

the press clippings. Before taking charge of this Ministry, I had gone through the press clippings and also the debates, the speeches of the hon. Members from both sides. That is why, I paid surprise visits personally, and in the course of my personal surprise visits, I have found out that in some of the banks reconciliation of accounts, particularly the inter-bank reconciliation of accounts, has been pending since 1973 ; as for the pending work in respect of Savings Bank and Current Account is concerned, it has been pending since 1979 in some branches and since 1980 in some other branches. That is why, we called a meeting of the Chief Executives and immediately brought it to the notice of the Chief Executives, and remedial measures have also been taken. I have gone through the report. I will also in detail go through the report of the Sezhiyan Committee. What has been stated is correct, and the concern expressed by the hon. Members is also correct. We will take suitable action so far as this is concerned.

As regards the others suggestions that have been made like appointment of a Parliamentary Committee to go into the details, these are being noted. Already there is a provision for statutory.....

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI : Will computerisation affect employment or not ?

SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY : So far as computerisation is concerned, I may submit one fact. Before nationalisation, there were about 8,262 branches throughout the country, and now we have got 40,820 branches throughout the country, and more than six lakhs of employees are working. You can see the voluminous transactions that are taking place every year in the banking sector. Over 90 per cent of the banking sector has been brought under the hold of the public sector. I can say from experience that computerisation and mechanization is the only answer. You have been seeing that we are giving the figures of 1981. When you are asking for so many figures, we are in a position to give only the figures of 1981 or sometimes even 1980. If this is the efficiency of the banking sector, if we are going to give you only the figures of 1981, then how can we bring about improvement

in efficiency ? Hon. Members from the other side should realise the importance of computerisation. So far as retrenchment is concerned, there will not be any retrenchment. As per the branch expansion policy of the Reserve Bank—which has been given to the nation in the year 1982—additional 10,000 branches will be opened throughout the country by March, 1985. There will be recruitment of officers and also clerks. I can assure the hon. Members that recruitment will not be less than about 10,000 per year ; there will not be any stoppage so far as recruitment of clerks and other people is concerned. On the contrary, if we go in for computerisation, if we go in for mechanization, there will be more efficiency. If elderly and highly respected hon. Members like Shri Ramavatar Shastri impress upon the Union people to go in for computerisation, it will be easy, and we can enhance the image of the institution also. There have been criticisms in Parliament and also outside Parliament about the inefficiency of the banking sector, and if at all you are really serious about efficiency in the banking sector, it is better that we go in for computerisation. That is why, I request you once again to impress upon the employees about computerisation. Even at the cost of repetition, I am saying this.

So far as the frauds are concerned, Government is very much keen to curb the activities which are not above board.

On the contrary, Government is going to deal with the persons who are the culprits according to the law.

18.15 hrs.

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMAND FOR GRANT (RAILWAYS), 1983-84—*Contd.*

MR. CHAIRMAN : No we take up further discussion on Supplementary Demand for Grant (Railways).

Shri Parashar. You may continue.

PROF. NARAIN CHAND PARASHAR (Hamirpur) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I was

speaking about the need for the restoration of certain important facilities which were available to us.

Earlier, I referred to the restoration of through coaches between Nangal Dam and Delhi which used to be attached to the Himachal Express. There is enough justification for this. Similarly, Sir, there are some new demands which should also be looked into by the hon. Minister. One is regarding the introduction of a new fast train between Delhi and Pathankot; here the people of Himachal and the northern Punjab are stranded and they do not get enough buses to go to Delhi and other parts of the country. They are mostly ex-service men and active service-men and they are put to a great inconvenience. There should be fast trains from Bombay to Kalka and from Bombay to Nangal.

Similarly, there are other matters to which I would like to draw the attention of the Minister. Sir, Himachal Pradesh is a scenic and beautiful State. On both sides of the track there are beautiful trees. They are not protected properly; sometimes, they are cut haphazardly. This is the time when we are talking of maintaining the ecological balance, the scenic beauty of Himachal should also be borne in mind. Scenic beauty has to be maintained and it should be seen that the forests are not destroyed especially the pine trees and other trees that are there on both sides of the track from Kalka to Simla and from Pathankot to some other place. In particular, I would request him to construct speedily a line from Nangal to Talwara. Actually, the present Prime Minister herself said at Una on 21.12.79 that this line upto Talwara would be constructed. I would, therefore, request the hon. Minister to see that about Rs. 5 crores is given this year so that at least upto Una the railway line be constructed which will later be extended beyond it to AMB, where the late Shri L.N. Mishra had also laid a foundation stone on 22-12-1974. Ultimately it would be taken upto Mukharian as an alternative line for defence.

Similarly, there are two or three demands from other regions. I would like to press that a new train should be introduced

between Delhi and Gorakhpur because the line has already been converted from the metre-gauge to broad-gauge. Naturally, this huge expenditure should be utilised for giving new services to the people. Similarly, from Gaya to Patna, a railway line should be constructed because this section is the hub of activity—a large number of pilgrims come. If this line is constructed, this would shorten the distance and this will give relief to passengers. There should be a line from Mathura to Alwar. I appreciate the hon. Minister's impact in the contributions made by the various zonal railways and at the Board level. But one thing that can be appreciated is this. They are doing better work. They are introducing more facilities. But, paucity of funds has to be acknowledged. Therefore, we have been suggesting that the Minister for Railways should be made a Member of the Planning Commission so that he is able to pay his attention immediately. The Minister in charge of Planning should be a Member of the Railway Convention Committee so that he looks into the finances and he can see what the difficulties are in the working of the railways in our country. A social burden of Rs. 300 crores every year is also there.

The railways have to face the anti-national activities in the form of agitations like the recent one in the Punjab. In the Punjab, there was a 'rail roko' agitation on 17th June. There was no train on that day from Delhi to Punjab excepting the Kalka Mail. What a huge expenditure is incurred by Railways for laying new lines and in introducing new services! Railways symbolise the progress of the nation. On account of this agitation crores of rupees are lost. The Minister must be given the constitutional authority because at present the GRP is not under his control. If some communal riot takes place it is the Home Minister who has to answer the question here. But, when there is an accident and if some death occurs, in the train or if there is some anti-social activity there, the Railway Minister is not in a position to take any punitive action; he has not even the control to exercise any power over the GRP.

So, the Constitution may have to be amended and for this I plead for the devolu-

tion of greater power on the railway administration. Sir, much needed reforms are required in the Railways Act and in various other activities of the railways. The Supplementary budget is not an occasion for a policy discussion on the Ministry of Railways but we can have a mid-term review of the workings of the railways. There is late running of trains and other shortcomings but with all this on one side. The Members will agree with me that the Railways have entered into a new phase of activity and have even shown greater earning in spite of the losses inflicted on them by such anti-social agitations like the one launched by Akalis in Punjab and such other agitations.

Sir, I pay a tribute to the employees of the railways that even under great strain they carried out their duties so well to the nation. With these words I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways and I also appreciate the services of the hon. Minister and his officials at the Zonal and Board level.

SHRI K. MAYATHEVAR (Dindigul) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, in Tamil Nadu ever since Independence we have got only one BG new line, namely, Karur-Dindigul-Madurai-Tuticorin project. The total length of that project is 324 km. and the latest cost of the new project is about Rs. 71 crores. This project was sanctioned in the year 1981 by our hon. Prime Minister. In the year 1981-82 the Railways demanded Rs. 2 crores and the Government sanctioned Rs. 2 crores. In the year 1982-83 the Railways asked for Rs. 8 crores but the Government sanctioned only Rs. 2.50 crores. In 1983-84 the demand was for Rs. 7.75 crores and the sanction was only for Rs. 1.75 crores. For the year 1984-85 the Railways have demanded Rs. 8 crores for implementation and we do not know what will be sanctioned by the Government. On account of funds not being sanctioned by the Government for implementation the whole work has come to a standstill and there is no progress over the last three years. Even payments to contractors and suppliers could not be made in 1982-83 for want of adequate funds. Commitments had also to be restricted due to the low level of funds. Tenders were called for building

bridges and for construction of formation for track between Karur and Dindigul and Dindigul and Madurai but were cancelled for want of funds. On account of paucity of funds, payment for committed liabilities cannot be made.

Sir, at the present rate of allotment of funds, it will take 40 years to complete the project, by which time the cost of the project will escalate to Rs. 150 crores. Therefore, I want the hon. Minister to sympathise with us. You had given water to us. We are thankful to you. I invoke your human sympathy to grant not less than Rs. 20 crores including the balance of arrears to be paid from 1981-82 upto 1985. I demand and request the Government to grant the money as it covers my constituency....and the Constituency of Mr. K.T. Kosalram and the constituencies of so many other Tamil Nadu MPs of this House. Sir, I would like to point out that the railway fare has already been increased to the maximum. I would therefore submit that it is not advisable to increase the fare further. I am opposed to any further increase in the railway fare.

Sir, the Integral Coach Factory at Avadi, Madras, has been producing new coaches which are exported to the foreign countries. It is earning foreign exchange to the tune of Rs. 28 crore per year. We are told by the management of the ICF that the Government is not coming forward to sanction more funds so that we can step up the production of more coaches thereby we can earn more and more foreign exchange. I would therefore request the Government to look into the matter and consider sanctioning of more funds for this purpose.

There are so many Unions in the ICF. The D.M.K. Union is the biggest union having membership of more than 6000. The Railways have recognised the unions which have membership of less than 500. But the D.M.K. Union has not been recognised by the Railways so far. I would request the Railway Minister kindly to consider giving recognition to the D.M.K. Union in the I.C.F.

Now, coming to railway facilities to the passengers, I would like to point out that

there were three trains which were running between Bombay and Madras and vice versa. Now, the Railways have cancelled the Train No. 13, that is, Bombay-Madras Janata Express. Sir, there are about 15 lakh people belonging to Tamil Nadu living in Bombay. Now, they are finding it extremely difficult to travel from Madras to Bombay and vice versa because of the cancellation of Bombay-Madras Janata Express. I would therefore request the hon. Minister for Railways to restore the Bombay-Madras Janata Express with immediate effect.

In this connection, I may point out that instead of introducing a new train between Bombay and Bangalore, the hon. Minister of State for Railways, has diverted the train which was running between Madras and Bombay. A very curious thing has happened. Instead of marrying a girl who is not married, you are kidnapping somebody's girl who is already married to somebody. Please do not kidnap the train that was running between Madras and Bombay. On behalf of 15 lakh Tamilians in Bombay, I would request the hon. Minister kindly to restore the train, that is, Madras-Bombay Janata Express.

Sir, on 2-8-1983, in Bombay, more than 10 lakh Tamilians assembled at a certain place to express their feelings and solidarity and condemn the genocide on Tamils in Sri Lanka. For this purpose, they had engaged a special train after paying Rs. 5000 to the Railway Department. The City Police also had granted necessary permission for assembling and carrying out a procession and for this purpose railway transport facilities were arranged with necessary permission. The train was running carrying them from Matunga to Bombay V.T. But unfortunately the train was stopped in the middle at Dudhen and more than 500 R.P.F. men and Railway Police assaulted all the Tamilians and committed robbery. They snatched away their black-badges, wrist-watches and the purses. More than 500 people were beaten and among them six persons were admitted to the local hospitals. Now they are in serious condition. I seek your sympathy once again to protect those people. When your Department has permitted for a special train on payment of money, why

should the Police stop them, assault and hit them badly? This is against morality and also against the democratic rights of the Tamil Nadu people in Bombay. I, therefore, request the Hon. Minister to appoint an inquiry commission and take serious action against the wrongdoers, the Railway Police in Bombay.

Sir, all the Tamil Nadu MPs have been demanding the change in the name of the G.T. Express into the Bharathiar Express. We have been demanding this for the last ten years. Myself and Shri K.T. Kosalram of the Congress Party and all other MPs from Tamil Nadu have been demanding this. I represented to the Prime Minister earlier in 1981-82. The Hon. Prime Minister was very gracious to reply to my letter assuring that suitable instructions have been issued to the Railway Board to change the name of the GT Express into Bharathiar Express. But till now, it has not been done. Sir, by changing the name you are not going to lose any money. Bharathiar was a great poet and patriot. He was a person who fought against the British rule. So, I request you to change the name of the GT Express into Bharathiar Express.

श्री विरदा राम फुलवारिया (जालोर) :
सभापति जी, रेल मंत्री जी ने जो मांगें यहां रखी हैं, उनका मैं समर्थन करता हूं। मैं यही निवेदन करना चाहता हूँ कि जोधपुर से भीलड़ी तक जो गाड़ी नं० 265, 266 जाती है यह सन् 1978 में बनी है। भीलड़ी से भुज वाली गाड़ी में लगकर यह अहमदाबाद जाती है। मेरा निवेदन है कि यह गाड़ी सीधी अहमदाबाद जानी चाहिए। इससे यात्रियों को बहुत सुविधा मिलेगी। पिछले साढ़े 3 साल से कई बार मैं यह मांग कर चुका हूँ और यही जवाब मिलता है कि 7 डिब्बे अहमदाबाद के लिए जाते हैं। ये 7 डिब्बे जोधपुर में ही भर जाते हैं। बाड़मेर का यात्री इसमें जाता है बालोदरा का इसमें जाता है। वहां एक बड़ी फैक्टरी कपड़ा रंगाई की लगी हुई है इस कारण वहां लोगों को बहुत जाना-आना पड़ता है। यह गाड़ी समदड़ी, मौकलचर, जालोर, भीनमाल, रानीवाड़ा, घानेरा वगैरह पर रुकती है। ये कई गांव और कस्बे हैं।

मेरा निवेदन है कि यह रेल सीधी अहमदाबाद तक चलाई जाये।

मंत्री जी ने अपने लैटर में भी कहा है, तारां-किन प्रश्न में भी जबाब दिया है, बार-बार यही जवाब मिलता है कि वहां की सारी मांगें हैं। मुझे भी वहां जनता परेशान करती है। हमारे यहां व्यापारी वर्ग बहुत है, हमारे जिले का व्यापारी वर्ग बम्बई, मद्रास, बंगलौर, पूना, हैदराबाद बहुत जाता है। हमारा पिछड़ा जिला है, मजदूरों का भी बहुत आना-जाना रहता है। मेरा निवेदन है कि यह रेल अहमदाबाद तक सीधी करने की मेहर-वानी करिये, यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण है।

जब से यह लाइन बनी है, तब से वही पटरियां बनी हुई हैं। यह पटरियां लम्बी की जायें। अब 17, 18 डिब्बे इसमें लगते हैं। पटरी पर उतरने में यात्रियों को बड़ी मुश्किल होती है। इस लाइन की पटरियां बड़ी बनाई जायें।

पहले हमारे मारवाड़, राजस्थान में मानसून बहुत कम था, अब मानसून ज्यादा रहने से यह लाइन हर साल बरसात में टूट जाती है और रेलें बन्द हो जाती हैं। अभी दो, तीन दिन पहले भी लाइन बन्द हो गई थी।

हमारे यहां जालोर-बाधरा सब लाइन कटती हैं। मेरा निवेदन है कि समदड़ी से जालोर लाइन को ऊंचा लेकर पुलिया बांधकर बन्दोबस्त कर दें। हर साल बारिश आती है और यह लाइन टूट जाती है। इस पर हर साल खर्चा करना पड़ता है।

मेरा निवेदन है कि इस लाइन को ऊंचा करके पुलिया को ठीक कर दें। जोधपुर डिवीजन की लाइन घाटे में नहीं चलती है। घाटे में सिर्फ बाड़मेर से बुनावा गाड़ी जाती है।

मेरा निवेदन है कि जोधपुर से अहमदाबाद पूरी एक्सप्रेस गाड़ी जानी चाहिये।

जयन्ती जनता यहां से अहमदाबाद जाती है और रास्ते में सरूपगंज ठहरती है। आते हुए वापसी में यह गाड़ी सरूपगंज नहीं ठहरती जिसका ठहरना जरूरी है। सरूपगंज के आसपास बहुत बड़ा कस्बा है, सरूपगंज एक मंडी है। यहां जे० के० की सीमेंट की फैक्टरी है जो कि बनारा के पास है। यहां लोगों का बहुत आना-जाना रहता है। वापसी में सरूपगंज गाड़ी के न रुकने से लोगों को आबूरोड उतरना पड़ता है जहां से उन्हें कठिनाई होती है। मेरा बार-बार निवेदन है कि यह गाड़ी सरूपगंज पर रुकनी चाहिए।

इतना कहकर मैं रेलमंत्री को इन मांगों का समर्थन करते हुए धन्यवाद देता हूं।

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister wants to make an appeal.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI A.B.A. GHANI KHAN CHAUDHURY) : Through you, Sir, I want to make an appeal to the Members of this House. The time at our disposal is very short. I make a commitment on the floor of the House : If, instead of bringing in the problems of their constituencies or problems of a general nature, they write to me, I will look into their problems. But for the present, if they have got any special type of problems which they would like to bring to the notice of the House, they can do so. Otherwise, they should be as brief as possible and that will save the time of the House.

SHRI A. NEELALOHITHADASAN NADAR (Trivandrum) : You are not convening informal Railway Consultative Committee meetings of the zonal railways in spite of our repeated requests.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister has given an assurance on the floor of this House. Kindly take advantage of that.

SHRI RAM PYARE PANIKA (Roberts-ganj) : We agree with the suggestion of the hon. Minister.