

[Shri A.B.A. Ghani Khan Chaudhuri]

the other questions of the Hon. Member are concerned I have already replied to them.

13.10 hrs.

PETITION *RE* PARITY IN RATES OF PROPERTY TAX LEVIED BY DELHI MUNICIPAL CORPORATION AND BY NEW DELHI MUNICIPAL COMMITTEE

DR. KARAN SINGH (Udhampur): Sir, I beg to present a petition signed by Shri H.D. Shourie and others regarding parity in rate of property tax levied by Delhi Municipal Corporation with the rate of property tax levied by New Delhi Municipal Committee.

13.12 hrs.

STATEMENT *RE*-RAILWAY FINANCIAL MATTERS

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI KEDAR PANDEY): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the House will recall that while presenting the Budget Estimates for 1981-82 I had assumed that the Railway would carry 215 million tonnes of revenue earning traffic, 20 million tonnes more than what was carried during the last year. I had also assumed a growth of 3% in non-suburban passenger traffic and 6% in suburban passenger traffic.

The House will be glad to know that to the end of October, 1981, as a result of continuing improvement in operations, the Railways have already carried 17 69 million tonnes of originating revenue earning traffic more than that carried during the corresponding period of last year. With the busy season ahead, I have every

hope that by the end of the financial year the Railways will not only achieve the target of 215 million tonnes of originating revenue earning traffic but also improve on this target. In fact, this would be the highest ever loading achieved by the Indian Railways. This great leap forward which the Railways have taken in the movement of goods has been acknowledged in all quarters. The expected buoyancy in passenger traffic has also come about.

The House will agree with me that the health of rail transport, which forms the basic infra-structure for the growth of our national economy, has to be nursed carefully and continuously. Any complacency can have disastrous consequences. The rolling stock has to be maintained efficiently. The railway track has to be kept in good shape, as also other connected operating and structural assets. Every possible endeavour is being made to improve safety and punctuality on Railways. (*Interruptions*)

श्री रामावतार शास्त्री (पटना) : यह बात नहीं है, हम अभी आये हैं ।

श्री केदार पाण्डे : कोशिश कर रहे हैं ।

Unfortunately, notwithstanding the economy measures taken and special steps having been taken to control expenditure by way of entrusting the job exclusively to an Additional General Manager on each railway, certain unforeseen post-budgetary factors have adversely affected the railway finances. Two additional dearness allowance instalments recently sanctioned to staff coupled with steep increase in cost of petroleum products including diesel oil, steel and other inputs etc., have thrown heavy financial burden on the Railways. The aggregate financial impact of all these post-budgetary factors including the additional expenditure to carry additional traffic materialising would add