

[Mr Speaker]

Clause 1

(ii) That at page 1, line 4 for the figures '1971' the figures '1972' be substituted"

The motion was adopted

SHRIMATI NANDINI SATPATHY

I beg to move

'That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to'

MR. SPEAKER The question is

'That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to'

The motion was adopted.

14 11 hrs

The Lok Sabha adjourned for Lunch till fifteen minutes past Fourteen of the Clock

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

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS) 1972-73—Contd.

SHRI BANAMALI PATNAIK (Puri)

Yesterday, I was talking about the importance of tourism, that is the main industry of the people at Puri they depend mostly upon the Jagannath temple. The train services should connect the pilgrim centres of India. There is a passenger from Puri to Asansol. This should be converted into an express and joined as Puri Banaras express, touching Gaya also so that people may be benefited as there is a passenger from Asansol and Banaras. Similarly there should be an express from Puri to Thirupathi. Pilgrims coming from the North would like to go to the South, if there are better and quick train services

Again the train connecting Orissa with Delhi is a biweekly, it is better not to travel by that train. It takes 54 hours to reach Delhi by that train whereas if you go via Howrah it takes just 36 hours. Why cannot they reduce the time? It serves the most backward areas, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Orissa. It does not reach in time, it is always late. Most of the trains are now punctual but the Utkal Express stands four or five hours in some stations on the way and there is no dining car. It may be converted into a daily express. They say that it could be done if Bina Jhansi line is doubled. If the line is doubled it could be speeded up. But they could at least provide diesel engines, it will serve the purpose for the present. The Khadagpur Badrak local should be extended to Khurda road so that the local public who attend courts could go back without wasting their time to their respective areas.

There are several divisions in each zone. There should be divisional advisory committees, which should meet once in three months or so where the local MPs, MLAs and other local representatives can express their difficulties. There are a large number of complaints about so many things like passenger amenities, movement of coal and so many other bottlenecks. At the zonal meetings it is not possible to raise these local issues. The General Managers should be asked to attend at least once these divisional meetings so that the problems can be sorted out and solved. That is much easier than writing a letter. If we write a letter to the General Manager, no action is taken. But if we write a letter to the Minister and if he forwards it to the General Manager, some action is taken. There was some difficulty about the movement of iron ore from the mining areas. I brought it to the minister's notice and some action was taken. But if I bring it to the notice of General Manager, no action is taken. It happened last year and this year also. We cannot always bring

the minister into the picture. The General Manager should take action if MPs write to him direct.

Previously the welfare officers were attached to the General Managers. Now they are attached to the divisional officers. But whatever complaints they bring to their notice, no action is taken. These are minor things about increment of some clerk or casual leave to be sanctioned or some other minor difficulties, but no action is taken on the report of welfare officers. If they are attached to the General Managers, at least at that higher level, some action can be taken and the purpose for which the welfare officers exist can be served.

In Khurda Division, a large number of retrenchments are being made. Some dharna is going on and some people are fasting. There were several allegations against the Divisional Manager. It was raised here on the floor of this House by Mr. Chintamani Panigrahi also, but the same Divisional Manager is continuing. Something must be done in this regard.

Coming to the question of pilferages, I can give one instance how it happens. There is a steep gradient between Khurda Road and Waltair and the goods trains cannot move quickly. Because of the steep gradient, the trains slow down. Invariably the wagons are opened and things are thrown out. Everybody knows it. With the connivance of the railway staff, things are stolen. There is a godown where you can purchase all these things at a cheap rate because they do not pay sales-tax as it is not a registered office. Railways also have to pay damages for the loss. What are the Railway protection Force people doing? There are various methods by which pilferages can be stopped, provided we meet and discuss these problems very often.

SHRI R. P. ULAGANAMBI (Vellore):
Sir, I rise to draw attention to some important problems while speaking on the Demands for Grants of the Railways, on

behalf of the DMK Party. The Minister has made certain radical changes such as maintaining the punctuality of departure and arrival of trains, reducing the running time and introducing certain rational reforms in railway administration. Though the Minister has taken some steps to improve passenger amenities, yet I find they are insufficient. Cleanliness in trains, catering service, etc. should be improved. The Minister should introduce a Rajdhani Express between Delhi and Madras.

It should be on the lines of similar trains to Calcutta and Bombay. Meanwhile, the running time of the express trains from Madras may be reduced. The Link Express to Madras and Hyderabad is not able to cope with the increased demand of the travelling public. So, I suggest that there should be a separate express trains to Madras as well as Hyderabad in place of the existing Link Express, in addition to the Grand Trunk Express and Janata Express.

The electrification of the Madras-Vijayawada section is noteworthy. The head office of this scheme was set up at Madras after considering all the pros and cons. Yesterday I was astonished to hear the Minister inform Shri Venkatasubbaiah that orders have been issued to shift the head office from Madras to Vijayawada. As the Minister knows very well, Madras has comparatively certain advantages. It is a cosmopolitan city and the head office of the Southern Railways is in Madras. Besides, there are other facilities available there. I do not understand on what grounds the head office is decided to be shifted from Madras to Vijayawada. I would request the Minister to reconsider the decision on merits without any political considerations.

Then, would like to suggest that the electrification of the Madras-Bangalore section should be taken up on a priority basis. The traffic in this line has been increasing since it connects two important

[Shri R. P. Ulaganambi]

industrial, commercial and cosmopolitan cities. The Railway Minister may have some hesitation in pleading the case of Bangalore because he represents that area. So, I am pleading that case on behalf of the Railway Minister and the people of Tamilnadu. I would request the Minister to ensure that this scheme is taken up to least in the next budget.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI K. HANUMANTHAIYA): Since I am personally interested in it, he should ask my Deputy to take it up

SHRI R. P. ULAGANAMBI: The Metropolitan Transport Projects Organisations are progressing at Calcutta and Bombay. Similar project should be taken up to Madras at the earliest.

The proposed railway line connecting Kanyakumari and Delhi and Hima is commendable and it must be expedited.

Vellore, which is my constituency; is a centre for producing mangoes. It is sending mangoes to all parts of the country and also foreign countries. The mango merchants of Vellore have been demanding two bogies daily to despatch 50 tonnes of mangoes to Delhi daily by the Janata Express but they are allowed to send only two tonnes. This is not at all sufficient. On 15.5.72 I have written a letter to the Railway Minister, enclosing the petition of the people of that area, demanding two bogies. Today I have received a letter from the Personal Secretary of the Minister, acknowledging the letter and saying that the Minister is on tour. But I find that the Minister is present here. So, I would request him to consider this petition and my letter favourably and allot two bogies so that the merchants of Vellore can despatch mangoes to Delhi. Since mangoes are easily perishable it is absolutely necessary that they must be despatched without delay. I hope the Minister will take necessary action.

The Railway administration spends a large amount of money for the development of Hindi. A monthly magazine in Hindi, namely, "Bharatiya Rail" is published by the Railway Board. Besides, 119 periodicals are published in Hindi. I do not understand how the non-Hindi speaking people will benefit by these magazines. So, I request the hon. Minister to publish them in English as well as in regional languages so as to enable the local people to understand the contents of these magazines.

The Railway Department issues 883 forms in Hindi and in English. I request the hon. Minister to see that these forms are made available and published in regional languages so as to enable the local people to understand them.

I am told that non-Hindi speaking Railway servants are compelled to study Hindi and that their promotions are withheld because of not learning Hindi or not knowing Hindi. I request the hon. Minister to give a categorical assurance that such a compulsion is not there and that he has not issued any notification to compel any non-Hindi speaking railway employee to learn Hindi and that his promotion is not withheld because of not learning or not knowing Hindi.

According to the report submitted by the Railway Board, in 1970-71, in Class I and Class II services, the Scheduled Castes and Tribes represent 318 out of 8,085 i.e. 3.7 per cent. In Class III services, they represent 55,232 out of 5,82,290, i.e. 9.8 per cent. In Class IV, they represent 2,00,269 out of 7,82,944 i.e. 24 per cent. The reserved quota for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes is filled only in Class IV i.e. sweepers, peons, watchmen, watermen, cleaners, gardeners and other menial jobs. I regret to say that even in Class II, they represent only 9.8 per cent. In Class I and Class III, they represent only 3.7 per cent.

The Government voices sky-high that they are for the welfare of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people. But I feel that their voice is only for their self-seeking goals to get votes and to win elections. I do not know how long they are going to cheat the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes people.

It does not mean that suitable candidates are not available from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. I know that there are thousands of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes graduates available with high water-mark. I would like to know what appropriate action has been taken to fill up the posts from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes for Class I, Class II and Class III services.

Under Demand No.2, 1971-72, for the survey in progress, Rs. 15,27 lakhs have not been utilised. In the Budget estimates for 1972-73, an amount of Rs. 21.13 lakhs has been reduced. For Salem, Rs. 10,000 have been spent out of Rs. 24,000 allotted for the survey. For Hospet, Rs. 2000 have been spent out of Rs 62,000 allotted for the survey.

Then, under Demand No.15, the development fund for the welfare of the staff allotted was Rs 9.28 crores out of which Rs.80.18 lakhs have not been utilised. The Budget estimate for 1971-72 is Rs.4.08 crores for passenger and railway users' amenities. Out of this amount, Rs. 22.91 lakhs have not been utilised. And also in the Budget Estimates for 1972-73, the amenities of the passengers have been curtailed. I can point out so many shortfalls in the railway administration...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : He may please conclude.

SHRI R. P. ULAGANAMBI : But the time at my disposal is very short.

I am coming to the last point. The Railway Board saved Rs.50,000 by keeping unfilled the vacant posts. The Regional

Railways have saved Rs.21.8 lakhs for non-appointment of additional staff during the year. Is this saving necessary without giving appointments in view of the growing unemployment problem?

The estimated income from freight charges was Rs.1.92 crores, but there was a loss of Rs.9.83 crores. In 1969-70, Rs.44,97 crores were less than the estimated income from Southern Railway, North-East Frontier Railway, North Eastern Railway and South Central Railway. According to the report submitted by the committee, there was a loss of Rs.5.86 crores due to railway lines running on loss. The compensation paid for the goods lost or damaged was Rs.14.16 crores, in spite of the expenditure on the railway police of Rs.17.11 crores.

On 2nd May, our hon. Railway Minister, while replying to a question in this House, stated that the loss on coal wagons had increased from 3 to 31 per cent.

There are so many shortfalls that I can point out, but due to non-availability of time, I am not able to do so. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to look into all these shortfalls and take necessary and appropriate action to utilise the allotted funds to avoid losses and increase the facilities to the passengers, and the Railway administration must be set right in the right gear.

SHRI K. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY (Naigonda) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Demands of the Railways.

The punctuality of railways has improved a lot. On this I heartily congratulate Shri Hanumanthayaji, the Railway Minister, for taking earnest efforts for bringing the railways run on punctuality. While perusing the Demands of the Railways, it is found that first preference has been given for conversion of the meter gauge lines into broad gauge lines. Such importance has not been given for cons-

[Shri K. Ramakrishna Reddy]

truction of new lines, which is not correct. In my opinion, the first preference should be given to opening of new lines and second preference should be given to conversion but not first. If this principle is agreed, the hon. Minister may kindly go ahead with the opening of new lines which are remunerative and cheap in all the States.

Andhra Pradesh is one of the unfortunate States which could not get any line, even of one mile or even an inch, since independence, i.e., for the last 25 years. I hope, the hon. Minister will pay special attention to Andhra Pradesh—not only by catching his eye to Andhra Pradesh but also by applying his mind. For the line Nadikude to Bebinagar passing through Nalgonda and the area of the mighty Nagarjunasagar Project. The survey was conducted in the year 1968—the Railway Board had asked for the survey.

In the year 1970, the report had been received by the Railway Board. I understand that it is the cheapest line which can be taken. Only Rs. 12½ crores are involved for the construction, and 12½ per cent remuneration can be achieved; by constructing this line, from Secunderabad to Madras 75 kilometres will be lessend. It will connect Nagarjunasagar area as well as the District headquarters which are backward areas. Not only this, the hon Minister last year paid a visit to Hyderabad where he consulted the General Manager and other officers and non officials several representations were made to him and he has promised at that time only but, to our misfortune, the Bangia Dosh matter came up which naturally reflected on our economy and we could not get that line that year. When I saw the Budget proposals of this year also, I am utterly disappointed that no new railway line has been given to Andhra Pradesh. In the present Budget only two new lines have been taken up viz., Tirunelveli to Trivandrum and Sabarmati to Gandhinagar. I think these are the only two new lines

taken up this year as far my knowledge goes. For Andhra Pradesh no new line has been given.

Recently, the hon. Minister paid a visit to Hyderabad, consulted the Chief Minister and the General Manager and other concerned people. They have also recommended that this is the most important line which should be taken up. Nagarjunasagar is a very big project. After completion, it will throw up an exportable surplus of rice and sugar worth about Rs. 100 crores. If you do not take steps from now on, how can you meet the needs of the project area at that time? The hon. Minister had a discussion recently. He was kind enough to promise that one or two lines he was going to take up in every State. I think he will take this line into consideration. This is the cheapest line, and remunerative. which is a must in a backward area.

Moreover, when HEH the Nizam's Railway was in existence in Hyderabad, there was a surplus of Rs. 6 crores at our disposal which was absorbed in the Indian Union Railways. In the Parliament perhaps an assurance was given that from this amount of Rs. 6 crores new lines would be constructed in the erstwhile Hyderabad. Even though Nadikude is not in the erstwhile Hyderabad State, if you can start it from the other side. It is not objectionable Nalgonda and Bibinagar are included in the erstwhile Hyderabad State. From this Rs. 6 crores, the line could have been started and completed by this time. The Minister is having an idea of giving. I hope and trust he will pay his attention to this line.

Not only this, this is the silver jubilee year. Not only the silver jubilee but the memory of Shri Hanumanthaiya will remain in that area if he sanctions this new line of Nadikude to Bibinagar.

There are several other proposals also—Nizamabad to Ramgundam line which connects the Pochampad area also and it is necessary for Secunderabad and Hyderabad areas.

Now, with regard to the Budget proposals under Demand No. 5 Replacement and Maintenance several huge monies are being misused. The line of Kottavalasa to Kirundul was started in 1965-66 and a huge amount of crores of rupees have been spent on that line and it is now being relaid after 4 or 5 years. Generally the life of the Railway line is for 40-50 years. Then who is responsible for it? Did any officer not checked this? Is the Railway Board in existence when such irregularities are not checked at all? There is an additional expenditure of Rs. 1.3 crores for relaying the lines. I think the hon. Minister will pay his personal attention to this matter.

Under maintenance, every year you are spending Rs. 97 crores. This year you are asking for Rs. 100 crores. That is, Rs. 3 crores more. Not only that. You are asking Rs. 1.48 crores for ballast purposes. What sudden improvement is needed when it is working satisfactorily without any trouble? Is there any Rajdhani track of service on these lines or any other reason? I want to know.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Your time is up. You must conclude.

SHRI K. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY: I want only 3 minutes more. From yesterday 11 O' clock I have been sitting and I got my chance now.

I now come to rolling stock. Rolling stock rose from Rs. 130 crores. Now you are asking for Rs. 139 crores. I do not know what are the special types of repairs of the rolling stock for which you need this amount. Rs. 1.33 crores increase is said to be the consequence of the increase of movements. I fail to understand how the increase in movement should result in the increase of the cost of repairs.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Kindly conclude. Don't be unfair to Members of your own party.

SHRI K. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY : Is it because of over-aged locomotive wagons and coaches which are in use, which cannot give satisfactory service? Is it because some other costs are covered under this head? Rs. 80 lakhs are being asked for special repairs to electric coaches and electric locomotives. Have you taken any action to stop the steam locomotives? I think the hon Minister should have a plan for stopping this.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please conclude as you have exceeded the time.

SHRI K. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY : Demand No. VII relates to working expenses on fuel. Last year you asked for coal consumption of Rs. 51.63 crores. This year you are asking for Rs. 54.49 crores. The Minister said that there will be 9.5 million tonnes of additional originating goods traffic and 3 per cent. of increase in passenger traffic. Last year also in the Budget he said that 9 million tonnes will be increased. But not even one million tonne has increased. Evidently, excess budgeting is being made to reach more coal to loco sheds and this will help pilferage and misappropriation of coal. Consumption of coal over the last 10 years has gone up by 35 per cent.

Under freight and handling, you have shown Rs. 45 crores. Freight and handling charges are also equal to the cost of coal. Railways are charging very nominal rates for coal as it is required for them only. Most of the money is being pocketed by contractors. So, some cooperative system may be introduced.

Regarding Dieselisation in Andhra Pradesh, except Dakshin Express no other dieselisation is there. More attention should be paid for the dieselisation and electrification also in this part.

Then, only one point.....

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : No. Nothing will go on record. Shri Chavda.

SHRI K. RAMAKRISHNA REDDY : *

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA (Patan) : First, I shall take the question of non-availability of wagons, particularly in the State of Gujarat. The Gujarat Chamber of Commerce requested the chairman, Railway Board, on 12th February, 1972 to allot supply of 50 wagons daily to cope with the huge traffic of jeera, aniseeds, oilseeds etc. from Unjah station. Then, I received a telegram on 29th March, 1972, which I would like to quote here. It reads thus :

"Jeera, aniseeds, oilseeds season in full swing at Unjah repeated request to railway authorities for clearance are in vain heavy accumulation at Unjah 1700 wagons awaiting clearance. ...".

Then, I wrote a letter to the general manager as follows :

"I have received representations from some businessmen of Mehsana district, Gujarat, that they have been feeling much inconvenienced due to non-availability of wagons, especially at small and roadside stations. Although orders for allotment of wagons are given, the wagons are not supplied and subsequently orders have to be changed and cancelled. Thus, the business community is put to hardship. A particular businessman was allotted wagons at Dhinoj station on 23rd and 24th February, and again on 8th, 9th, 10th and 12th March, but actually no wagons could be made available to him."

In his reply to my letter, the general manager has said :

"In all such cases, care is taken to fulfil the allotments as early as possible on subsequent days."

This is not a fact, as I have pointed out earlier.

I would like to make one suggestion in this regard that allotment orders for roadside stations where there are only a few indents for wagons should be given by control specifically instead of giving general orders.

There is non-availability of wagons for coal also. The Central Gujarat Chamber of Commerce wrote a letter to the chairman, Railway Board, regarding acute shortage of wagon supply in Baroda division. In the same way, the Kutch-Sausashtra Salt Manufacturers' Association have also written regarding non-availability of wagons for salt movement.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The hon. Member is giving so many references.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA : Because I want to point out the reason for non-availability of wagons. Though there are sufficient number of wagons in the country, yet corruption has been introduced much more at every level than before in the case of allotment of wagons. Therefore, something should be done in this matter.

My next point is regarding the shifting of the office of the Railway Service Commission from Bombay to Nagpur last year. It was easy for candidates coming from Gujarat and Rajasthan to attend the Railway Service Commission at Bombay. The shifting of the Railway Service Commission to Nagpur is disadvantageous to Rajasthan and Gujarat because these two States are covered by the Western Railway. I fail to understand why this office has been shifted to Nagpur.

Nagpur is not covered by the Western Railway. In his reply, the Railway Minister Shri K. Hanumanthaiya wrote to me as follows.

"By shifting the office from Bombay to Nagpur, no hardship would be caused in the employment opportunities to the candidates hailing from Rajasthan and Gujarat as apprehended by you. Candi-

dates belonging to Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan.....”

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The hon. Member wanted five minutes only, but he is giving so many references.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA : I shall take only one more point and I shall conclude.

The hon. Minister further wrote :

“Candidates belonging to Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh or Rajasthan could come to Bombay for taking the written test or interview; these are arranged at convenient centres where an adequate number of persons are to be examined.”

If that is so, then why is it being shifted to Nagpur? I demand that the office of Railway Service Commission should be shifted to Ahmedabad or some place in Gujarat, so that the people from Rajasthan or Gujarat, could take advantage of it because it is these two States which are served by the Western Railway and not the Nagpur division.

Secondly, the headquarters of the Western Railway which is at present at Bombay should be shifted either to Ahmedabad or Gandhinagar, because it is at the extreme end of the whole railway. Rajasthan and Gujarat are covered by this Railway and it is only proper that the headquarters should be located at Ahmedabad or Gandhinagar.

Regarding the TTEs in the Rajkot Division, there are only 37 of them and there are 80 trains. These TTEs were recruited on 1st January 1964. They are not yet confirmed. Also 50 trains are running without TTEs. This is not a satisfactory state of affairs. All the trains should have TTEs and the 37 TTEs now in service should be confirmed.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI) : In my short intervention, I shall briefly deal

with some of the points raised by hon. members. One of the problems referred to was about non-availability of wagons. In order to understand the dimensions of this problem, it is necessary to understand the whole background of the wagon position in the country. If you look at the overall loading of goods traffic in 1971-72, there has been some improvement in it. This is not a matter of much satisfaction to the Railways because we have to load more. But I must say we have not been able to hit the target of 9 million tonnes extra traffic which we wanted. As against this estimate we have been able to increase it only by 2.09 million tonnes, leaving a shortfall of about 6.9 million tonnes.

Looking at this picture, the railways are not wholly to blame. The balance of 6.9 million tonnes which could not be achieved was no doubt due to lack of rail transport. This includes 1.24 million tonnes of coal from other public users, 0.8 million tonnes of export ore from Barajamda sector to Calcutta Port, 0.72 million tonnes of cement and about 0.4 million tonnes of fertiliser and other general goods.

In this House, I have so many times stated the reasons for this shortfall. I will briefly touch those points again. The shortfall was unavoidable due to certain factors. As hon. members know, the situation in the eastern sector was far from satisfactory. Once it is dislocated, it is very difficult for the railways to restore the functioning to normalcy; It takes a long time, years of planning to establish the transport system in a particular area, but once there is a *bandh*, strike or *dharna*, the entire system is through out of gear and it takes months to restore normalcy in traffic. Unfortunately, during the last two years, the situation in the eastern sector was far from satisfactory, although now things are improving and with the improvement in the law and order situation, wagon availability position has also improved.

[Shri K. S. Chavda]

As hon. members are aware, there were 13 major *bandhs* in 1970-71, about 7 *bandhs* in 1971-72; then there was a series of strikes by railway staff in 1970; then unfortunately, we had extensive breaches on the NE and NF railways in August-October 1971 which immobilised about 10,000 wagons in this region. Then we had to cope with extensive movement of food-grains and other essential commodities to the north-eastern sector for millions of refugees in the last quarter of 1971 immobilising about 3,000 broad gauge wagons. Then we had heavy defence commitments and the movement of prisoners of war and refugees. During this period 3292 military specials were run. This is the brief picture of the problem.

15 hrs.

Goods traffic to Bangla Desh was resumed and we have about 4500 wagons in that area. With a view to help the Government of Bangla Desh we have moved about 3½ lakh tons of foodgrains and over half a lakh tonne of other goods. As the situation stands today, we are not able to get back these wagons from Bangla Desh soon. We hope that with the improvement of the situation in that country, we shall be able to get a large number of wagons released, which can be used within the country for the movement of our goods traffic.

There was a hue and cry about the movement of brick-burning coal. We realise that it is a short reason only demand and it is only during the dry months that the demand goes up. We have tried our best to see that the demands of the States are met. There are certain difficulties in meeting the demands in full. With the situation improving in the eastern part, wagon releases from different areas will improve and this will also improve the situation about the brick kiln coal.

A very strange phenomenon developed in 1969-70. The demand for coal was met

in full 100 per cent by the railways. In January-September 1970, as many as 793 sponsored rakes representing about 64,000 Wagons were cancelled by the parties presumably due to low demand. But the position however took a deteriorating turn from August 1970 when the train services. On the eastern railway were completely dislocated due to various reasons which I have already stated. The demand started picking up and the normal functioning of the railways also improved slowly and that also showed some improvement in the wagon position. We have now launched special drives to see that wagons are made available for movement of coal.

Some hon. Members have said that there are large stocks built up at pitheads. It is true that in 1971 about nine million tonnes of coal accumulated at pitheads; now it has come down to 7.96 million tonnes as against the normal pithead stocks of 5.6 million tonnes. There also the position has considerably improved.

SHRI DAMODAR PANDEY (Hazaribagh) : Is it due to the fact that production has been plugged by the coal mines to that extent, that the stock is less?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : So far as coal movement from pitheads is concerned, it was reported in some newspapers that the Railways are in a position to supply 3600 wagons per day which would make coal movement very easy and the entire demand of our industries will be met. Sir, I would like to point out here that in 1970-71 and 1971-72 the average number of wagons loaded from Bengal Bihar fields has been 5,542 and 5,647 wagons respectively every day. The corresponding figure of daily loading from all coal fields has been 7557 and 7829 wagons per day. If the House looks at these figures, it would be seen that the Railways have supplied much more than was actually demanded by the coal mines.

I would revert back to the brick burning coal. The average loading for the last three years has been in 1969-70 it was 532 wagons per day. Now in 1970-71 it has come down. In order to meet the growing demand of bricks and the brick kiln owners, we are now planning to step up the availability of wagons to these brick kiln owners. As the House is aware, Railways have to supply wagons. Sponsoring is done by the State Governments. It is the State Governments who sponsor the various parties and allocation of railway wagons to them. Railways have to supply the wagons to them according to the sponsoring. Unfortunately, some times an impression is created that it is precisely the responsibility of the Railways if there is shortage of coal in any particular area. We have no control on detailed distribution of coal.

SHRI RAMAVATAR SHASTRI (Patna): Coal is piling up, but there are no wagons.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : Pithead stocks are coming down. I do not know to which place Shastriji is referring. Even in Bihar, Bengal coalfields, the pithead stocks have been considerably lower because of the better availability of wagons in those particular areas. Railways are making every endeavour and every effort to see that the demands are met fully so far as brick burning coal and other coals are concerned.

My colleague from Gujarat Shri Chavda stated that there have possibly been no movements of wagons to Gujarat and that is why lot of traffic from that area has suffered. I would like to stress one point. So far as the movement of salt is concerned it is true that some complaints were received from Saurashtra and Kutch. I would like to give the loading figures. In Saurashtra in the year 1970-71 we loaded about 754 broad gauge wagons. In 1971-72 it has gone upto 1010. From Kutch area loading was 704 broad gauge wagons in 1970-71 and the loading has gone upto 1013. But, unfortunately, there has been a marginal decrease on the metre gauge,

I admit. But whatever decrease has been on the metre gauge has been broadly compensated by the increase on the broad-gauge. If you take an over all picture there has not been much distress. But there is some distress, I admit.

SHRI P.M. MEHTA (Bhavnagar) : 55% of the salt is produced by the Saurashtra. They require wagons. If the wagons are given to Saurashtra before the monsoon the position will improve. The monsoon comes, they will be at a great loss.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : We have instituted a drive for the loading of salt both from Saurashtra and Kutch in May 1972 and the loading has been stepped up. I will give the rough ideas of what is the position now. From Kutch area January figures are 203 broad gauge and 505 metre gauge wagons. February figures show 187 broad gauge and 205 metre gauge wagons. In the first ten days of May the position is 233 broad gauge and 364 metre gauge wagons.

In Saurashtra area, we have considerably improved—182 wagons in broad gauge in January and 2668 in the metre gauge. In February 2442 metre gauge wagons were loaded, in March 2424 and in April the figures is 1990. I can assure the House that in the month of May there will be considerable improvement in these figures. So, the loading of the salt from Kutch and Saurashtra area will not be hampered. The figures I have given clearly show that we are making an earnest and honest effort to see that the loading is increased in those areas.

SHRI K.S. CHAVDA : I said that at Unjah 1700 wagon-loads are accumulating and the Gujarat Chamber of Commerce has written to the Chairman, Railway Board for wagons. What about that?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : About individual stations, he can write to me and then I will look into it. I am giving the broad picture.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY (Kandrapara) : Is the Minister aware that in Keonjhar district in Orissa, manganese and Iron ore mines are closed down due to non-availability of wagons?

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : There have been some representations from manganese, dolomite and other mines people. There has been some difficulty in giving them the complete number of wagons they wanted. There has been some improvement. I am not giving a very rosy picture about the availability of wagons. I am just placing the actual facts before the House. We are trying to improve the situation. I am giving the reasons why dislocation was there. Unfortunately, power crisis developed in our country. My friend from Gujarat should realise that the Ahmedabad Electricity Board are now being provided with 27 rakes of coal a month as against the normal supply of 10 to 12 rakes, to maintain power supply in Gujarat. These power-houses, whether in Gujarat or Bihar or other places, never built up inventories. They thought the situation was easy and they could get coal for the asking. But their inventories went very low and they had to come to the railways, because only the railways could rescue them. Many power-houses had planned to move coal by road. Even in those cases, the railways stepped in and helped them by allotting them a large number of wagons, which would have been normally given to the general public for moving brick-burning coal or other goods traffic. Not even in a single case are the railways responsible for the shortage of coal in the power-houses. It is our duty as the primary national organisation of transport to see that their difficulties are solved. So, we had diverted a large number of wagons to the power-houses. I am sure that when they are able to build up their inventories for a week or 10 days, we will be able to divert most of the wagons from the power-houses and put them in the general pool for use by the general public. I can assure the House

that we are seriously considering the whole problem of availability of wagons. We have now planned to build more wagons—about 27,000 wagons during the next 2 or 3 years. We feel the wagons we have now are not sufficient to cope up with the increasing traffic in the country. That is why we are trying to build more wagons. We require covered wagons. We are seized of the problem and we are giving the fullest cooperation to the States to tide over this difficult period. The wagon situation in the country is showing an improving trend, but we have to be more vigilant and cautious and make every effort to see that we reach a reasonable level so far as availability of wagons are concerned.

Mr Jyotirmoy Bosu said yesterday that there has been an increase in the number of railway accidents from 840 in 1970--71 to 867 in 1971--72. Unfortunately, the comparisons he made pertain to a short period. If he sees the overall picture, it will be seen that as against 1293 accidents during 1964--65 which was the lowest figure till then ever recorded, it was only 867 in 1971--72. This shows that there has been tremendous improvement, so far as accidents are concerned. It is only a marginal fluctuation which he has pointed out. He should rather encourage the railways that they are doing something well and appreciate the effort put in by the employees, officials and other people concerned to ensure improvement in the accident rates.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour) : I tried my level best but I could find nothing admirable.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : If he opens his eyes and mind he would see something good also.

SHRI K. S. CHAVDA : What about allotment to wayside stations? Now sometimes wagons are available but allotments are not made

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : Certain unscrupulous people were taking coal from colliery pitheads and trucks and booking them from wayside stations. The result was that a large number of non-sponsored coal has moved into various States, which gives rise to black-market. Unfortunately, this unscrupulous traders take advantage of the scarcity conditions in the country. If my hon. friend wants us to do booking from roadside or way side stations, it would be very difficult for us. We tried to remedy this defect by issuing a circular to our authorities that they should not book coal from wayside stations. The parties went to the High Court and an injunction was issued against the Railway Board, not to restrain them from loading the wagons from wayside stations. We tried to amend the law further. A contempt notice has been issued against the Member (Traffic) to explain why action for contempt should not be taken against him. These are the difficulties we are facing. Yet, we are trying to see that some way is found out by which we can solve this very big problem.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU. The situation is worsening. No action is taken in spite of all these promises.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : The whole trouble is that my friend is always pessimistic. He looks at everything from a different angle. Suppose there is a cup which is half full of water. He will not say that it is half full; he will say that it is half empty. He shows a pessimistic approach. He looks at things from a different angle.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU. Our Deputy-Speaker is a professor of English. You can ask him. Half empty is more right than half full. Because "full" means full.

SHRI MOHD. SHAFI QURESHI : Then I come to the provision for over-bridges and under-bridges in various States. I would emphasize once more that the railways have a safety fund. It is rail-

way money which is given to the States. This fund was constituted in 1966. The amount available in this fund during 1971-72 was Rs. 10.83 crores. This amount is available to the State Governments to assist them in meeting their share of the cost. It is only when the need of the State Government is more than the amount available in the Safety Fund that it is expected to find extra funds. The railways are prepared to spend their share any time the State Government so desires. So, hon. Members are at liberty to request the State Governments concerned to recommend to the Railway Board or the Ministry the construction of various over and under bridges and this money, which is lying with the State Governments, would be utilized. Unfortunately, the response so far has not been so good, except in the case of Mysore which has come up with some new schemes.

As has been pointed out, the outlays in 1971-72 was Rs. 1.26 crores and for 1972-73 the outlay would be Rs. 3.55 crores. So far as small works are concerned, I do not think there is any difficulty, provided the State Governments take the initiative in this matter.

The other problems which the hon. Members have mentioned will be dealt with by my senior colleague.

SHRI SURENDRA MOHANTY (Kendrapara) : I crave the indulgence of the House to quote an unanimously passed resolution in the Orissa Assembly which states—I quote—

“That this House wishes to impress on the Government of India that since the longest mileage of the South Eastern Railways lies in Orissa compared to the other States accounting for a substantial share of the revenue of the South Eastern Railways and in view of the central situation of the State of Orissa, in the South Eastern Railways system, the location of the Headquarters of the South Eastern Railways in Orissa is not only just

[Shri Surendra Mohanty] and convenient but also will help Orissa to develop and prosper while it will not adversely affect any other region in the country. That this House therefore urges upon the Government of India to agree to the location of the Headquarters of the South Eastern Railways in Orissa without any delay."

This was a resolution which had been adopted in the Orissa Legislative Assembly on 6.4.72 unanimously.

I quite appreciate the Hon'ble Railway Minister replying that the shifting of the Headquarters of the Railways cannot be decided on the basis of an unanimous resolution passed in a State Legislature. I quite agree with him. But, had not been politics imported into an administrative question by no less a person than Shri Siddhartha Shankar Ray, who is the Chief Minister of West Bengal, Orissa Assembly would not have passed this resolution. It is very regrettable that a leader of Shri Ray's stature should make a statement and it is on record, that if the South Eastern Railway's Headquarters is shifted to Orissa, Bengal will be on fire, will be ablaze. Such kind of irresponsible remarks and importation of political motives and passions to a purely administrative question has today bedevilled the issue and in that context the Orissa Assembly had passed this resolution. I ask the Hon'ble Railway Minister to consider this resolution not as an unilateral demand of the State Legislature but as an index of the strongness of the feelings and the emotional aspirations of the people on this aspect of the matter.

Sir, I think when I say that the Kilometerage of the South Eastern Railway in Orissa is the longest, the Railway Minister will not question it. South Eastern Railway passes through the States of Andhra, Madhya Pradesh,

Orissa and to a very small extent in Bihar and Bengal and among these States, the Kilometerage in Orissa is the longest. When I say that a major portion of the revenue of the South Eastern Railway is earned from Orissa, it will also not be questioned. It cannot also be questioned that the mineral resources and also the industrial and trading activities in Orissa fetch the South Eastern Railway, its maximum revenue. It also cannot be disputed that Calcutta is outside the operational area of South Eastern Railway. From these three considerations alone, this question has to be judged without threatening that Bengal will be on fire or Orissa will be in floods.

Calcutta has got the Headquarters of two Railways already—the Eastern Railway and South Eastern Railway and when the tube railway is established, its Headquarters will also be located in Calcutta. So, when it has been the declared policy of the Government that there should be de-centralisation, and in the context of the assurance which had been given by no less a person than the Railway Minister himself; I would ask to his sense of judgement, is it fair that you will concentrate the headquarters of three railways in one city alone?

It has been said that if the Headquarters is shifted to a neighbouring State, like Orissa, Bengal will be on fire. Is that the way by which you are going to build the emotional integration of which you are talking about? When the headquarters of the Southern Railway is being shifted from Madras to Secunderabad, what harm is there if the South-Eastern Railway headquarter is transferred to Orissa?

I am told, the historical association of the Garden Reach headquarters of erstwhile Bengal-Nagpur railway which was associated with the exiled Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Oudh is being keenly preserved by the South-Eastern Railway.

I am told, the new nawabs of the South-Eastern Railway are very much fascinated about retaining the historical association with the said house. I have no quarrel with the present nawabs of Oudh of S. E. Railway. At least, the offices of the Chief Commercial Superintendent Office and the Railway Public Service Commission could be shifted by stages. That will go a long way in assuaging the frayed tempers of the people of Orissa. I hope, the hon. Minister will do justice to the humble plea that I have made on the floor of the House in this regard.

Then, about the Cuttack-Paradip railway link which lies within my constituency, the hon. Minister held out a promise that it will be completed by December, 1972. The hon. Minister knows that it is not even going to be completed by December, 1974. The pace of the work is so slow, the implementation of the programmes is so tardy, that unless some special steps are taken, the Cuttack-Paradip link is not going to be completed within the stipulated time.

Further, on this railway, the local people are not given any preference in employment. I have received a number of telegrams and communications which I will forward to the Railway Minister for his kind consideration. The local people are not being given any preference. So far as the existing employment policy is concerned, other conditions being equal, the local people are to be given preference. But even though all other conditions are equal, the local people are not being given any preference in matters of employment. This has created a lot of heart-burning.

About the construction of a new railway between Jakhpura and Bansh pauri, the hon. Railway Minister had promised that the construction of this railway line could be taken up as soon as the economic feasibility report was available.

The economic feasibility report was made available to him and, after the Orissa Mining Corporation promised to give him the siding, the hon. Minister turned round to say that unless the Malanagtoili deposits are investigated, its potential is explored, the decision on this railway line could not be taken. This is how a raw treatment is being meted out to a State which is called an under developed State. For developing an under-developed area, the railways is the most important infra-structure. I would urge upon the hon. Minister to consider all these aspects, not in a spirit of political jingoism, not in a spirit of political passions and prejudices, but to go by objective factors.

SHRI B. S. MURTHY (Amalapuram) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I congratulate Mr. Hanumanthaiya. In many respects, he has the qualities of the original Hanumanthaiya of whom we read in Ramayana. . . .

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, you continue your speech on Monday. We take up the private Member's Business now.

15.30 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS AND RESOLUTIONS.

FOURTEENTH REPORT

SHRI AMARNATH VIDYALANKAR (Chandigarh) I beg to move :

"That this House do agree with the Fourteenth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 17th May, 1972."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : The question is :