the essential consumer goods transshipment, the freightage can be of three-tier system. As the hon. Railway Minister knows, we are facing a severe drought and the movement of most of the commodities required to meet the drought was done at a substantially subsidised rate. In the same way, between the present freightage which has been recommended and the concessions

given to the drought-affected areas, there should be some other concession given for the movement of essential commodities. One of the reasons why the prices of consumer goods go up is the increase in the railway freight. Ultimately, it is not the businessmen or the manufacturers who are going to pay for the freightage increase but it will squarely come on the shoulders of the consumers. To keep the low-cost economic development, certain essential raw materials movement should also be cheaper. Today we are going in a big way for indigenisation, we are going in a big way for small-scale industries for employment generation. They can also be given some concession.

Sir, the railway fare increase has been well taken so far as the first-class and air-condition classes are concerned. Even if you put a little more increase in that, nobody is going to be affected because those who can afford to pay more and travel in first-class will bear this increase. But in the case of increase in the second-class fare, a large number of people are affected. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister kindly to reconsider and help these people. Moreover, those people who travel for short-distance very frequently, say about 100 Kms. or less for doing small business or for earning their livelihood and the students to reach their colleges and schools, have now to bear the burden of increase in fare. The hon. Minister may kindly consider giving concession to these people.

There is one point about the platform tickets. I thought that the cost of platform tickets could be raised even to Rs. 2. But is there any checking done on the platform? There is no checking at all on the railway station platforms. I would suggest to the hon. Minister that the checking of visitors on the platforms should be done before the trains arrive because it has been seen that the local-anti-social elements never buy the ticket. They dominate the local railway staff and even if the cost of railway platform tickets is raised to Rs. 1.50, only those law-abiding people will buy it. But the anti-social elements will not buy it and go scot free. They even do not bother for the local railway staff because the local railway staff is small

[Shri Ajay Mushran]

number. This is more true in smaller stations. Moreover, if you raise the price of platform ticket, you must also ensure that the checking is done at the platforms.

Then, Sir, the ratio of North and South trains continues to be much less than those running between North and South-East, North and West and North and East. Sir, there used to be a train called Jayanti-Janata Express running from North to Southern States. It is now discontinued. There were two trains. One is Jayanti-Janata Express and another is Kerala Express. The Kerala Express is continuing but the Jayanti-Janata Express was discontinued and the people of South living in Jhansi and Nagpur regions have been deprived of the facility of this train, particularly from Itarsi and Jabalpur there are about 50,000 people wanting to go to South and there is only one train at the moment. I would urge upon the hon. Minister kindly to consider reintroduction of Jayanti-Janata Express because it used to serve the people very significantly.

Sir, there is a train called Ganga-Kaveri Express which has been running three times a week and it will now be running four times a week. I would request the hon. Minister kindly to consider running it daily. Another difficulty faced by the people is in catching the Kerala Express at Itarsi Station because the train stops there for five minutes only. The train has got 20 to 22 bogies and people have to run with their bag and baggage on the platform at the dead of night to get into the carriage to occupy the seats reserved for them. Therefore, Sir, if the train halts at least for 10 minutes at Itarsi Station, the people going to South would be finding it convenient to get into the train.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore) : You are talking of Jabalpur only.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : The trouble is that you can only think of West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, not whole of India.

Sir, so far as Jabalpur is concerned....

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Now he has come to All India.

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He has to go to All India via Jabalpur.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : Sir, the geographical centre is in my constituency. So, it belongs as much to Madhu Dandavateji as to me. I would suggest that in Jabalpur there is a greater need to have overhead railway bridges. In Katni there is a very great need. From there National Highway No 7 passes, which goes right up to Kanyakumari. There is such a heavy traffic that unless we have the overhead bridges, we will not be able to really serve people in Jabalpur. You have sanctioned a lot of overhead bridges for other areas. They are also necessary, but if you do give us a chance to have these bridges expedited, I will be very grateful.

15. 56 hrs.

[MR. SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

In the end I will only request the hon. Minister that sometimes it is very necessary that some trains are to be increased or there are some times when some trains are to be re-routed. Whenever there is a re-routing done to the trains, the North and South ratio must be increased. There is a tremendous responsibility on the Minister. You have got shortage of funds, you have got a very ambitious development programme. I am sure the whole House is with you. And so far as the Railways are concerned, you deserve nothing but praise and we hope that we will be again in a position to praise you provided one thing is fulfilled. So far as ex Servicemen are concerned, you must give them the same benefit as you have given to Arjun Award winners. There are sportsmen who have got Padma Shree, but you have not given them the same benefits as you have given to Arjun award winners. You are giving benefits of travelling to people who have not laid down their lives, but who have done something good. Please, for God's sake, include awardees of Vir

Chakra, Mahavir Chakra, Param Vir Chakra, Ashok Chakra and Kirti Chakra also in that list and I would personally be very happy, and I am sure the whole House is with me if these people are also included. If at all, I suggest that all the widows of the awardees should be given a First Class free ticket for their life and so far as the awardees are concerned, give them some concessions. The Army as it is used to get concession on Form 'D', you can pay the rest of the amount of Form 'D'.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : War widows also ?

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : No. What I am saying is, those who have got concessions or those which are not being given to the people who have laid down their lives .

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : War widows are already benefited.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : War widows are getting. But you have recently in the budget speech announced some concessions, Sir, and those concessions should also be given to those people like Param Vir Chakra, Vir Chakra and other awardees, they must get concession for life.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : He is not saying 'all' widows.

SHRI AJAY MUSHRAN : And You must give the concession to those who have been invalidated, who have lost their limbs. You should also take a percentage of those people in your service as clerks or in other categories because at the moment ex-Servicemen are not getting.

In the end, I will take half a minute, Sir.

You are developing the living accommodation of the railway passengers. Now, wherever you are opening a new station or a new Divisional Headquarters, new buildings are coming up, but those Divisional Headquarters which existed hundred years ago, their repair and development is nil. For example, one of the

four oldest Railway Divisions of India is Jabalpur. (Interruptions). Sir, you must give an additional amount for the repairs and improvement of the accommodation. (Interruptions).

Sir, the Chairman is so nice to me and you come and curtail my time !

[Translation]

SHRI MOHD. AYUB KHAN (Jhunjhunu) : Mr. Speaker Sir, I am extremely grateful to you because my turn has been announced as soon I came in.

First of all, I want to convey my heartiest congratulations to our hon. Railway Minister, Shri Madhavrao Scindia. Along with him, all people who are members of the family of Indian Railway deserve to be congratulated for having worked in such an exemplary manner. I visited the Rail Coach Factory at Perambur, Madra. I had a chat with the workers and others who work there. Workers of the Factory are very pleased with the hon. Minister because he went in their canteen and inspected its working.

Now I will speak on Rajasthan..

MR. SPEAKER : You can speak on this tommorrow.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : But, Sir, you could at least let us have some snacks from the canteen.

MR. SPEAKER : He can speak on this tommorrow when he will be fresh.

16.00 hrs.

STATEMENT RE : ARRANGEMENTS
FOR THE SAFETY OF INDIAN
NATIONALS IN TEHRAN
FOLLOWING RECENT ESCA-
LATION OF IRAN-IRAQ
WAR

[English]

**THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL
AFFAIRS (SHRI K. NATWAR
SINGH) :** Members are no doubt aware