

serious about it.

SHRI INDRAJIT GUPTA: The whole country is worried about it. In that case, why are you postponing further and further down the priority list?

[*Translation*]

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad): Sir, you are suggesting 4 p.m. but these days we are observing 'roze' (fast) since it is the 'Ramzan' month. You should kindly keep our problem also in mind.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: It may be taken up before that.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Keeping in view 'Roze' and 'Ramzan' you may taken up discussion on the communal situation right now.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY: No, Sir, if you have fixed 4 p.m., it should not be taken up earlier. It will be convenient for us if you decide the time in advance. If you fix a positive time, we can come here duly prepared. You should not change it, sometimes it is said that it will be taken up at 3 p.m. and sometimes that it will be taken up at 4 p.m.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: If not at 3 p.m. you can come at 4 p.m. There will be no problem.

SHRI SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: If you take up the discussion under Rule 193 at 4 p.m., it will create difficulties for us. You may take up the discussion on Railways Bill at that time.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: If it is possible to take it up earlier, it shall be done. We are in favour of it.

12.30 hrs.

RAILWAYS BILL AND DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 1986-87

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we will take up items No: 10 and 11, that is, Railways Bill and Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) together. The time allotted for this is two hours. I think we will finish it within the time allotted. Then we will take up the discussion on communal situation.

(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT): We can do away the lunch break also and even if it is finished earlier, we will take up the discussion on communal situation immediately.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes, around 3 O'Clock, anytime between three and four p.m.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: 4 O'Clock is definite. If it is finished earlier, we will take up.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SALAHUDDIN OWAISI (Hyderabad): Sir, keeping in view our 'Roza' and 'Ramzan' you should take up the discussion under Rule 193 right now or we will have to face considerable difficulty. You can take up the discussion on the Railway Bill at 4 p.m.

SHRI H.K.L. BHAGAT: The hon. Minister has some problems. It will be taken up as early as possible.

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If it is finished earlier, tell me what we can do? So we are assuring that 4 p.m. is the definite time.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will make the position clear. We will follow two hours strictly and at 3 O'clock we will be taking up communal situation. There is no lunch break. Mr. Scindia...

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): I beg to move:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Railways, as reported by the Joint Committee, be taken into consideration."

The House may recall that the Railways Bill was introduced in this House on 25.4.1986. In view of the comprehensive nature of the Bill and its public importance, the Bill was referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses for detailed examination. After holding 36 sittings, the Joint Committee presented their Report to this House on 21.2.1989.

The Committee have thoroughly examined each and every clause, and have made several useful changes, as indicated in paras 17 to 38 of the Report. I am indeed grateful

to the Members of the Joint Committee for having taken keen interest in the discussions, and for giving useful suggestions. All the changes suggested by the Committee have been accepted by the Government.

We have also taken note of some general observations and recommendations made by the Committee. I would like to assure the House that those are receiving full consideration.

As the Bill has already been thoroughly scrutinised by the Joint Committee, I would commend to the House that the Bill, as reported by the Committee, may be considered.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Motions moved:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Railways, as reported by the Joint Committee, be taken into consideration."

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1987, in respect of the following Demands entered in the second column thereof.

Demands Nos. 5, 13, 14 and 16."

Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) for 1986-87 submitted to the vote of the Lok Sabha

<i>No. of Demand</i>	<i>Name of Demand</i>	<i>Amount of Demand submitted to the Vote of the House</i>
5.	Repairs and Maintenance of Motive Power	6,07,57,302
13.	Provident Fund, Pension and other Retirement Benefits	53,67,41,390
14.	Appropriation to Funds.....	31,91,17,640
16.	Assets—Acquisition, Construction and Replacement	
	Other Expenditure—Capital.....	57,49,20,707

SHRI B.B. RAMAIAH (Eluru): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, regarding this report of the Joint Committee and the Railways Bill I would like to mention a few points which are very important and relevant. Considering various aspects about passenger amenities and the safety part of it it is very important that a number of over-bridges be constructed. Both the Central Government and the State Governments should bear the responsibility but safety point being with the Railways they should be able to take up more over-bridges in the interest of Railways safety and passengers. They should construct more over-bridges and share substantial amount from their funds instead of asking the State Government to contribute.

Another point I would like to lay emphasis upon is about un-manned crossings which have led to many accidents. In the interest of larger benefit of both maintenance of the track and for the better functioning of the Railways the un-manned crossings should also be properly manned. Railways should be able to take more responsibility instead of laying responsibility on somebody else. At some places I find where there are big municipalities and cities and they want a manned-crossing to be provided the Railways insist on the municipalities to bear the cost and also the recurring cost which becomes a difficult job to comply with by municipalities. These bodies have very meagre revenues. I understand there is substantial amount of safety fund available with the Railways and even their collection is improving. If necessary they can collect more to see in the larger interest that they take proper safety measures. In fact, we have to take some of these things as important. In view of the track maintenance, we are unable to see to it that they are maintained properly even in the monsoon season. The expert committees who have gone into this aspect have recommended that the railway track is not up to the mark and as per the technical specifications. The bridges also have to improve

substantially. In fact, in every monsoon season, we find that the accidents are increasing. We have discussed about the Island Express accident recently. What happened in Kerala? So many people have died and still the report says that it is due to something else. But the obvious reasons have not been specifically pointed out. We have seen the recent accident in the Karnataka Express. How many people lost their lives! These are the items which the Railways should be able to take into consideration. If you are not able to do it up to the mark, you can at least learn from others. In fact, in spite of the earthquakes and typhoons, Japan is maintaining the best railway system in the world. And we are supposed to be the best organisation not only in this country but in the world. Hence, we should not hesitate nor we should feel any delicacy to learn from others wherever it is required and where we are experts, we can also teach others and other countries. This is a very important aspect and I repeatedly stress this point again and again. The young dynamic Minister on which the people of this country have left so much of confidence should initiate steps regarding this point. If there is grave negligence on the part of the officials, he should not hesitate to take action and to maintain discipline because this is the largest responsibility which he is holding. The life and property of the people have been left in the hands of the Minister. He is supposed to take dynamic, progressive and prosperous steps so that he should be able to deliver goods to the people of the country. The Railways belong to the people of this country. You will be responsible for all these things. You should be able to show your dynamism to the people and this is one of the important aspects on which I would like to stress upon.

Regarding the conditions of the coaches, they are deteriorating year after year. In spite of the surplus production in this country and we are able to export to other countries, we

[Sh. B.B. Ramaiah]

are not able to maintain proper coaches in a number of trains. you can find that the number of coaches has depleted and they are not at all suitable for the passengers to travel. We want you to improve the conditions of the coaches which is very important and thus the facilities for the passengers can be improved. Somehow or the other, we are still carrying on with the old and condemned type of passenger coaches. So, I request the hon. Minister to see that something is done in this respect in the larger interest of the people of this country.

Regarding the timings of the trains, he has to improve the timings and schedules of the running of the trains. You can find that the timings of a number of trains are out of proportion and I do not know what type of action are they going to take. If there is some reason which is beyond control, then we can understand and it can happen once in a way. But this is happening repeatedly. We should have a system by which we will be able to maintain and control this aspect.

We find that electrification is becoming very slow. As per the economics of Railways, we find that the system of loco engines is one of the inefficient systems that we are operating. We are not leaving those things still. It is better with diesel but electrification is still much better and I wish that we should be able to take initiatives and see that more electrification is done as fast as possible so that it will help the economy of the Railways and improve the speed of the trains. It will also regularise other irregularities.

Another items is to improve the maintenance of the railway stations which has become very bad. Specially in the summer season, we find that in the electrical system, there are lot of irregularities and problems. Though they have provided with generators in a number of stations, you can find that the

operators are not available and even after providing, they have not been operated on time. Some places have been provided with them. If there is no proper lighting system, it becomes very difficult for the people when the trains arrive during night time. Especially when the trains come from longer distances, people find it very difficult as to where to go and how to go and in which part of the train, they have to look for. I can only say that they should be able to maintain properly and wherever there are generators or whatever they may be, there should be somebody to maintain and operate them properly. Otherwise the facilities which you are providing will be of no use at all. This is another part of it. I request the hon. Minister to do something to look after the maintenance of the railways stations and to see that things are being operated properly. Quite often there is a problem with regard to the goods traffic. Since there is an increase in the production of both agricultural as well as industrial goods, Railways have to take the responsibility of handling more goods. Also, the tariff rates which have been so fantastically increased, affect the industrial development and the common man's regular livelihood. About 1000 crores of rupees increase in tariff will have its affect on the consumers and they will have to pay through their nose. I would say that instead of increasing the tariff you should have increased the efficiency of the Railways and also of the handling system and effective utilisation of track.

Sir, we find that our track utilisation, when compared with other countries, is not up to the mark. If we can utilise our track more efficiently and effectively, probably we will be able to generate more resources than by increasing the tariff. Luckily this year, though you have not increased the passengers traffic but there is a substantial increase in the goods traffic. This is going to affect the common people and businessmen in this country.

I request the Hon. Minister to see of these aspects and improve the railway's efficiency and its operation so that the railways should be able to fulfil its obligation for the people of this country.

SHRIT. BASHEER (Chirayinkil): I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak and participate in this discussion. Sir, Railways is a very important organisation. It is the largest public sector organisation in this country. So, its operational efficiency and other things concerned with it are very important.

As I rise to speak on this subject, with anguish I would like to say about the report of the Railway disaster which occurred in July last year in Kerala. In Perumal, which is one of the biggest disaster in the history of the Indian Railways, about 105 people died in that accident. What appeared in the Press about the Report of the Commission for Railway Safety on the causes of the Perumal railway disaster, is an insult to the people, especially to the people of Kerala. Sir, the Commission has totally negated the preliminary observations made immediately after the accident. The Minister came with a very surprising and astonishing theory. i.e. the tornado theory. I should like to say that this is a challenge to the human intelligence and the common sense of the people. I would say that this is an insult to the people of Kerala. People were astonished when they heard this theory. There was no sign of any tornado in that place at that time. I do not understand how after all these months of inquiry, the Safety Commissioner could come out with a new theory. I would request the hon. Minister that the Government must order a fresh inquiry into the circumstances of this great disaster at Peruman to find out the actual causes of the railway accident. I think this tornado theory is a cover up process to protect the railway officials. This is a very serious thing. People of Kerala are so much concerned and agitated about this report

and its findings. We had not been given an opportunity to see the report. I hope the hon. Minister will place the report on the table of this House. As my colleague has already said, the safety of railway passengers is of great concern for the people of this country. Repeated accidents are taking place. Very recently, the Karnataka Express accident has taken place in which more than 50 people have died. In Kerala many accidents have taken place. The Kerala Express was derailed last month. Hence, I say that the Ministry's topmost task now is to restore the confidence of the people in the Railways.

The condition of our passenger coaches is very bad. Most of the coaches are very old. Some time back I travelled in Kerala Express which is a long distance train from Delhi to Trivandrum. When I travelled, I found that in the two-tier AC coach, the AC is not working at all. You can very well imagine the fate of the passengers travelling in that coach.

I would like to make another point about new railway lines. The broadgauge railway line from Trivandrum to Ernakulam has become over-saturated. It is estimated that the present utilisation is about 118 per cent. No further development of traffic will be possible in this route unless this line is doubled. There was another alternative proposal for constructing a new line. The Railway Board, in 1984, ordered a preliminary engineering cum traffic survey for a new broad-gauge alignment to Trivandrum via Kottarakkara and Nedumangadu. The density of population in the project area is several times higher than that of national average. The propensity of travel is also very high.

I would therefore request the Government to take steps to construct a new railway line to Trivandrum via Kottarakkara and Nedumangadu.

Now, I would come to my constituency.

[Sh. T. Basheer]

Varkala is a very important pilgrim centre in Trivandrum District. It come under my constituency. It is not only a pilgrim centre for people of Kerala but also of South India. It is high time that the Government should consider the replacement of railway level crossing at Varkala town by an over-bridge. In every 16 hours—from 5.30 A.M. to 9.30 P.M.—this level crossing blocks the traffic at an average of 40 times and each closing takes an average of ten minutes. Misery caused to the public due to frequent closing is beyond explanation. So, I would request the hon. Minister to take immediate steps for constructing an over-bridge at Varkala.

Now, I will come to Velli Railway Station in Trivandrum. This railway station is named after our famous Scientist Vikram Sarabhai. It is in a very bad shape. The Government should take steps to see that this station is developed.

I want to mention about the Model Station at Trivandrum. In this Session, I received a reply from the hon. Minister and from that reply it is seen that no substantial work is going on. No substantial among is being spent for the development of the Model Railway Station at Trivandrum. The Government should allot more funds for this Model Railway Station and also the Government should take expeditious steps to see that this Station is developed properly.

Lastly I want to mention here that the Government must introduce more summer specials from Delhi to Kerala.

With these words, I thank you.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a few remarks on this Railway Bill.

Firstly of all I want to refer to the recent

accident of the Karnataka Express.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister.....

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He is listening to you. He has put the earphone also.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): My one ear is all the time with you and my Deputy's both the ears are with you. So out of four ears, three are with you.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER: It is a very serious matter. Because my constituency is involved. Nearly 10 persons from my constituency died in this accident.

I must first of all say that the Railways' Bangalore Division have really done their best in making excellent arrangements to see that the kith and kin of the injured and the dead are contacted. They gave all the facilities. Those who wanted to go by air or by train, for them they have made all the arrangements. But so far as the accident is concerned, I have read in the papers that there was lack of communication between the Railway Ministry and the authorities at the accident spot. I was told that in the papers it was reported that even the hon. Minister who was in Gwalior also got the message five hours later; so also were the Chairman and the members of the Railway Board. It is surprising. Probably, the reports in the papers also said that if only the ambulance and other things had arrived earlier, immediately after the accident, many more lives could have been saved. This is really very unfortunate.

13.00 hrs.

The hon. Minister has given comparative figures somewhere, that the number of

deaths in railway accidents has decreased when compared to previous years. That is not a consolation, because we have got an efficient Minister. We want to see that the aim is to have an almost accident-free functioning, particularly of accidents involving a huge number of deaths. It is really sad that people are losing confidence in the Railway safety since these things happen.

So far as my constituency is concerned, I want to say this here: I was in Bangalore on that day; and when I received the message, I went to the railway station the very next morning. Of course, so far as our railway officials are concerned, I have already said that they had done well. The only grouse the families of the deceased have is that they could not get the dead bodies for 72 hours. I telephoned the Railway Minister's office here in Delhi. Unfortunately, the officer who took the telephone said: 'Sir, *Saab nahin hain*; he is on the spot. I cannot do anything.' Through the Railways, I sent messages; and through various agencies. But what we wanted was this. There were four national *kabaddi* players. One of them was a very capable champion: Rangadev by name. I could not see the pathetic condition of the families of those people. For 72 hours they were crying and crying, particularly the mothers and fathers. You can understand that situation.

The only lapse, I should say, was this: the Railways should have air-lifted the bodies. They should have got the bodies to Jhansi, and from Jhansi to Delhi and from there they could have air-lifted.

Particularly when the bodies arrived at the Bangalore station, there was a lot of confusion there; and the Railway officials and probably the Minister is aware of this: the people were so upset. Even about the special train which brought the bodies, on the first day they said it would come in the morning; then said, 'in the afternoon'. But it

came only in the evening. People were upset, particularly the kith and kin; the *Kabaddi* players particularly had hundreds of admirers, and all had reached the railway station. This is one lapse.

Another accident which took place—about which Mr. Basheer referred to—happened in Kerala. The report of the Railway Safety Commission that has appeared in the papers has aroused in the minds of the people. What has happened is that the people have lost faith in the Railway Safety Commissioner's verdict. The reason given, viz. tornado, looks like a fairy tale. Even the common man, even an illiterate person does not believe it. I do not know how far it is correct. The hon. Minister is saying that they should read the report in full, and only then come to a conclusion. Very good: you place the report in the House. This report was received long back. The hon. Minister should have done it. This is very important. Once the public loses confidence in the Railway Safety Commissioner's report, then it will become worthless it will not be worth the paper on which it is written. The hon. Minister may say that the Railways have nothing to do in the matter, because it comes under the Ministry of Civil Aviation. No; the Government is the same. Whether it is the Railway Ministry or the Ministry of Civil Aviation, it is the Government which is the instrument here.

So, I want to say that the Minister must take it seriously and see that a proper enquiry is held. Let it be an open enquiry, and he should see the actual position. I have read many reports of the Railway Safety Commission. I had also referred to it in my speech on the Railway Budget. The majority of Railway accidents are due to human error, particularly on the part of Railway employees. When our Railwaymen are doing so well, and when our Minister and the Railwaymen have such a good rapport, this is very unfortunate. You should find out the reasons. The hon. Minis-

[Sh. V.S. Krishna Iyer]

ter must see to it. I do not blame the Railway workers. They are very hard-working people. But many reports say this. Even in regard to the Kerala accident, the preliminary report said that it was due to the fault of the Engineer. That was the preliminary report. Of course, the final report is altogether different. You can decide for yourself. My request today is that the Railway Minister must see to it. I was about to ask for speeding up of certain trains. Now I am afraid of asking for it, because I have second thoughts over that matter.

I do not want to ask today about that matter because I want that the railway should see that all necessary steps are taken to complete modernisation; they should also see that whatever equipment for modernisation is necessary should be purchased, because modernisation has been the theme of the railway and you are laying stress on modernisation. So, there should be no difficulty in this respect. Your first and foremost task is to see that there is no railway accident.

With regard to the controversy which has arisen in Karnataka, due to diversion of the Mahalakshmi Express which was running between Bangalore and Miraj and vice versa, it has now been diverted between Mangalore and Miraj. This is one of the prestigious trains. Recently a new train (Udyavan) has also been introduced; that is a boon. So, this diversion is really a curse to the people of Karnataka. Of course, what we want is that, instead of diverting a train from Bangalore via Arsikere to Miraj the Minister could have introduced one more train from Miraj to Mangalore via Arsikere. You have introduced so many trains this year, but not a single train has been introduced for Karnataka State. Please do it now. With regard to diversion of Mahalakshmi Express there was a court stay order, but, probably your officer

got it vacated only yesterday and you had already started diversion of Mahalakshmi Express from yesterday. There was a commotion prevailing in Northern Karnataka; they were so much upset over this matter. So, I would request the hon. Minister to see that Mahalakshmi Express is restored to its original position that is Bangalore-Miraj.

There are so many new lines which are there, but the most important which I want the Minister to consider is that Hubli to Karwar railway connection should be given because there are two naval establishments. The post is being upgraded in Karwar also. Also this is more economical to export ore from Bellary and Hospet through Karwar pat. So, I would request the Minister to order for a survey of Karwar-Hubli line. Always you say that it is financially not viable, but some report says that it is economically viable. That was surveyed one hundred years ago; that would have been completed within a few crore budget; now it has become very costly. Anyhow, that is a very important link because your own naval establishment station is there. So, I would request the Minister to give attention to it.

There is one more important thing. There is just a small bit of a missing link in the doubling of the Madras Rengal Mangalore line that is between Whitefield and Kuppam. Even in this year's budget, you have not provided for it. You please at least see that in the Supplementary Demands for Grants, it should be provided. It is a missing link. Please do it.

My final appeal is regarding modernisation of the Model Station (Bangalore Station). Unfortunately, I differ from the hon. Minister, nothing has been done except one or two reserve lounges. The hon. Minister has told me that the Reservation Centre is a part of that. That was sanctioned long time back even before the Model Station idea came into being. So, please see that suffi-

cient fund should be provided for this project. More than half of the train will be open to sky. You please go and see at the Bangalore Station; whether it is a broad-gauge or metre-gauge. My main object is that accidents should be avoided.

SHRIN. TOMBISINGH (Inner Manipur): I would like to support the Railways Bill which seeks to consolidate and amend the law relating to the railways and also Demands for Excess Grants covered by items 10 and 11. While supporting these items, I would like to make a few important observations.

I belong to one of the States where it has yet to see even an inch of the railway. Even so, as we belong to the country and we have to conduct our national activities throughout the country, we have our own experience of the Indian Railways. It is a fact that Indian Railways have made a tremendous progress and development during the last four decades, particularly after independence.

The Railways Bill today seeks to amend and also consolidate the old law which seeks to make administrative changes and certain other changes. This is a very comprehensive Bill. I do not like to cover all the aspect because it will not be possible within the short time at my disposal. So, I would like to confine myself to the experience in the North-East. For the whole of Assam Valley and for the Southern part of Brahmaputra Valley, the Brahmaputra bridge is the only channel, the only bottleneck, the chicken neck, which takes the Railways to Assam, Barak Valley and the rest of the other North-Eastern States like Arunachal, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura. Whenever anything happens in the Assam Valley, particularly on the northern side of the Brahmaputra, any political agitation or anything, it is so easy to disrupt the whole of the North-East by blocking or by stopping the Railways. That is the only line. I would like to appeal to the Government of India and the

Railway Ministry to see that this is maintained properly, at whatever expenses because it will be very costly, and after years of dreaming, decades of dreaming, and lot of planning and projecting so many years that the Brahmaputra bridge came about. We are grateful to the leadership, the Indian leadership, Panditji who took a keen interest in this. That has given us much relief, but this is the only line which serve so many States. It is a vast area. So, whenever anything happens on this line—and it is happening every day, the Bodo movement for instance—the movement of trains is disrupted. It happened so many times during the last few months. We have experienced lot of hardship in the matter of movement of passengers, movement of essential goods and movement of so many other things and it has led to untold misery. In order to remove this hardship the Government of India should find an alternative route to this. Whenever anything happens on one route, there should be another route where alternative arrangements can be made so that people are not held at ransom, and the Government cannot do anything, because the Railways cannot be taking a risk as thousands of passengers are—thousands of people moving in so many trains—involved, in the affected areas. That is one aspect.

The other aspect that I would like to mention and to draw the attention of the hon. minister through you is that certain States like Tripura and the foothills of Mizoram, and then a portion of Manipur, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, have been promised extension of the railway lines; particularly for my State of Manipur the Government has promised time and again the extension of the line from Silichar to Jari Bam, and that it would be completed within the end of the Seventh Five Year Plan. The promise was made, as far as I remember, by the Government by successive Railway Ministers earlier also. But I have confidence that this time the promise means business. I also hope that it will be

[Sh. N. Tombi Singh]

fulfilled. But as I see it from practical experience, it will be difficult to fulfill the promise within the scheduled time. The progress of work in the field is very slow. I would like to draw the attention of the Government to this and request that a responsible officer may be entrusted this task of fulfilling the promise made on the floor of the House, to ensure that this is done. Because, this promise was made by Shri Ghani Khan Choudhury long ago in 1986 and now we are in 1989. There is a gap of three years. Now, it is time that there is no further gap.

Another point that I would like to make is that about those of the States which do not have their own railway and have been given an out agency, like Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and so many North-Eastern States and Sikkim. Now, coming to Nagaland and Manipur, Nagaland has a railway at Dimapur. They have a certain quota or a number of seats in certain trains. Adjacent to Nagaland is Manipur. We have to pass through Nagaland to catch any train at this point, Dimapur. Therefore, we do not have an adequate number of reserved seats. I have made this demand—a very legitimate demand—a number of times on the floor of this House and also in so many other forums. Many other people also have made it from the State Governments' point of view also that we should have an adequate quota. At present there is no possibility of any train reaching Manipur Valley in the coming hundred years. At least the Government should be generous enough to provide a separate coach for Manipur at the Dimapur point for all the trains passing towards Delhi and Calcutta, particularly I would mention, North Eastern Express, Tin Sukhia and Kamrup going to Howrah. The trains connecting Dimapur with Delhi and Calcutta should have a separate coach for Manipur. I do not know why the Government is so hesitant to provide such a small facility for

these unfortunate and backward States.

The Manipur Valley population is dominantly a Hindu population. They go to pilgrim places of the country. Since they do not have a separate quota of seats, which can be booked at the Imphal out agency, they have to travel by bus. They cover all the pilgrim places including TamilNadu, Rameshwaram, Tripathi, Dwaraka and so many other places. Since they cannot travel by train because of the lack of quota of seats and secondly, lack of experience in travelling by train, they have to resort to bus travelling. By allowing generous quota of seats for Manipur in such trains, as I have mentioned, the Government will be giving opportunities to these people who have been isolated for centuries from the mainstream for sufficient exposure to the mainstream culture.

With these words, I support the Railways Bill and the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways).

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): Sir, in today's Hindustan Times, a news item has come up. New high tech rail describer soon arrives at a cost of 4.35 million pounds to Delhi. And the last item is, in a press release, the Northern Railway said, the 510 down Avadh-Assam Express scheduled to leave New Delhi tomorrow will remain cancelled for want of its link rake as the 509 Up is not coming today due to derailment on NF Railway. This is the Indian Railways crisis.

In some domains, Indian Railways has done better and carrying of freights has been better. But in the matter of catering service to the rural India—some branch lines, it has utterly failed. I want to draw your particular attention to this. Another point I want to draw the notice of the Government is regarding corruption on the Indian Railways. I would have liked Mr. Scindia and Mr. Rajiv to be present. I had written a letter to Mr. Scindia

and Mr. Rajiv Gandhi on 3rd November 1988. In Jamshedpur, there are two stations, one is Adityapur and another is Tatanagar. Adityapur is meant to carry materials, to the Tatas and whatever goods coming out of Tatas and exported from Tatas pass through Tatanagar, where weigh bridge is there and booking is done there. From 1973 onwards Tatas in connivance with a section of Railway officers carried several thousands of wagons through Adityapur and not through Tatanagar, without making payment of a single paisa as freight. This was brought to the notice by some railway men and Bihar Government made a case. The greatest of the great in Jamshedpur in Tatanagar moved even the Chief Secretary of Bihar Government to drop the case but the Bihar Government did not drop the case. The Bihar Government proceeded with the case and issued a chargesheet against 13 persons, of which 8 were railway men. But to prosecute a railway officer Railway Board's permission is needed. This great august Railway Board building where many great officers and Ministers live, did not permit the Government of Bihar to prosecute the Railway officers continuously for seven years and the Bihar Court had to drop this case because the Railway Board did not give permission to prosecute the Railway Officers. I demanded that CBI inquiry be made and this thing should be properly looked into. The hon. Minister Shri Scindia, has given me a reply saying that there was no criminal intention on the part of the railway officials. He has become an advocate. The lapse of having booked freight in unbooked wagons was detected by the Railways on their own and the recovery was also effected. Since the Tatas had given back that money after being caught, so no railway officer could be punished or prosecuted. But I would like to know whether very small men, some clerks or some small officers, are not prosecuted and punished by the Railway Vigilance for many small lapses. Why do you allow these lapses to continue when these lapses come from

big persons? Mr. Scindia has given me a reply posing himself to be an advocate of the Tatas. So double standard is going on. I again demand that this case should be probed by the CBI why the Tatas were allowed to carry the material through Adityapur and why the Railway Ministry was silent. Is it because Tatas are involved?

Modernisation is going on in the Indian Railways and hundreds of crores of rupees are being spent in the name of modernisation. Even today the Hindustan Times has mentioned about modernisation. Definitely something is being done. But there is rampant corruption in this. I gave a detailed letter to the Minister regarding corruption in the name of modernisation in Kharagpur Railway Workshop. I was given a reply that an enquiry was made. I made the complaint. But when the enquiry was made, I was not consulted. I make a complaint. The enquiring officers go from Delhi. They make enquiries. They never consult us and they give the clean chit that nothing has happened. I again demand that let an enquiry be properly held and I be associated with the enquiry. If I fail to prove, you punish me even and if it is proved and if you try to hide those officers who are doing these things, then you should get the punishment. In the name of modernisation at Kharagpur, officers have bought new cars, new fridges for their offices and bungalows. Even hospital ambulances are being bought and brought in the name of modernisation. Is it the meaning of modernisation that the hospitals need ambulances and the money should come from the modernisation fund?

I will take advantage of this debate to place before the Minister some other points. Derailments and accidents have become very common features. Why is it so? Particularly in the section between Kanpur and Allahabad, derailments are frequent and trains are diverted via Lucknow to Howrah. I would like to request the Railway Ministry

[Sh. Narayan Choubey]

and the Railway Board officers to ponder over it. Railways came to India in 1853. Till a few years back, many things on the Indian Railways were done by the contractors, but the Britishers as well as our independent Government did not allow the maintenance of tracks to be handled by the contractors. But in the name of economy, for saving the money which was spent on casual labour, from saving themselves from the troubles which the casual labourers create by asking for permanent jobs, the Railways have handed over all these things to the contractors very recently, some two to four years back. Definitely it has saved a lot of money for the Railways. But on the question whether derailments have increased or not, whether the quality of jobs has fallen or not, the Railways can give us a very pet reply by saying, yes, PWIs and other Railway officials are supposed to look after the jobs themselves. But are they properly doing it? Are the contractors' jobs to be looked after by everybody, by every official everywhere? I think this particular portion of the railway track which I have mentioned, should be reviewed by the Railways. When some section like the Howrah-Delhi section stops for two days, three days, you may save some money by not spending it on casual labour or by not spending on the railwaymen, but what is the amount of the national loss when the entire country comes to halt? I think, they should ponder over it.

As regards Railway Hospitals, the Railway Ministry, the Railway officers know that there are hundreds and hundreds of vacancies in those hospitals. Our railwaymen used to get some medical benefits from the Railway Hospitals but now they are not getting those benefits. Even in a place like Delhi, our national capital, the Railway Hospital has no pathologist. If the Railway officials feel that their blood should be tested, then they have to go to some Central Government hospital

or some State Government hospital. Even in a place like Delhi, the Railway Hospital has no pathologist. In the South-Eastern Railway Hospital at Kharagpur, my own area, there are a dozen vacancies. The Railway is failing to fill up those vacancies. I think they should now ponder over it. Previously *ad hoc* doctors were appointed. Since the *ad hoc* doctors move for permanent jobs, so neither the Railways are appointing *ad hoc* doctors, nor the Public Service Commission is providing them suitable doctors in time. So, more and more doctors are retiring and less and less doctors are coming in. I think this is posing a very serious problem. So, the Railways should look into it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now wind up please.

SHRINARAYAN CHOUBEY: Yes, I am winding up. Regarding paucity of staff, more and more staff is retiring and less and less staff is being taken in. A number of vacancies in the India Railways remain to be filled up and the Government, in the name of economy, is not appointing railwaymen, thus leading to lesser service, leading to accidents, leading to derailments, leading to delays. These things should be looked after by the Ministry immediately. Of course, you can save a lot of money but this will be at the cost of the railwaymen and at the cost of the country.

The last point that I would like to mention is about the third line from Kharagpur to Panskura and the fourth line from Panskura to Kharagpur. The survey has been conducted. Now the work should start. It should be taken up immediately, otherwise this busiest section from Kharagpur to Howrah is getting choked day by day. So, please see that this section gets some relief. Otherwise the entire section is coming to a halt.

With these words, I again request the Railway Minister to ponder over how they

are running the Indian Railways.

SHRIV. KRISHNA RAO (Chikballapur):

Sir, I would like to support the Railways Bills and Demands brought forward by the hon. Railway Minister, Shri Madhavrao Scindia, in this House. Sir, recently the Karnataka Express had met with an accident near Jhansi in which about 60 and odd persons had died and a number of passengers were injured. This accident could have been avoided had the Railway staff been alerted a little earlier before the Express could pass through the accident spot. That is the information given by the passengers who travelled in the same train. About 150 passengers who travelled in the same ill-fated train came to my residence at Delhi and told me about the accident. Fortunately, most of them had survived in this accident. These passengers had also visited the Prime Minister who expressed his happiness at their survival and safe journey.

Sir, I am happy that the hon. Railway Minister has introduced the Karnataka Express to pass via Guntakal. This is a good sign and will help people of Karnataka feel happy that the train is going through Karnataka State instead of running via Andhra Pradesh. Sir, the catering facilities provided in the trains are not good. This should be improved. Sir, there was a train called Mahalakshmi Express which was running from Bangalore to Miraj to link the Bombay Express. But unfortunately it has been deviated from Arisikare to Mangalore, instead of going via Bangalore. I would request the hon. Minister that this Express should be restored, that is, it should run between Bangalore and Miraj. If necessary, to cater to the needs of the passengers in those areas, another train may be introduced to connect Mangalore and Miraj, instead of deviating the existing schedule of running of the Mahalakshmi Express.

Sir, you would agree that Bangalore is a very important capital city in Karnataka and

there is no separate Zone for this region. We have to depend upon the Southern Railway Zone and for some portion of Karnataka we have to depend on the South-Central Railway Zone. Sir, we have been requesting the Government that Bangalore may be considered for the headquarters of South-Western Railway Zone. This request has been pending for long. Thousands and thousands of workers and a number of railway stations and junctions have to be looked after in the South-Western zone. A separate Railway Zone, that is, South-Western Zone, with its headquarters at Bangalore would go a long way in proper maintenance and working of the Railways in this region.

Another request which I have been making to the hon. Railway Minister is that the present metre-gauge line between Bangalore and Mysore should be converted into a broad-gauge line. This is a very important line. A very large number of tourists and pilgrims and other businessmen are visiting these cities daily. If the metre-gauge line is converted into a broad-gauge line, there will be easy flow of commuters tourists and businessmen in this section. I would therefore request that the Government may take action immediately to convert the metre-gauge line into Broad-gauge line between Bangalore and Mysore. This request has been pending for a long time. Similarly, there is a metre-gauge line between Bangalore and Miraj. This line is connecting South and North of our country. I would plead with the Minister that this line should also be converted into a broad-gauge line. This is a very important line which passes through my constituency. Yelahanka-Bangarupet. Sir, from my constituency, that is, Chikballapur a large quantity of potatoes is grown and a greater percentage of them is exported to Rangoon and also sent to other parts of our country like Simla, etc. Sir, because of the transportation difficulties in Chikballapur, the farmers are facing a lot of difficulties in sending their produce to other parts of the

[Sh. V. Krishna Rao]

country and in this they are losing very heavily. Large quantity of potatoes will have to be transported through railway wagons from Yelahanka and unless the railway line in Yelahanka section is converted into a broad-gauge, the transportation difficulties will not be solved. We have to keep the potatoes for so many days in the wagons. So, they will be spoiled during transportation. Hence I request the conversion of this Yelahanka-Bangarupet line from narrow gauge to broad gauge.

Like that, the Chitradurg—Rayadurg line which has been sanctioned and started, should be completed as early as possible. The Mangalore-Udipi line also has been taken up. It should be completed early. The Kuppam-Krishnarajpuram line is a single line till now. The time which takes from Madras to Kuppam, so much time it takes from Kuppam to Bangalore, it being a single line. So, just to avoid delay, I request you to kindly see that doubling of this line is taken up as early as possible.

About electrification from Jwalarpur, it has been pending for the last 10 to 12 years. I request you to kindly see that electrification is done as early as possible.

We are happy that the railway axle plant has been established in Karnataka, that too in Yelahanka, when Mr. Jaffar Sharief was the Railway Minister, but unfortunately, I regret to say that Kannadigas have been neglected. Most of the appointments are not at all from Kannadigas. They are from outside. Please give preference to the Kannadigas first and see that the posts are filled from Kannadigas only. The local people, the labourers, have not been given any preference. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY: In Bengal, then, only Bengalis will work and in Bihar

only Biharis will work. It has become a State Government affair then. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO: I tell you, unskilled labourers have not been taken.

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJU (Tumkur): Mr. Choubey, I hope you are not going to ask for the closure of this plant. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO: Anyhow, preference has to be given to the local people. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJU: Axile plant will be closed if it is in Mr. Choubey's constituency. We know you are the destroyers of all industries.

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO: With these words, I support the Railway Budget.

SHRI GEORGE JOSEPH MUNDACKAL (Muvattupuzha): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am supporting the Demands for Grants of the Railways.

Recently the Technical Committee's report has come out about the train accident in Kerala. It is very very bad because nobody will believe that report. So, kindly make a judicial inquiry or adopt some other method to find out what was the reason for the accident.

The second thing is, Kerala is situated far in the South. The railway is treating Kerala very badly. Kerala is getting step-motherly treatment. We have got only 810 kilometers of railway in Kerala. According to the population of Kerala, we have to get at least 2500 kilometres of railway. That means, we have got only one-third of the All-India level. The compartments are very old. We are getting the maximum rainfall in our country. Unfortunately people are sitting in the railway compartments with open umbrellas in the rainy season. People are actually

laughing at this sitting in the railway compartments with open umbrellas. Like that, condemned engines and compartments are coming. That is why we are usually getting more accidents in Kerala. So, kindly send good compartments and engines to South. There are no auxiliary industries in Kerala. All the other States have got industries, either a wagon factory or an engine factory or some other factory. Unemployment is a big problem in Kerala. Unfortunately Railways have not started any auxiliary industries in Kerala.

Concerning the electrification work, they are saying that no traffic is passing.

The most thickly populated State is Kerala and we are paying the maximum railway fare to the Department also. Unfortunately, not even a single inch of railway line is electrified in Kerala. The Alleppey-Quilon line is completed only for 100 kms and that means only 900 kms. It means that we are getting only 35 per cent at the all India level. So, I request the Railway Minister to kindly take up the new railway line like Cochin-Madurai line. Some two years back the survey was over and now they are saying that funds are not there. Either they will say that it is not feasible or economical. How can it be? That area is earning a foreign exchange of more than Rs. 300 crores by exporting tea, cardamom and pepper. One year of foreign exchange is good enough for constructing these railway lines. The people there are working in hill stations fighting with wild elephants and malaria and earn foreign exchange. But they have no facility for travelling. So, I request the Railway Minister to reconsider and take up the inter-State railway line of Cochin-Madurai. If goods are to be taken to Suez Canal, America or Europe, they have to go rounding about Ceylon. Instead of going straightaway to the West, they are going to the eastern direction rounding about Shri Lanka and going back to Suez Canal. So, it is a national waste. How much

distance the ship has to travel and how much energy we have to spend? So, I request the Railway Minister to complete the line of Cochin-Madurai early so that people can go to Western countries easily. Like that, if a passenger wants to go to Bombay from Mangalore or Cochin, he has to go to east coast and then he has to go to west coast again. So, a lot of time and energy is lost in travelling this excess distance. So, I request the Railway Minister to complete the Mangalore-Kongan railway line as early as possible and electrify the lines in Kerala. In the long distance trains like Kerala Express, the food is very bad. Especially, in the north, we are getting food in a small aluminium foil and the items are costing Rs. 2/- or Rs. 3/- more now. It is not according to the taste of the passengers also. I request the Railway Minister to give good food. I asked a question about three weeks back that the super-fast Kerala Express is reaching its destination only 30 per cent in time. That means not even once in three days, it is reaching in time either in Delhi or Trivandrum and you are charging super-fast charges also for this train. I request the Minister to see that the above train runs in time. I am supporting the demands for grants.

[*Translation*]

SHRI HAFIZ MOHD. SIDDIQ (Moradabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I thank you for granting me opportunity to speak on the supplementary demands for grants of Railways. Keeping in line with the progress achieved by our country, the Railways too have made considerable advance in their functioning. We have been provided with facilities by the railway department after independence which were not available to us earlier. Various railway lines have been laid due to the sincere efforts of our Railway Minister and the officials of his Ministry and efforts have been made to link the one end of the country with the other. Thus we see that the progress made by the railway depart-

[Sh. Hafiz Mohd. Siddiq]

ment, is praise-worthy and I would like to avail this opportunity to thank the hon. Minister of State of the Ministry of Railways Shri Madhav Rao Scindia and the Deputy Minister Shri Mahabir Prasad. They have introduced many trains. A new train has been provided in my constituency also between Dehradun and Kanpur for which I, on my own behalf and on behalf of the people of my area thank them. At present railway facilities are being extended keeping in view the transportation needs of the country but I would like to submit 2-3 points. Firstly, it has been noticed that the toilets in passenger trains lack in respect of water, so much so that in many trains even proper taps are not there. There is a need to pay attention towards it. Similarly people have to suffer due to non-availability of reservation, I can say about Moradabad that there is a need to increase these facilities there so that people may get reservation easily. Moradabad-Bareilly double line is already under construction but work is going on very slowly, it should be expedited so that people may get this facility early. Similarly, the work on modernisation of Moradabad railway station is at a stand still, efforts should be made to complete it.

It is a famous centre of trade of utensils. Utensils are exported from here to the whole of India and the world, but there is not direct train from Moradabad to Agra. Foreign tourist visit Agra and there are bright prospects of increasing the trade in utensils. Therefore, I demand that a direct train should be run between Moradabad and Agra. The conversion work from Moradabad to Agra has been completed due to the personal efforts made by the hon. Minister. We are highly thankful to him for it. Nainital is very near to Ramnagar and the tourists from abroad as well as from all corners of the country go there but there is no direct train from there to Nainital. I would therefore, suggest that a direct train should be introduced for Nainital and an-

other train should be introduced for Bombay for the convenience of passengers. With these words, while congratulating the hon. Minister, I support the demands.

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): I also support his demands.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, while speaking on the Railway Bill Shri Ramaiah said certain things, I want to refer to one point about Andhra Pradesh Express. I wrote a letter to hon. Minister about it but no action has been taken on it. This train leaves at 2 p.m. and reaches the next day at 5 p.m. after 26 hours whereas it should not take more than 24 hours. Thus our two days are wasted. We have raised this point many times, have also written to the hon. Minister and it was also discussed with the Railway officials but the new time-table published on 1st May shows its departure time at 2.15 p.m. from New Delhi and arrival at Secunderabad at 5 p.m. the next day, thus two days are wasted. G.T. takes one day and two nights to reach Madras, thus one day only is wasted. When we can reach Madras wasting single day time, why can't it be done in case of Andhra Pradesh? Tamil Nadu Express also leaves during the night and takes two nights and one day to complete the journey. G.T. and Tamil Nadu Express start almost simultaneously i.e. one follows the other? Why can't it be done in case of Andhra Pradesh Express? Is it because there is no Andhra Pradesh official in the Board, General Manager belongs to Madras. I mean to say that Andhra Pradesh Express should reach within 24 hours. If it starts at 5 O'clock it can reach by 8 O'clock. It should start from here either in the morning or in the evening but not in the afternoon. I have written several letters to you about it but your officers do not want to give a reply or acknowledge the letters. Loose time of 3-4 hours is provided to Bangalore-Hyderabad Express so that private buses may reach earlier than this train. This

approach must be changed. I have written a letter to you but no reply has been received. While going to Hindupur, Bangalore the train remains stationed for 2-3 hours because buses operate between Bangalore-Hyderabad. Thus bus reaches earlier than the train. Therefore, people prefer to go by bus instead of train. Your officers take bribe and hold up the trains. This loose time should be done away with. Trains should reach Bangalore from Hyderabad within 14 hours. Time of A.P. Express should also be altered at the earliest. The plea of shortage of coaches is taken and money is needed for manufacturing new coaches. The proposed coach factory has been shifted from Kazipet to Punjab and another factory has been installed in Madras. One coach factory has been provided at the each of the two ends of the country but we in middle have been left in the lurch to suffer. Your export committee had also recommended setting up of a coach factory at Kazipet, but you put this proposal in the cold-storage and installed it in Punjab for the sake of national integration. You thought that unemployment was responsible for increase in extremist activities and people were starving there. So a factory has been installed there but it has been proved now that it was totally a different case. Extremism is increasing in Andhra Pradesh due to starvation, number of naxalites is increasing, so is the case with atrocities and unemployment. Even then you have made no efforts to instal a factory there. You did not provide relief where it was needed. You try to cure a patient without identifying the limb affected by the disease. You do not go into the root cause of the illness. Therefore, I would submit that a coach factory should be set up at Kazipet so that unemployment may be removed. I have also written letters about providing a manned level crossing at Jangaon. You say that not more than one manned level crossing can be provided within a distance of 5 Kms. If the municipality or the *Gram Panchayat* agrees to pay Rs. 2 lakh or to bear the maintenance charge, you are

prepared to provide manned level crossing. Manned crossing should be provided at least at a distance of every 2 Kms. to save fuel, petrol and diesel. Efforts should be made to provide at least unmanned level crossing within a distance of 2 Kms. I had written a letter about it. There is a Municipality in my constituency known as Jangaon. An over bridge is under construction there after completion of which manned crossing will automatically go. There is one at a distance of 3 Kms., where the population is about 30-40 thousand. Municipality was approached for contributing Rs. 2 lakh for the construction of the manned crossing but when they did not have money even for sanitation, drinking water, medicines etc., how can they provide money for a manned crossing. Therefore, I request the hon. Railway Minister to complete it as early as possible. You are providing stop of trains on the direction of your Ministers. A stop has been provided at Madura for the Konark Express because Shri Vengal Rao asked for it. There is a great difference between the population of Madura and Jangaon. Population of Madura is 15,000 only whereas that of Jangaon is 50,000 but you are not providing a halt for this train at Jangaon. When we asked the officials the reasons for providing a stop for the Konark or Minar Express at Madura but not Jangaon, they replied that we should ask the hon. Minister about it. In case of a super fast train, you have a positive rule that a halt will be provided at Taluk headquarter or the size of population will be the yardstick. It is not fair that you provided a halt just on the mere recommendation of your Cabinet colleague. Please try to halt Godavari, Gonti and Narsipur Express trains in Andhra Pradesh at old Taluk headquarters and it should be done at an early date so that trade movement may be facilitated. There is a Char Minar Express and a Madras Express. Madras Express used to halt at Jangaon earlier but now it does not stop there and Char Minar is a super fast train so it will not halt there.

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE (Rajapur): Not Char Minar, it may be Minar Express.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY: Minar Express was started during your time, now there is Char Minar Express.

PROF. MADHU DANAVATE: There is Char Minar Cigarette also.

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY: I would appeal that Jangaon is a big municipality and its population is about 50,000, so these trains should halt there. Efforts should be made to provide halt of these trains at old Talukas in Andhra Pradesh, whose population is 20 to 50 thousand and where volume of trade is considerable. It does not sound well if we have to beg before the Railway Minister even for stoppages. Efforts should be made to provide bed rolls in first class when these are supplied in A.C. II. The misuse of facility provided to freedom fighters should be checked. A division should be opened at Kazipet and I also request for establishing an electric locomotive shed there.

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar): Hon. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I support the Railway Bill, 1986 moved in the House by the Railway Minister. Railways have made appreciable achievements in their sphere of activities and the hon. Railway Minister, his colleague Shri Mahabir Prasad and the Railway officials and the entire railway fraternity deserve to be thanked for that. Today, Railway department has set new records throughout India. Its progress is closely linked with the progress of the country. Various on-going projects and works of various railway departments, the objective set out and the approach adopted by the Railway Minister and Railway Ministry are quite appropriate for the expansion and development of the Railways.

14.00 hrs.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for the corporate plan. With his prudence, he has presented a 15 year corporate plan from 1984-85 to 1999-2000, in which all the needs of the country regarding freight and passenger traffic have been kept in view. The hon. Minister of Railways and all the officials of his Ministry deserved to be congratulated for this. This corporate plan has been prepared in view of the needs of the country upto the year 2000. Besides, in view of the increasing population of the country, necessary provision has been made for a big target in respect of passenger traffic.

14.01 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*]

The major objective of corporate plans is to make the railways capable of handling the projected passenger traffic of 415 to 440 billion kilometres which includes non-suburban traffic of 310-330 billions and suburban traffic of 105-110 billion kilometres. This plan in itself is very unique, and it was very much needed for the development of the railways. The hon. Minister of Railways deserves to be congratulated for this.

Among all the corporations or public undertakings under the Ministry of Railways, I would especially like to praise IRCON, which has earned a great name both inside the country and broad by completing their work with full responsibility and within the scheduled time. It has shown good standard of work in all contracts it bagged in the country and abroad. IRCON has got most of its contract in foreign countries. It has earned valuable foreign exchange for the country. Besides, a number of engineers and skillful persons of our country has got employment through it. I would like to congratulate IRCON for helping the Indian Railways in

achieving so much of progress, as a result of which it has come at par with the progress achieved by the railways of other developing countries of the world. Today, IRCON has earned a profit of Rs. 27 crores. In 1976-77, it started with a turnover of Rs. 2 crores which has now increased to Rs. 208 crores. The performance of this public undertaking is really commendable. While on the one hand, it provides employment to the engineers, graduates and other youths of the country, on the other hand, we have got opportunities to show our competence in railway construction works through global tenders. It enhances the skill and keeps the morale of our officials high. I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railway, for he has presented the present Railway Bill in a consolidated form before the House. There were many shortcomings in the earlier Railway Bill which were not rectified. The present Railway Bill will take care of those shortcomings. The hon. Minister of Railways deserves to be congratulated as it is for the first time that a tribunal each for freight and passenger traffic has been appointed which will suggested freight rates in the country. This is altogether a new concept. For the first time an arrangement has been made, under which it will be decided democratically as to how much fare the railway can charge from a passenger and how much the passenger can pay for the mode of conveyance or the vehicle he is using. This democratic system has been included in the present Railway Bill. Now there will a tribunal in the railway department with a Chief Commissioner and two co-members. One of the members will be a financial expert and the other a management expert. So the provisions made in the Railway Bill to set up a Railway Tribunal is a commendable step.

In clause 106 of the Railway Act, it has been stated by the hon. Minister of Railways that it will be necessary to give a notice before presenting any claim against the Railways and the claimant cannot challenge

it in the Civil Court or any other court once the claim has been fixed by the Railways even after receiving the notice. I think this clause needs to be reviewed because after the claim is fixed by the railways, the person who has suffered loss or who is the right person to get the claim, can go to the Railway claim Tribunal and can challenge its decision also as the constitution and our civil law, both has given this right to the common citizen. You have tried to deprive him of this right on the ground that if the person has been already given the compensation alongwith the copy of the verdict given by the Railway Claim Tribunal, he cannot challenge it in the civil court. According to the law, the person, who has incurred loss due to damage, has the right to challenge it in a civil court. In my view, it is not justified to deprive him of this right under the law. Such provision can be challenged in the Court and even in the Supreme Court. The hon. Minister has expressed concern about the payments of accident claims and has desired that claims should be settled early. In accident claims and especially in the case involving death of a passenger, the first instalment of the claim should be paid within one month of the accident whether the application has been submitted or not. At least, one fifth of the claim. i.e. Rs. 25 thousand should be given within one month. There is a provision in the Motor Vehicle Act also that Rs. 15 thousand will be paid in lump sum in the beginning itself. In the same way, Rs. 25 thousand should be given initially in the case of railways also. In view of the prevailing situation, the next kin of the deceased passenger should be given a claim of Rs. 1.5 lakh.

Besides, I would like to submit that the delay in the payment of accident claims should be checked and they should be disposed of expeditiously. There is a provision in the Act regarding the inheritors of the deceased person. I think that the decision of inheritors should be decided according to the personal laws governing such persons.

[Sh. Ram Singh Yadav]

The provision in this regard should be that if the person is a Hindu, he should be governed by the Hindu succession Act, if the person is a Muslim, he should be governed by the Muslim Succession Act and if the person is a christian, he should be deal with by the Indian Succession Act. The inheritors should be decided in accordance with these laws and not under the provision made in the Railway Bill.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to submit few points to the hon. Minister of Railways about my constituency-Alwar. First, I would like to thank him for starting the construction work on Mathura-Alwar broad gauge railway line from Alwar side. There was some dispute about the land acquisition in Mathura but in Alwar, about 60-70 kilometres of land, which fell under Rajasthan was handed over to the railway department after acquisition. If there is any dispute on one-two miles, it will be settled soon by us in cooperation with the Government of Rajasthan. This work is going on at high speed. But I would request that as this project involves an outlay of Rs. 44 crores and only Rs. 7 crores have been provided this year, some more amount should be provided to this project under supplementary demands, so that this project could be completed as early as possible. It is your wish to link Alwar and Jaipur with broadgauge railway line, but finance creates hindrance in it. I hope that the hon. Minister will provide this amount as the Ministry of Railways is earning a lot of profit.

I would request you to inaugurate the work on the overbridge, which has been sanctioned near the Alwar railway station. But Government should provide more fund for this project, as it involves a cost of Rs. 1.20 crores, but allocation made for it is only Rs. 40 lakhs. The State Government on its part has completed the linkage on both sides. Therefore, this project should be completed

before December this year.

The railway department has themselves recommended that Khanpur Ahir, which is at present a flag station should be converted into a regular station, as students, farmers and labourers catch train from there and the number of passengers there is also very large. There is a lot of freight traffic also. Therefore, Khanpur Ahir, which is located on Rewari-Bandikui section and about which I was given written assurance by the railway department, should be converted into a regular station.

With these words, I congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for his successful efforts to rectify the shortcomings in the law by presenting a new Bill in the House.

[English]

SHRI SATYAGOPAL MISRA (Tamluk): Sir, some proposals were made from all sections of the House to bring a comprehensive Railway Bill and accordingly the hon. Railway Minister brought a comprehensive Bill and then the Railway Bill was sent to the Joint Select Committee of both the Houses and the Joint Select Committee discussed it at length for more than two years.

Some valuable points were raised and many of them were accepted. I welcome them. I want to point out two things. In my opinion those two things should have been incorporated in the Bill. First, what should have been incorporated is that the persons who force the Loco Running Staff to work for more than ten hours at a stretch should be punished. If they force the Loco Running Staff to work for more than ten hours at a stretch, then warning should be given. It should have been there.

Regarding accidents, I welcome the suggestions for accident benefits. But suppose if some gang men or engineering staff

work at the railway line and at that time, if accident takes place, unfortunately they face death. What type of compensation will they receive? Some type of compensation should be given, because they will be on duty.

Another thing I would like to point out is that suppose if some persons work besides the railway line and that time if some railway accident takes place, they face death. What type of compensation is given to them? It is not their fault. So these should have been incorporated in the Bill.

Coming to the Supplementary Demands, passenger amenities should be there, because two major problems are there. One is old coaches and the other is sick lines. So replacement of old coaches and replacement of sick lines are necessary. Both old coaches and sick lines are responsible for railway accidents and these things should be looked into. No doubt, old coaches are being replaced by new coaches but the ratio of replacement is very poor. We had the unfortunate experience of the Kerala accident last year when some persons died. Some report about this accident has come. Is it because of human failure or as has been reported by some newspapers it was on account of tornado which took away seven to eight coaches from the railway track? I would like to know the actual state of affairs? The report should be placed on the Floor of the House and the House should discuss it. This year we have the experience of the accident of the Karnataka Express. My point is that old coaches and sick lines should be replaced according to the need and necessity.

There are some on-going projects in my state of West Bengal. Nobody knows when those projects will be completed. Firstly I would like to know when Tamluk-Dhiga project will be completed. Some announcements have been made but we want to know when Balurghat—Eklakhi project will be completed. How much time it will take for its

completion. Further more when will the construction of Buzz-Buzz-Lakshmikartapur Railway line be completed. A very meagre amount has been provided in the budget and, as such, I do not think this project can be completed even within fifty years. I understand that Howrah-Bargachia-Amta Siakhla project has been given up. Nobody knows about the fate of this project. In the year 1971 the foundation stone of this project was laid but now in the year 1989 we find the fate of that project still hangs in balance.

Another thing is metro rail. I know there are some problems. Four court cases are pending. Nobody knows how much time the court will take. But if necessary amount is not sanctioned (which is more than Rs. 150 crores) the metro rail will not get completed. The problem is money. That point should be looked into.

Another point is regarding the conversion of steam engines to electric and diesel engines. That is one of the priorities given by the railways. In West Bengal there is Bandel-Katua line. For a long time we have been demanding for the conversion of this line into electric line but no answer is coming from the Railway Ministry. In Tripura, at the time of elections so many projects were sanctioned but no money has been provided for their implementation. Nobody knows when Agartala will be connected with the railway line. We do not want promises. We want actual construction of the railway line. I hope the Railway Minister will look into these matters and give possible answer.

[Translation]

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I think three things are needed for Indian Railways—First of all the blessings of Planning Commission in order to get larger allocation of funds, second the public sympathy and the third is a hardworking Minister and disciplined work-force. Luckily

[Sh. Harish Rawat]

we have got the hard-working Minister and disciplined work-force. But the Railways is not getting adequate allocation of funds from the Planning Commission and it is because of this reason the Ministry of Railways and the Minister of Railways find themselves unable to implement projects which they think necessary and it results in creating certain problems. So far as the Public sympathy is concerned Railways is an integral part of public life. But recently some elements have started taking recourse to sabotage on railway tracks in order to give vent to their hostile feelings. If there is an strike in textile mill, if there is an agitation against any state Government, if there is Bengal Bandh because of political decisions, railway lines are blocked, rail-roko agitation is started. The result is that the people have to suffer, railways have to suffer and the worst point is that the functioning of the Ministry is disturbed. I think that the Ministry of Railways should start a systematic propaganda campaign through television network and other medias to educate the public that the 'rail-roko' agitation causes a heavy loss to the Railways and a great inconvenience to the common man.

Many of the hon. Members have expressed their concern over the various railway accidents. I also share their feelings. I am a member of this House since 1980. During the period 1980 to 1983-84, Railways had always been a target of criticism for inefficient functioning, railway accidents, theft incidents and for many other such things. But after this period the functioning of Railways has improved considerably. When there is a discussion on Railways, we demand a new railway-lines, upgradation of railway-stations and other improvements, but now there is no criticism for inefficient working of Railways. This factor needs to be analysed. We all want that the Railway system should be made accident free. I think the hon. Min-

ister of Railways must be feeling very much concerned in the matter. But it is really very difficult to achieve this motive in our country which is quite large in area and where railway net-work is spread all over the country. Railways cannot be made completely accident free also because there are so many constraints and problems, and a number of various other external factors which are beyond the control of the Railways. In view of all these factors I think that even God cannot make it accident free. It is possible that cases of accidents can be minimised. If we review the position of the last 3-4 years, we find that the percentage of accidents has been reduced considerably. I think that the percentage of such accidents during the current year has come down by 32 per cent. We may find cases of accidents in countries like Japan, Germany, France and England where latest available technology has been employed.

Any railway accident whether it is major or minor, in any place in the country is a matter of concern for the House, the country and the Railways. The Ministry of Railways has developed certain practices to make the bereaved families feel that the Ministry of Railways and the Government stand with them. It is a sad thing if we do not acknowledge this fact. Hon. Minister of Railways does not expect any appreciation from me because his work is an appreciation in itself. Moreover, I bear a number of personal grievances with the hon. Minister and if I refer them all.

[English]

I think I can speak for at least 30 or 40 minutes about these complaints.

[Translation]

But besides the personal grievances when I evaluate his performance as the Minister of Railways and the working of Railways.

[*English*]

as a Member, I feel proud.

[*Translation*]

and I want to submit that this fact should be acknowledged. I do not mean to undermine the gravity of the accidents... The Members in this House have expressed a deep concern over the accident of Cochin Express. I also share their views. The working of the commissioner of Railway safety has been criticised in the house and in the press as well. The working of the commissioner for Railway safety is not out of the purview of this House. The House has got full authority to review or to criticize the functioning of the Safety Commissioner. But to see things in a way that the commissioner will make efforts to cover up the railway fault is not proper. It is due to this very fact that the policy makers in our country have put him under the Ministry of Civil Aviation and not under the Ministry of Railways. The report of the commissioner for Railway Safety is submitted by the Ministry of Civil Aviation every year and the brief of the report is placed on the Table of the House. I think that in about 80-90 per cent cases, in which enquiries were conducted by the Railway Safety Commissioner, the functioning of the Railways has been criticised. He has criticised the man-management. Its manual faults and tracks etc. It is not that he has never criticised the working of the Railways. He has made severe criticism of it. He has written critical notes about the working of Railways. The information about the reaction of the Ministry of Railways to the criticism made by the commissioner should also be made available to the Members of the House. But, I regret to say that we always try to criticize the impartial attitude of the commissioner. I also do not agree that storm had caused the railway coaches to sink into the lake. It is my personal view. May be, the

velocity of the wind was high. But it would not be a good tradition to criticise the working of the commissioner without considering all the aspects. I am not challenging the rights of the hon. Members. I would like the hon. Minister to provide the comparative figures of the Railway accidents in the developed countries. It is true that the number of the accidents has gone down during the current year but I would like the hon. Minister to tell us as to in how many cases the Railway Safety Commissioner has found the Railways responsible for the accidents and what measures have been taken by the Railways to improve its working.

With these words I support the Railway Bill and the Railway Appropriation Bill presented in the House by the hon. Minister of Railways.

SHRI RAJKUMAR RAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways towards Varanasi-Bhatni railway track.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: No please. You cannot speak without my permission. Do not record any thing.

(*Interruptions*)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot disturb the House in this manner. I have already called the other hon. member. Please sit down.

[*Translation*]

*SHRI P. APPALANARASIMHAM (Ankapalli): Mr. Chairman, Sir, we were extremely happy when Shri Madhav Rao Scindia took over the Ministry of Railways. He is young and dynamic Minister. We ex-

**Not recorded.

*Translation of the speech originally delivered in Telugu.

[Sh. P. Appalanarasimham]

pected a lot from him. But unfortunately there is hardly any improvement seen in the functioning of Railways in the last two years.

Sir, the railway station in the north have improved a lot during the few years. Unfortunately the stations in the Southern part of the country especially in Andhra Pradesh have seen no improvement at all. Many of the stations which are adjacent to the national Highways in the State were neglected very badly. To cite an example at Pendurthy a railway flyover bridge was sanctioned long ago. Even tenders were invited. Foundation stone was also laid. Yet, the actual construction work has not yet been started. Similarly a bridge at Ankapalli was sanctioned long ago and yet nothing has been done.

Sir, at present the link express which runs from Visakhapatnam to New Delhi is linked with Dakshin Express. This sort of arrangement has proved utterly useless. This train runs through 5 districts. The running time of the train has gone up by 6 hrs. Moreover the train has not proved beneficial to the passengers of this area because of its slow-running. There are no A.C. coaches available in this train everyday. Yalaman-chali station is in my constituency. It is an important station and covers 6 mandals. Madras-Howra Mail 3 UP and 4 Don, and East Coast Express 45 and 46, are not halting at Yelamanchali. I represented the case, to you several times in the past. I raised this matter in Consultative Committee meeting also. But no action has been taken so far to halt the above Express train at Yelamanchali. Once again I make an earnest request to you, through this august forum to see that these trains halt at Yelamanchali.

Lastly, Sir, Samarkakata to Visakhapatnam and Vijayanagram to Visakhapatnam are very important routes. Nearly 10,000 commuters travel Samarlakota

and Vijayanagram to Visakhapatnam. Many of these commuters are the workers who work at Visakhapatnam Steel Plant at other factories. Hence diesel trains should be provided both from Samarlakota and Vijayanagram upto Visakhapatnam. It would be very beneficial to the worker and also it would help the early construction of the V.S.L.

With these words, I conclude my speech thanking you for the opportunity you have provided me to speak. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY (Hazaribagh): The Railways have set up a glorious tradition. Every citizen of our country is proud of it. Railways provide the cheapest means of transport. Not only in towns and in the cases of season tickets only. This is cheapest means of transport to one who travels in the train on full ticket and I think that there is no other cheaper means of transport available in the country. This is the reason that all the representatives of people sitting here, demand the maximum train facilities to be provided in their constituencies so that people may be benefited. If there is a minor failure somewhere in such a large system, then it does not matter much. If there is an accident it does not mean that the entire Railway Department is inefficient. During my recent visit to England, while travelling from London to Cambridge by train, I found that the train suddenly stopped and no one could know as to what has happened. After some time T.T.E. arrived and he told us that the train engine has failed and we will have to wait there at least for 3 hours. We were 2-3 colleagues. We began to laugh and took it as if the system has either been adopted from India or India has adopted the system from here. But one thing we noticed was their promptness in informing about the failure in engine. In our country we have developed our systems, communication system also, but it has not been possible for the railways so far to give such information to passengers

travelling in the train. At times this looks very odd, especially when we have to travel with a foreigner. We find it very inconvenient to communicate with him. There are no two opinions about the fact that the trains are punctual these days. But if there is some failure somewhere, the railways should give its information which has not been possible so far. In Japan there is a facility of paying the compensation in the train itself if it gets late on the way and one does not have to approach the authorities outside for the same. Even penalty is paid if required. When we talk of modernisation we should think of taking some steps in this direction also. Our railway system is quite large and perhaps stands second or third in the world. We will have to improve our technology but no improvement will be possible by importing technology. Unless we improve ourselves, unless people of every standard realise that they have to make more efforts, our country can not progress. Employees as well as officials do work but responsibility is missing which should be there. I am sure that the system will be further improved and the hon. Minister will pay attention to it. I know, it is not so that a glorious tradition always covers all the good things. At times there are some complaints as well. I would like to say something about that also. I do not know what prevents the hon. Minister from paying his attention to Bihar, no matter, how much we request. He very well knows about the earning from Bihar. It would be a grand feat if even a small amount is spent in proportion to that earning. Southern Railway and Eastern Railway are fetching the maximum revenue with the exception of North Bihar. Bihar may be also covered in this. I do not think it a creditable thing if not even a kilometre or even a furlong railway line is laid in 5 years. The Government should reconsider this. What wrong has Bihar done to earn the displeasure of the hon. Minister..? Has he decided not to lay new railway line in Bihar. It is not so that there is no demand by the people. In my constituency, Hazaribagh,

there has been no improvement in railway system. It is as it was in independence days. We ave been told a number of times that a survey is being conducted and Hazaribagh will very soon be linked with the railway line. Earlier it was the District Headquarter but now it is the headquarter of the Commissioner. All the Railway Ministers who paid a visit to this area made promises and so did our hon. Prime Minister too. Everyone who visits there, feel that a railway line should definitely be laid in this area but it has been our misfortune that no concrete result has come out so far although the findings of the survey were communicated to us that a railway line is essential for transporting the increased production of coal from there as no other means of trasportation is available. My submission is that the Government should re-consider to bring back Hazaribagh on the railway map. Survey has already been conducted a number of times and if even now the Government repeats that a survey is being conducted, people will only make fun of it and no one will feel satisfied. The Government has got the survey report and it is about everything. Yet it is regretting that the work has not been undertaken so far. Therefore, the hon. Railway Minister should at least pay attention to what is most important.

I will conclude after making one or two points. There are a number of superfast express trains linking North Bihar and South Bihar. It is immaterial whether they start from Ranchi, Dhanbad or Jamshedpur. There is not arrangement for their reaching Patna and back well in time so that people may return to their homes in time. It would not be an exaggeration if we change the name of those trains to 'super-slow trains'. They run at the same speed as those of the passenger trains and no one is bothered to see the number of stations they have been provided halt. Mr. Chairman, Sir, if you go on ringing the bell, how will I get an opportunity to make my point.

[*English*]

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has to reply at 2.50 p.m. and there are four persons yet to speak. Please wind up now.

[*Translation*]

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY: I would now put only important point. In all the trains running in Bihar, whether it is Maurya Express, Ranchi-Patna Express or Ganga-Damodar Express, those coaches are attached which have been declared unfit for use. I do not know for which crime are we being punished. I do not say that the Government is doing injustice to us but I would certainly say that the hon. Minister should pay special attention in this direction. It is not so that work will not be undertaken if the hon. Minister pays attention to it. However, my suggestion is that attention should be paid to Bihar which fetches the maximum revenue. This should not happen that not even a single railway line is laid in Bihar. We travel in compartments of all classes and a many of our colleagues also accompany us but we do not feel with that as if we are travelling by a railway system which is well known in the world what to talk of the standards of the other railways in the world. Our railway system is known to be one of the best in the world but one does not feel so while travelling by a train in Bihar. I have had an opportunity to visit all the places and I am making this submission on the basis of my experience there. The railway system in my state has not been developed and I feel as if we are 50 years behind this matter. We consider ourselves as the tenth industrialised country and yet what is the condition of Bihar and what is condition of the trains running in the state. Rajdhani express has been made to halt for one day at Dhanbad. I do not know how is it going to enhance the prestige of Dhanbad. How many seats have been provided in the Rajdhani Express? Only 10-12 persons board the train from Dhanbad so,

you have selected only 10-12 persons for providing a precious train in the entire Bihar? I feel that this needs to be considered and such a bad condition of trains there should be removed.

The condition of employment is also bad. There is just one workshop in Jamalpur and only 10 thousand workers against the earlier number of 16 thousand are now left there. Last year an advertisement was made and people also applied but by the time of interview, the advertisement itself was cancelled. If this is the condition, it would not help by merely opening the office of the Railway Commissioner in Patna. Therefore this should be paid attention. An arrangement should be made to fill the vacancies.

With these words I fully support this.

SHRIMATI USHA CHOUDHARI (Amravati): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I fully support the Bill presented in the House for providing facilities, protection in the trains and strengthening the railway system. Regarding Railways, our hon. Members of Parliament were just not submitting that there is a shortage of employees in the Railways. It is right that the passengers travelling by the Railways have to face a lot of problems and so also does the Government. Further, neither the condition of the trains nor that of the Railway employees is good. The recruitment of more employees in it is essential. Railways are being burdened the most in our country and there are number of such trains whose coaches are in a very bad condition. These coaches should be replaced with immediate effect. It should have been specifically provided as to what expenditure is likely to be incurred on a particular area. One of the hon. Members has already demanded for it. While supporting his demand I would like to repeat that the items to expenditure should have been shown in detail in the Railway Bill.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, there are certain of

my colleagues who do not understand that the projects Railways undertake can be executed only with the help of Planning Commission or Department of Planning. May I submit in this regard that if this is not possible then improvements in the Railways can be effected by issuing bonds and thus raising the funds by the contribution of the people. Now we should change the old system of things.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, the constituency from which I hail is Vidarbha region. I feel obliged to the hon. Minister for his handling the situation against heavy odds and in face of so many problems. I thank him for the same and congratulate him with one complaint, that I have submitted a number of times in the Zonal committees of the Railways, that if someone does not get anything and another person gets in excess then one does feel dissatisfied and angry. There is the problem of financial constraints in our country. The population is going on increasing with the result that the means of transportation are becoming insufficient. But survey has not been conducted in regard to Amravati-Narkhed railway line so far in the Vidarbha region. I would like to thank the hon. Minister, Shri Madhavrao Scindia for his assurance that a survey will be conducted of this line. The hon. Railway Minister gave this assurance during the last session in his reply to my question but I would like to tell Shri Madhav Rao that I keep receiving letters in which it is mentioned that earlier also a survey was conducted twice of this railway line. Therefore, the hon. Minister should clarify in his reply as to when the survey of the Amravati-Nankhed railway line, which would benefit the orange growers of Vidarbha region, would be conducted. In view of the fact that the orange growers do not have a market in vicinity, I would like to know as to when will the railway facilities be provided to them. The Yawatmal-Murtzapur meter gauge line which was owned by the East India company should be converted into a broad-gauge line.

The Government has made special programme for the improvement of the meter-gauge lines in the entire country but has not been indicated as to what particular provisions have been made for the Yawatmal-Murtzapur railway line in the Supplementary Grants. It is requested that this railway line must be converted into a broadgauge.

In regard to the demand for the laying on the new Amravati-Nakhera railway line, the Government should make some provision for it in the Plans and should also clarify as to when would it be completed and when would the work commence in this regard?

With these words, I express my gratefulness to you.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon'ble Minister will reply.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI (Kalia-bor): Sir, I have to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: At three O'clock we have to take up the discussion on the communal situation. Within ten minutes we have to pass the Bill.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: You cannot ignore me. My party is a recognised party.

MR CHAIRMAN: There is no time. Please co-operate. There is no time. What can I do?

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: I am coming from the North-eastern region, I want to speak.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right; two minutes only.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: All right. I will take five minutes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: What do you mean? When I said, two minutes and you say that you will take five minutes. What do you mean thereby? Please conclude within two minutes.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: Thank you very much. Sir, everybody knows that the North-Eastern region is a backward part of the country.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): He asked for two minutes. Now he is working towards five minutes by praising you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: As far as I am concerned, flattery does not work.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: Sir, the North-Eastern region is a backward part of the country. So far as the Railway is concerned, if you go there, you will find a horrible picture there. Nothing has been done for the last 40 years so far as the North-Eastern States are concerned. The Railway Stations are the worst, the bogies are also the worst, as only rejected coaches are sent to the North-Eastern region and then for the last two years no new train also has been introduced.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): Only the passengers are good.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: The passengers are good, of course. You are very right.

This should be properly looked into. When we say something then you say that the matter is under consideration. That is the ready made reply we are receiving.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: So many times it has been stress and emphasis has been laid by the Prime Minister, on the North-Eastern region. But they will not listen. The speech also is a ready made speech.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI: The speech is already there, it is ready made and it comes in the papers and the media. But nothing has materialised.

The timings of the trains in the State of Assam are not adhered to. If a train has to start at five O'clock, it will start at 12 noon only. It is like that every day. You cannot move in time. You cannot reach the destination in time. The trains are so slow that it is better to go on foot. If you go on foot you will reach earlier. That is the horrible picture prevailing in my State.

No new train has been introduced and whatever trains are there, they are the slowest trains in the country. I request the hon. Minister to look into this. He has assured us time and again to improve the facilities provided but no facilities are provided. If one travels in the trains, one finds that there is no water to drink. If it is night time, there is no light, and people have to travel in darkness.

No expansion of the lines has also been there. In my State there used to be a train, called the Kaziranga Express. It has now been stopped. I do not know the reason why it was abolished. That was the only train connecting Guwahati to Jorhat, conveniently. That also has been abolished.

I request the hon. Minister to pay some attention to our State of Assam. He should not forget Assam. Assam is also a part of the country. He is doing a lot. Several new trains have been introduced now by all of them have been taken to Madhya Pradesh, the Minister's State and other parts of the country. So far as the North-Eastern Region is concerned, nothing has been done. In the

Consultative Committee also, we raised this matter. The Minister has also agreed for the extended line, but nothing has been done.

In the trains, compartments are very bad, railway stations are worst and one cannot sit for a moment because of mosquitoes. Everything is worst. Even the bodies which have been introduced in the trains going from Deini and other parts of the country to the North-Eastern States are very worst. This should be properly looked into.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Madhavrao Scindia. We shall take up discussion on communal disturbances at 3 PM.

(Interruptions)

SHRI EBRAHIM SULAIMAN SAIT (Manjeri): I think, the Minister will take only a few minutes so that we can start discussion on communal disturbances at 3 PM..*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: I am trying to rush. I am trying to speed up the train. *(Interruptions)*

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): You just declare that everything is under consideration...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: That is what I am going to say. You have stolen the words.

Sir, I am grateful to the hon. Members for having given suggestions during the discussion on the amendment of the law relating to the Railways, as reported by the Joint Committee, and on the appropriation Number 3 Bill relating to Demands for Excess Grants.

As far as the Demands for Excess Grants reconcerned, it is very very marginal. Rs. 13839 crores was the total voted grants and

the actual expenditure was Rs. 13846 crores. So, Rs. 7 crores out of a budget of Rs. 13839 crores is very marginal. I do not think I really will have to make many comments on this.

The Railways Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha on 25th April 1986 and it was referred to a Joint Select Committee. At this juncture, I would like to express my appreciation to the Chairman Shri Arvind Netam and other Members of the Joint Select Committee, which went into all the aspects of Railway working and made very valuable suggestions and very valuable proposed amendments, which we have presented to the House. All the amendments were agreed to. There were piece-meal amendments in the last one hundred years, which happened 44 times. So, we rationalised and tried to present the Railways Bill as one which is more pertinent to the needs and requirements of the time. We have deleted 35 provisions which were obsolete, more relevant to the times when Railways were run by companies, and we have added 31 new provisions. I think, it has already been presented and the House had time to study it in great detail. I would once again like to express my appreciation to the entire Committee for having rendered us invaluable assistance and given us invaluable advice and thereby, greatly helped, I am sure, in the future to facilitate the Railway working.

I would just like to make mention of the fact that some hon. Members, Mr. Basheer and Mr. Krishna Iyer talked about the recent report of the Commissioner of Railway Safety on the Quilon railway accident. I would like to inform the House that the hon. Minister Mr. Krishna Kumar has also been discussing this issue with me several times and had made several enquiries. And after much discussion with him, we did decide that we should have a very close look, as we always do on the report once it is received by us in the Railway Bhavan. I would specially thank Mr. Harish Rawat for having put the matters

[Sh. Madhav Rao Scindia]

in the correct perspective and really having set the record straight as far as the Commissioner of Railway Safety is concerned. I agree with the hon. Member that it will really indeed be a very sad day when aspersions are cast on the Commissioner of Railway Safety Office and when attempts are made to remove his credibility.

Sir, the Commissioner of Railway Safety is a highly competent person. They are totally independent of the Railways. They come under the Civil Aviation Ministry. As the hon. Member Shri Harish Rawat has said, in many more cases I think, about 85 to 90 per cent of the times, the Commissioner has fairly and squarely put the fault of the accident at the doorsteps of the Railways. And we have been very much held in fault.

15.00 hrs.

As has been imputed in some newspapers and in some sections in Kerala, there is no question of our trying to cover up or trying to hide or not trying to own up our fault. If it were so, why should one do so for one accident? 85 to 90 per cent of the time we are being held at fault and we have certainly owned it up, and we have accepted his recommendations. (*Interruptions*) I will not yield because I have to finish in one minute.

You will be happy to know that in the amendment to the Railway Act as presented here, there is a new section which has been added, making it obligatory on the part of the Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety to prepare an annual report which will be laid by the Government before both the Houses of Parliament. This has been made obligatory now. It was not there earlier. This shows the urge the Railways have to have a totally open exercise. We are the ones who stand to benefit because we will learn from it, we will

learn from our mistakes. Therefore, we welcome the report and look forward to it to improve our working as far as railway safety is concerned.

I am grateful to hon. Harish Rawat when he mentioned that railway accidents have gone down by 32 per cent. But it is our effort to continue to strive and improve upon this record.

All I would like to say about this accident is that we have to consider the peculiar circumstances of this particular accident. I think that the report deserves very very deep study. Before any layman's comment is made, I think, it does deserve a very deep study.

The report of the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Bangalore, regarding the accident near Quilon on 8th of July, 1988 has been received. This report is currently under study by the General Manager, Southern Railway, who will be sending his comments to the Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety and the Railway Board. The views of the Chief Commissioner of Railway Safety will also be obtained, hereafter.

I have discussed this matter at length with Mr. Krishna Kumar and have apprised him of all this. But I would like to assure the hon. Members and Mr. Krishna Kumar especially because he is the Member of Parliament from that particular area, that the report of the Commissioner of Railway Safety, Bangalore would be thoroughly and critically examined. As a part of the process of this examination and keeping in view the peculiar nature of the accident, we will also set up a Special Committee of Experts, covering all relevant facets, to examine the report in all its aspects. We will also seek the advice of yet another independent authority—the National Transportation Safety Board—in the matter, before we take a final view on the report of the Commissioner of Railway Safety.

I am sure, this clearly establishes our deep desire and urge to get to the bottom of it and really find out what the problem was and to try and certainly rectify any mistakes, if any, but certainly study the report in full details, take the advice of the experts in and outside the Railway Ministry, take the advice of the National Transportation Safety Board before pontificating on it or before expressing our views on it. I think, this is a fair enough procedure because this a very serious matter and it affects not only the railway safety working but also affects the credibility of a certain institution which has had a high record of integrity and still maintains it.

With these words, I think, I will readily accept the suggestion of the former Railway Minister, Mr. Madhu Dandavate, in saying that all the suggestions of the hon. Members will be noted. Most of them have been discussed in the Budget discussion and we will certainly see what best we can do to keep improving on the overall working of the Railways.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill to consolidate and amend the law relating to Railways, as reported by the Joint Committee, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we take up clause by clause consideration. The question is:

"That Clauses 2 to 200 stand part of the Bill"

The motion was adopted
Clauses 2 to 200 were added to the Bill

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That clause 1, the Enacting formula and the long title stand of the Bill."

The motion was adopted

Clause 1, the Enacting Formula and the long Title were added to the Bill

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister may now move that the Bill he passed.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted

MR. CHAIRMAN: I shall now put the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) for 1986-87 to vote. The question is:

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1987, in respect of the following Demands entered in the second column thereof:-

Demand Nos. 5, 13, 14 and 16."

The motion was adopted

15.06 hrs.

APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS) NO. 3
BILL *, 1989

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI
MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): Sir, I beg to move