

[Shri Satya Narayan Sinha]

beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of a part of the financial year 1958-59.

Mr. Speaker: The question is:

“That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for the withdrawal of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the service of a part of the financial year 1958-59.”

The motion was adopted.

Shri Satya Narayan Sinha: Sir, I introduce* the Bill.

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DEMANDS FOR GRANTS—RAILWAYS—*contd.*

Mr. Speaker: The House will now resume further discussion of the remaining Demands for Grants, that is Demands Nos. 2 to 18 and 20 in respect of Railways—1958-59. Out of 5 hours allotted for the discussion and voting on these Demands, 3 hours have already been availed of and 2 hours now remain.

The list of cut motions moved on the 8th March, 1958 relating to these Demands has already been circulated to Members on the same day.

I will call upon the Minister of Railways to reply to the debate at...

May I know how long the hon. Minister will take?

The Minister of Railways (Shri Jagjivan Ram): About forty-five minutes.

Mr. Speaker: Yes; it is now 12.05. I will call upon the Minister of Railways to reply at 1.15 after which the cut motions will be disposed of and all the Demands put to vote.

Shri N. B. Maiti may continue his speech.

Shri N. B. Maiti (Ghatal): I shall place certain small points before the hon. Minister and the railway authorities. Though they are small so far as they are concerned, they are of vital importance for the areas and the people who live there.

First of all, I shall refer to the slow movement of the trains, in the South Eastern Railway. The Howrah-Gomoh passenger starts from Howrah at 6-56 and reaches Gomoh at 21-15. That is, it takes about 14 hours 17 minutes in order to go over a mileage of 222. That is also the speed of its counterpart, the down train. Then, there are the trains from Midnapur to Howrah and from Howrah to Midnapur. In order to go only 80 miles, they take 4 hours 42 minutes, 5 hours 50 minutes, 5 hours 14 minutes and so on.

In these days of speed—I shall not refer to the Sputniks which are not here—in these days of speed, and speed in action in Parliament, I would observe that the speed of these trains is very slow. I hope the Minister would kindly try to see if he can make them speedier.

Next, I shall refer to the paucity of trains from Bankura to Howrah; not only that, from Gomoh to Howrah also. It is known to the hon. Minister that this area is very thickly populated. Fortunately or unfortunately, it passes through the district of Howrah which is also the hotbed of some sort of agitation. Many a time, it so happens that the alarm chains are pulled and so on and so forth. This has to be prevented. Some trains should be diverted from the main line to this line. That is to say, some trains that go up and down Delhi and Howrah can be diverted from Gomoh or Asansol to this line *via* Adra, Kharagpur, etc. If that is so, there

*Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

would be less of these things. There will not be overcrowding also and there will not be so much indiscipline that we see.

In the case of Bombay Mail, third class booking is allowed from Kharagpur to Howrah but in the case of Madras Mail it is not allowed. Third Class booking should be allowed from Kharagpur in the case of both up and down Howrah-Madras Mail.

The Madras Mail does not stop at Contai Road station. It is a sub-division with a population of more than seven lakhs. Not only that. It also serves a large part of Midnapore sub-division as well. A great hinterland lies beyond the Contai Road station. So, I suggest that Madras Mail—both up and down—should have a stoppage for a minute or two at Contai Road station. The same also applies to Jhargram. For the last three or four months, the Dn. Bombay Mail was allowed to stop there. I am told that the income on this account is about Rs. 35,000 or Rs. 250 per day. I understand that the present practice is going to be discontinued and it will not stop at Jhargram. I would humbly place these facts before the hon. Minister to kindly consider this case.

My friend, Dr. Pashupati Mandal suggested the construction of Santragachi-Vishnupur line on the South-Eastern Railway. It will pass through Radhanagar, birth place of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Arambag sub-divisional town, Kamarpakur, the birth place of Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Harishpur. That line was recommended by the West Bengal Government for construction. It has been kept in cold storage perhaps. I would humbly request the hon. Minister to see that it is resurrected.

As many friends have said, it is proper for me to say a word about my constituency. There should be a survey of a line from Ghatal to Digha. It will go *via* Tamluk—the hon. Minister knows about the freedom struggle there—and Contai no less known.

It will go to Digha, a seaside health resort. At least some kind of a survey should be made for this line, though I know that it has been stopped for the present year.

My last and most important point is this. In order to bring back the morale of the people and the staff, there should be some sort of an educative propaganda among the masses. It is very unfortunate that in West Bengal, while passing through Midnapore district and Howrah, there had been pullings of alarm chains, satyagrahas, pilferings, non-payments of charges, wagon breakings, etc. I would suggest two sorts of reform for this work. One is internal and the other is external.

The internal part is this. The high officers should ask their field workers to be more scrupulous and honest and they should check their work.

As for the co-operation which the Minister seeks from the public, a sort of a propaganda might be set in motion in this place with the help of the Members of Parliament and local legislature. The hon. Minister or his Deputy might inaugurate that function. We may hold meetings after meetings explaining the implications of all these nefarious practices and how it harms not only the railways but also the workers of the railways and also the national interests. I would suggest that this may be taken as a pilot scheme in those areas. Along with our friends, we would place our humble service at the disposal of the hon. Minister if he is inclined to take up the suggestions that I have made.

Shri Mahanty (Dhenkanal): Sir, in moving my cut motions Nos. 140 and 141, I only crave the indulgence of the Minister to lend some attention to the ever increasing regional disparity that has been widening in certain under-developed States of the Indian Union. I venture to do so for nobody is more confident than myself that it is a healthy desire to work for

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the bettering of the lot of not only backward classes but also of the backward areas.

Now, Sir, very rightly the Indian Railways have been described as the life-line of this country. But, to our misfortune in the State of Orissa this life-line has been dried up. I would venture to quote certain figures from which the House can well appreciate the intensity of my emotions. When we come to Bombay the railway mileage is 6,319, in Rajasthan it is 3,241, in Madhya Pradesh it is 3,040, in Punjab it is 2,316, in Andhra it is 2,807, in Bihar it is 2,293, but when we come to Orissa it is only 838 miles. From this you can well imagine the enormity of the situation in which we are placed.

During the First Five Year Plan period about 650 miles of new railway lines were laid throughout the Indian Union. Out of these 650 miles not even a single mile was conceded to the State of Orissa. During the Second Plan also, Orissa has not received any attention from the hon. Railway Minister. Last year, another 192 miles were added on to our Indian Railways, out of which not a single mile was given to Orissa.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: No, it goes to Orissa also.

Shri Mahanty: I am coming to it. It is only a siding and that too for the transport of iron ores and not human beings. Construction of another 500 miles of new railway lines is in progress in this Budget, but not a single mile has been allotted for the unfortunate human beings of the State of Orissa, though its iron ores are considered more important by the Railway Minister. It is only a railway siding that has been given.

The Deputy Minister of Railways (Shri Shahnawas Khan): It gives prosperity to the human beings.

Shri Mahanty: We are thankful to the hon. Minister for having opened up the Mahanadi Valley of Orissa by constructing the Hirakud Dam. In this Budget, I am happy to note that the Railway Ministry is proposing to construct 100 miles of railway line from Robertsganj to Garhwa in the Northern Railway for opening up the Rihand Dam area. I venture to ask, what about the Mahanadi Valley area?

I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to another aspect of this question. I am well aware of his grievance. There is paucity of funds. I am sure, had he more funds he would not have ignored us. But, it is a question of parity, it is a question of balancing; otherwise, what is planning. If planning means an abject surrender to certain forces which are chaotic, which are beyond the control of man then, Sir, that is surrender to destiny; certainly that is not planning. When we talk of plan, when we think of plan, essentially we mean that it is a question of choice of priorities.

I am very happy that the Railway Minister is laying so much emphasis on electrification. Let him not consider me so out of date, so primitive, so anti-deluvian that I will not be one with him when he talks of railway electrification. But, may I invite his attention to the history and development of railway electrification not only in India but in the world? Let us take the case of U.S.A. The total mileage is 2,21,866 whereas in India I think our total mileage is only 34,700 miles. In U.S.A. only 2,044 miles have been electrified even though they took to electrification of railways as late as 1905. In U.S.S.R., another highly progressive and highly industrialised country, the total railway mileage is 74,753 as against a beggarly 34,000 in the Indian Union. They took to railway electrification in the year 1926, and they have got only 3,430 miles of electrified railways. When we come to Australia, another highly industrialised country, the electrified railway mileage there is only 398. I think we

have got much more in India. In Canada, it is only 31 miles even though Canada took to railway electrification in the year 1908, and even though the total mileage in Canada far exceeds the mileage in the Indian Union; whereas they have got 42,132 miles we have got only 34,700 miles.

Therefore, the little point that I am trying to make out is, let there not be so much emphasis placed on railway electrification when other areas, closed areas, under-developed areas are languishing in a sort of, what should I say, a blind alley. I find from this Budget that 1,062 miles of new railway lines have been proposed to be electrified, and for which a sum of Rs. 16.29 crores has been earmarked. During the Second Five Year Plan, we are proposing to spend Rs. 75 crores over this electrification. As against a sum of Rs. 22.9 crores which is being provided for constructing 140 miles of new broad gauge railway lines in this budget, we are providing Rs. 16.29 crores for railway electrification. I appeal to the conscience of the Minister, I appeal to the organised conscience of the House and this country at large.....

Shri Bimal Ghose (Barrackpore):
No conscience is left.

Shri Mahanty: I think some conscience is left. I appeal to the hon. Minister to consider this proposition. Let it not be said that we want electrification first, we want electrification of a particular region for transport of our goods speedily. I am quite aware of that fact. What about China? In China, the hon. Minister probably knows better, if the published reports and figures be correct, they have far exceeded Ind'a in the fulfilment of the targets of the First Five Year Plan. May I know from the hon. Minister how many miles of railway lines in China have been electrified? Are they suffering from any bottlenecks? None. I should like to inform the House that in China out of 16,700 miles of railway lines in 1955 they had not even a single mile which was elec-

trified, and I guess the situation has not improved in the meantime.

Therefore, it is a question of choice of priorities. Where areas are languishing in a sort of blind alley, where areas have not been opened up, certainly it is open to us to counsel the Minister to tarry a bit in his electrification programme and open up new lines in areas which are remaining closed.

Sir, this situation will gain in enormity and in the intensity of it when it is considered that these 838 miles of railway lines which you find in Orissa were constructed in the good old days when there was the B.N.R. Company. And, I think it will not be far from wrong when I say that even though the old B.N.R. Company had many other projects for new railway construction in Orissa those have been abandoned under the regime of the present Ministry.

I will now come to a very small point and then I will finish. Before I come to that, I would also like to urge another point. The hon. Minister is pleading that there is paucity of funds. But, what do we find? When we come to the administrative expenditure we find that there has been an increase of Rs. 221.92 lakhs over the revised estimates of last year, out of which Rs. 71.33 lakhs are for additional staff who have been appointed or are to be appointed under so many heads. I am not analysing the estimates because this is not the stage when I can analyse; I am simply giving an instance. There has also been an additional increase of Rs. 79.07 lakhs for additional staff under 'traffic' under the pretext that transshipment of goods has increased, even though our earning under goods has fallen far below the expectations of the revised budget. I have never been able to reconcile this claim made in the Explanatory Memorandum that we should increase the staff and increase the allotment for providing for the kind of strain that is being imposed on the railways and then making a candid confession in

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the budget speech that our earnings under the goods side have not been up to the expectations in the revised budget. Be that as it may,—I am not questioning that and this is hardly the stage for that. What I am saying is that we require about Rs. 13 lakhs for the construction of one mile of broad gauge line, taking into consideration the estimate for the Robertsganj-Garhwa railway line. If that be the standard—I am not asserting it—and if we need Rs. 13 lakhs for constructing one mile of new broad gauge railway,—I am taking this figure as an average and I am not fixing any norm—had this amount been saved by proper husbanding of the resources, by proper planning, by a proper co-ordinate administration, then, certainly all these under-developed areas could have been favoured with new railway lines which the hon. Railway Minister is so hesitant to grant.

I shall now come to another aspect, and then I shall have done. It is about the location of a divisional headquarters in Orissa. The major portion of the South-Eastern Railway runs through the State of Orissa. I am talking of the broad gauge railway in this connection, for, the metre gauge is very inconsequential here so far as the South-Eastern Railway is concerned. In Orissa, the South-Eastern Railway has 734 miles; Andhra has got 238 miles; Bihar has got 380 miles; Bombay has got 138 miles; Madhya Pradesh has got 589 miles and West Bengal has got 395 miles. If the length or the mileage be any criterion, is it too much for us to expect at least a divisional headquarters in the State of Orissa? I hope the hon. Railway Minister will at least convince me—at least convince public opinion in Orissa—why this poor State has got the raw deal from every Ministry of the Government of India. Does he consider we are to be starved, so to say, or we are exiles or untouchables? I do not know why there should be this allergy, this prejudice, against the State of Orissa. Certainly, if mileage alone is

taken into consideration, the headquarters of the South-Eastern Railway should be situated in the State of Orissa. Not only we are entitled to the divisional headquarters but to the general headquarters also in Orissa, if we are not ambitious, because we know over-zealous ambition does not pay at least with the hon. Railway Minister. What we pray is that there should be the divisional headquarters in Orissa.

What I am told is—if the published reports be correct—even the little headquarters that they have—I do not know how to describe it—in Khurda Road, is going to be further demented.

These are all the aspects that I wanted to bring to the notice of the hon. Railway Minister. I welcome the decision of the Government of India to create a new zone for the development of another under-developed State, namely, Assam. I welcome the decision to open a new headquarters at Pandu. My only grievance is, the same consideration has not been shown to us, the 15 million people in Orissa, and certainly they have not welcomed the railway budget as has been presented by the hon. Minister. I have no intention to make any broadside against anybody, much less to criticise the administration, but I believe that in his goodness, in his sympathy for the backward classes and the backward areas, the hon. Minister of Railways will not forget us and will not ignore the legitimate demands to which we are entitled.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Subiman Ghose. So far as the hon. Members who have not spoken at all, I shall give them an opportunity during the general budget. The hon. Members who have not spoken in this session will kindly send me chits. I shall try to call them one after the other during the session. I do not want any hon. Member to go back without his name appearing in the Press.

Shri Subiman Ghose (Burdwan): I want to impress upon the Minister of

Railways certain points. The first point that I want to impress upon the hon. Minister is this. It is the stop and start system that has assumed the proportion of positive nuisance. The stop and start system that prevails in the suburban railways means a stoppage of 30 seconds at a station, and this rule was framed long, long ago. The times have changed now. In the way-side stations, one will find that a number of persons—hundreds of persons—go down and get up. 30 seconds is quite insufficient. If the transportation staff adheres to this timing strictly, they will be manhandled by the passengers. If they look to the convenience of the passengers, then they will be manhandled by the Department. Naturally, therefore, they are between the devil and the deep sea. I request the hon. Minister to look to this and to remove this anomaly so that the passengers are not put to any inconvenience, and that this system does not put the staff to any inconvenience either.

I think that this system, in some way, is responsible for some of the accidents. Even during the British regime, I know of a case of a surgeon whose hand had to be amputated and he had got Rs. 50,000 as compensation from the railway only because of this stop and start system.

The second point, which has been spoken of by very many hon. Members, I mean about accidents, and the hon. Minister has been pleased to reply to it suitably. But the matter is so very important that one hardly needs any apology to revert it. Recently, I had been to Sonarpur station. I want to give certain facts to the hon. Minister. I do not know if they are in possession of the facts, or it might be that there has been some attempt to black them out. I came to learn that at Sonarpur station, on the 20th February, the interlocking system was being changed and the non-interlocking system was being introduced and the programme was for ten days. It began on 20th February. But it was

finished on the 23rd February. It was declared to have been completed by 5-50 P.M., that is, ten minutes before the scheduled time. It is the rule—I am speaking subject to correction—that from 6 P.M. to 6 A.M. no line can be declared normal. But this work was done in an indecent haste. Moreover, at that time, when the change was being introduced, the Station Master wanted some more staff. That was not given. The Station Master was asked to act as the Assistant Station Master and he sent telegrams to all concerned and the officers concerned, informing them that he will be acting as Asst. Station Master. But the station was without a Station Master. Yet nobody paid any heed to it. The Station Master was not consulted when the line was declared to have been completed or declared to have become normal.

Then, on the 25th, that is, 12 hours before the occurrence, the Assistant Station Master in charge of the cabin was withdrawn. One Assistant Station Master sent a telegram at 6-30 P.M. to all concerned that the signals were failing, that the block instruments were failing and the authorities must take steps. But nobody paid any heed to it, and the natural consequence was the occurrence of the accident in the early hours of the morning. Perhaps it cannot be called accident; it may be called deliberate acts of omission or commission on the part of some higher officers. So, I would submit that it should not end in punishing some of the employees like cabin man or the driver. I would, in all humility, request the Ministry to go deep into the question and find out who is the guilty person.

In this connection, I suggest that for devising ways and means to avoid accidents and if it is worth consideration, the Ministry may consider it. The Minister might call some zonal meetings with experienced transportation staff—not only with General Managers, who are on a high pedestal. They do not know day to day work. As we all know, practical experience

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is more valuable than theoretical learning. The Minister might call for a meeting with highly experienced station masters, highly experienced guards and other railway employees, and find out how accidents happen. It is my firm belief that their experience will be of benefit to the administration.

They will be in a position to suggest some means to prevent accidents. So, I would beg of the Minister to consider this matter and convene a zonal meeting. Because, we know that accidents never happen in a uniform manner. They happen all on a sudden, and that too without notice. So, naturally, the experience of these people who are connected with the day-to-day administration should be taken to see where the difficulty lies.

Then, everybody knows that unless we get the support of the employees, we cannot succeed in running the administration. If the employees cry for the moon, naturally they will not get any sympathy. But if the employees cry for a morsel of food or for remedying an injustice, I think it is up to the Ministry to attend to their grievances.

I will only refer to two categories of people. One category is SMs and ASMs in the railway administration, who are 30,000 strong. They are scattered all over the country, and they work round the clock. They are cut off from society and practically the rest of the world. Education of their children is neglected. They get medical facilities only when the disease is in an advanced stage. I suggest that justice should be done to them so that they remain satisfied. As I said, if they cry for the moon, that should not be conceded. But, if their grievances are genuine, they should be attended to

There are various anomalies in the case of SMs and ASMs. The new deal came into force in 1957. I take it that it might have been introduced with the best of intentions for the betterment

of the conditions of the SMs and ASMs, but the result has been otherwise. Instead of promotions, there have been demotions. For instance, the scale for the last category is Rs. 64—170 and for the second category Rs. 100—185. Under the new deal, people in Rs. 100—185 became the last category and they ceased to be supervisory staff. They are not promoted to the next category; direct recruitment is made to fill up the vacancies. *Bona fide* members of the lower categories are very seldom taken in the higher categories. So, I submit that the Ministry should remedy these grievances.

Then, in the case of SMs and ASMs, charges have been framed because they have refused to accept promotions. I will refer you one case in Dinapur Division. I refer to the case of Mr. P. D. Thakur, who is under suspension on the ground that he refused to accept promotion. I had some correspondence with the Divisional Superintendent of Dinapur in the matter. He has written me a letter that the person concerned has violated the orders. But, while reading between the lines of the letter I have found that the violation referred to was the refusal to accept the promotion.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: Refused to take the transfer, perhaps.

Shri Subiman Ghose: Not transfer. It was in between Kiul and Mokameh. The pay for a post must be commensurate with the responsibility attached to the post. You will promote him but you will not give him a pie more. I think that is sheer injustice. We must remember and again I say that the strength of SMs and ASMs is 30,000. They are scattered all over India and they work round the clock. So, they should not be driven to desperation, and something must be done before it is too late.

In this connection I refer here to the speech of Mr. Shastri. On one occasion he said:

"I realise the responsibilities of ASMs and SMs. They have not been paid accordingly. I wish for better treatment."

and he also said:

"They will get, but not in toto. Even if they get what they demand, other people should not be envious of it."

In his budget speech he said:

"Appropriate adjustments should be made in the case of station masters."

I invite the kind attention of the Minister to all these statements.

Then I come to the legal men in the railways. They are all doing the same kinds of duties, though they are known by different names. They are called law inspectors, law assistants, court inspectors, commercial inspectors and so on. Though they are doing the same kind of job, their pay scales differ from zone to zone. You say that India is one and indivisible. But by your action you show that India is divided. They are given different kinds of treatment, though they do the same job and why?

Then, there was recruitment in the Vigilance Department. A person has been given a higher pay from 300 to Rs. 500/- plus a special pay of Rs. 100/-. I think these are all injustices that should be attended to immediately, without referring them to the Pay Commission, as it will take a long time. I think the Ministry is competent to redress those grievances.

Lastly, I will end by saying that justice delayed is justice denied.

Mr. Speaker: I now call Shrimati Tarkeshwari Sinha. Then I will call Shri J. R. Mehta.

श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी सिन्हा (बाढ़) : अध्यक्ष महोदय, मैं आपका बहुत कम वक्त खूँगी क्योंकि मेरा इस बहस में भाग लेने का कोई इरादा नहीं था, पर अभी पिछले दिनों कई एक ऐसी घटनाएँ हो गई हैं मेरे इलाके में कि इस में भाग लेने के लिये मुझे मजबूर होना पड़ा। मन्त्री महोदय को इस की सूचना जरूर मिली होगी, मेरे पास भी कई तार और पत्र आ चुके हैं कि बख्तियारपुर बिहार लाइट रेलवे बिल्कुल बन्द हो गई है क्योंकि वहाँ बहुत बड़ी हड़ताल हो गई है। यह जो रेलवे है, यों तो वह हिन्दुस्तान सरकार की चीज नहीं है, वह वहाँ के डिस्ट्रिक्ट बोर्ड की है, पर कुछ दिनों से लिखा पढ़ी चल रही थी कि हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार इस रेलवे का राष्ट्रीयकरण कर ले। लेकिन बात कुछ आगे नहीं बढ़ सकी। मैंने सुना था कि रेलवेज के कुछ इन्स्पेक्टर वगैरह गये थे जांच वगैरह करने के लिये, उस के बाद उस पर कुछ फैसला नहीं हो पाया था। उस रेलवे में दिन प्रति-दिन हालत खराब होती जा रही थी। ग्राज नतीजा यह हुआ कि छः छः महीने की तनख्वाह कर्मचारियों को नहीं मिली। उस के बाद उन्होंने फैसला किया कि वे हड़ताल करेंगे और ग्राज सारी रेल बन्द हो गई है।

वहाँ पर राजगृह और नालन्दा के प्रसिद्ध स्नान हैं। राजगृह में एक मेला भाष में लगता है, जिसे मलमास का मेला कहते हैं। लाखों आदमी उस मेले में स्नान करने के लिये और रहने के लिये जाया करते हैं। यह गाड़ी ही उनका एक सहारा थी क्योंकि बिहार राज्य की ज़ाबसे चलती है वे बहुत थोड़ी हैं लोगों को वहाँ ले जाने के लिये। हालांकि वह रेल बहुत निकम्मी थी, फिर भी वही रेल एकमात्र सहारा थी जिससे यात्री जाया करते थे। अब मेरी समझ में नहीं आता कि यह मेला वहाँ कैसे सगोगा और कैसे लोग वहाँ जायेंगे। इसका जो नतीजा होगा उससे माननीय मंत्री जी अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं क्योंकि वह बिहार

[श्रीमती तारकेश्वरी सिन्हा]

में ही रहते हैं और वहाँ के वातावरण से काफी परिचित हैं। मैं सत्य कहती हूँ कि दर्जनों तार मेरे पास आये हैं और उनमें यह कहा गया है। वहाँ के रेल कर्मचारी मुख्य मंत्री से मिले थे, इसके बारे में समझौता कराने के लिये क्योंकि डिस्ट्रिक्ट बोर्ड कहता है कि उसके पास रुपया नहीं है और वह देने से लाचार है। जैसा कि रेलवे कर्मचारियों ने पत्र में लिखा है, राज्य के मुख्य मंत्री जी ने उनसे कहा कि हमने हिन्दुस्तान सरकार को लिखा है कि वह जल्दी से जल्दी इस रेलगाड़ी का राष्ट्रीयकरण कर ले, या न भी करे, उसमें कुछ देर हो तो जो इस रेल के कर्मचारी हैं उनसे कुछ समझौता कराने की कोशिश करे। वहाँ की हालत दिन प्रतिदिन बिगड़ती जा रही है। आप जानते हैं कि जो वहाँ के कर्मचारी हैं उनकी तनख्वाह नाममात्र की थी। पहले ही उनकी स्थिति बहुत खराब थी, अब उनकी जीविका का एकमात्र सहारा भी बन्द हो गया है। मैं आप से क्या बतलाऊँ कि वहाँ क्या हालत है। यह रेलवे मंत्री के हाथ की चीज नहीं है, लेकिन जब से माननीय मन्त्री जी ने पद सम्भाला है, मैंने देखा है कि रेलवे के साथ मजदूरों के जो सम्बन्ध हैं वह बहुत मुघरने जा रहे हैं। इसके लिये मैं उन को बर्धाई देती हूँ और धन्यवाद देती हूँ कि उन्होंने हमेशा मजदूरों के मामलों को बहुत अच्छी तरह से तथा समझौता कराने के मानवीय ढंग से देखा है और उनको सांत्वना देने की कोशिश की है। इस लिये मेरी माननीय मंत्री जी से प्रपील है कि इस मामले को भी बहुत आवश्यक समझें और हालत को जल्दी से जल्दी सुधारने की कोशिश करें। मैं तो समझती हूँ कि हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार को इसमें देर करने की गुंजाइश नहीं है। लिखा पढ़ी का जो समय था वह चला गया। सही बात यह है कि रेलगाड़ी तो जनता के फायदे के लिये चलती है। जब वह एकमात्र आवागमन का रास्ता बन्द कर दिया जाय, तो सरकार की यह सत प्रतिशत जिम्मेदारी हो जाती है कि जनता की भलाई के लिये

जो भी बाटा आर्थिक दृष्टि से हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार को ही उसे सहन करे। मैं जानती हूँ कि कुछ दिनों तक उसे बाटा होगा पर उसको इस काम में पड़ जाना चाहिये और जितनी जल्दी हो सके उसे डिस्ट्रिक्ट बोर्ड से लेकर हिन्दुस्तान की सरकार के नीचे उसे ले लेना चाहिये। मेरा पूरा विश्वास है कि अगर माननीय मन्त्री जी चाहेंगे तो इस काम में कोई दिक्कत नहीं होगी और जल्दी से जल्दी यह समझौता हो जायेगा।

अब मैं इतना कह कर समाप्त करती हूँ और रेलवे मंत्री जी से फिर एक बार प्रपील करती हूँ कि वह इस मामले को अच्छी तरह से देखें और जल्दी से जल्दी कोई समझौता कराने की कोशिश करें।

Shri J. B. Mehta (Jodhpur): Mr. Speaker, Sir, to begin with I would like to say a few words on the subject of accidents, on which, of course, much has been said already. But my apology for it is that it is a subject which is looming very large in the eyes of the public and in the eyes of the administration also. It is a subject by which the general public to a very large extent measures the efficiency of the railway administration.

The importance of the subject can be judged from the fact that the predecessor of the present Railway Minister thought fit to surrender his job with the laudable object of stirring up the railwaymen and the railway administration to a better sense of responsibility and duty. I am not suggesting, Sir, that with every accident or with every major accident we should expect the hon. Railway Minister to resign. Probably, if that happens, we won't find sufficient number of persons to fill the job. But it may not be so bad if the hon. Deputy Minister and the members of the Railway Board put themselves together and took their chance by turns!

For one thing, with due deference, I do not like too much stress being laid on the contention that the number of accidents on our railways is smaller than in any other country of the world. That may be true, but to lay too much stress on this point, I respectfully submit, creates a sense of irresponsibility. The average man does not appreciate this sort of an argument and I am sure this sort of approach has a demoralising effect on the railwaymen also. I think the correct approach should be that we should take each and every accident, major or minor, seriously and we should aim at a state of affairs in which accidents will be a thing of the past in this country, whatever may be happening in other countries. I am happy that is the attitude which the hon. Railway Minister has taken in the reply which he gave to the debate last time.

The hon. Minister has told us that human failure largely accounts for these accidents. This is probably true—I think it is perfectly true—yet, I am afraid, it does not lead us very far. The question remains: what are the causes of the growing failure of this human element and what steps, if any, we can take or should take to remedy the present state of affairs? The point, which I have to make in this connection, is that a very important factor responsible for this state of affairs is, what I may call, the diffusion of responsibility at all levels and at all stages. This diffusion of responsibility is not only responsible for the increasing number of accidents but for deterioration in administrative standards not only in the Railways, but in all the Government departments it will apply more or less.

In this context, first to my mind comes the Inspectorate of Railways. Much has been said on this subject on the floor of the House and complaints have been made that they have not been functioning properly. Some have laid the blame on their own shoulders and some have laid the blame on the door of the Railway Board. It is not my purpose to enter into that controversy. My submission

is that it is inherent in the very arrangement in which the Inspectorate of Railways function at the moment that something must go wrong. Firstly, they are responsible to a Minister, who is not in contact with what is happening on the railways and who can have no interest in the railways. Secondly, they are more or less working in a sort of a segregated atmosphere, because they are absolutely cut off from the living currents and they have no living contacts with what is going on in the railways—the railway programme, the railway administration and everything. Sir, I strongly plead that it is time that if we were to make the maximum out of this Inspectorate of Railways, it should be placed under the Railway Minister. I can very well appreciate that they should be independent of the Railway Board, but that does not mean that they should not be a part and parcel of the Railway Ministry.

Next, in this connection, I will refer to the Zonal system. Here again, much has been said as to the merits and demerits of this system. I would like to look at the matter only from the point of view of this diffusion of responsibility and I do feel that the very size of the zones does lead in a measure to the diffusion of responsibility. But I cannot easily swallow the remedy which has now been suggested that we should revert to the old system and scrap off these zones altogether. We are not living in the age of Tughlaks when we could create capitals and after incurring huge expenditure and a lot of waste of time order overnight that the capital should be shifted back to the place where it was stationed before.

13 hrs.

But one thing I would like to say in this connection. We hear much stress being laid these days on divisionalisation. Any way this is a confession of the weakness of the zonal system. But when I agree that if we are to retain the zonal system and remedy its defects, probably the

[Shri J. R. Mehta]

remedy lies in making this divisionalisation more effective and more thorough. That will mean, to my mind, giving as much powers as possible to the Divisional Superintendents or whoever may be in charge and make them more or less miniature General Managers, and asking the present General Managers to look after matters of policy and inspection work for which there is so much need these days.

Having said this, I come to the last factor, which to my mind is very greatly responsible for this diffusion of responsibility, and this is what I would call multiplication of the categories of staff on the railways. It is not for me to enumerate all the categories, but I will give some illustrations.

For instance, we are now creating, I am told, posts of Safety Inspectors or Accident Inspectors. I submit that to create a separate staff for this purpose just creates the opposite effect in the minds of those concerned. People begin to think that accidents and safety are the responsibility of these people alone and not of others. There are other instances also. I do not know whether it is correct, but I am told that there are going to be appointed some Efficiency Inspectors. If that is so, then probably other people will think that efficiency is not part of their business. So, I plead, Sir, that we should think well before we multiply these categories of staff.

In this connection, the House will excuse me if I refer to a matter which is of very vital significance not only for the Railways but for the administration as a whole. The other day I came across a circular which was issued by the Vigilance Section in the Home Ministry addressed to all the Ministries in which it was stated that all cases of discipline in each of the Ministries should be referred to the Vigilance Officer attached to that Ministry. This is an extreme instance of what I call diffusion of responsibility. I submit that the man who

takes day to day work from the people is in the best position to deal with cases of discipline and responsibility. If I may give an illustration which will be very readily appreciated by the Members of this House, I would submit that this arrangement sounds to me like leaving the judgment over the conduct and performance of the Members of this House, not to the hon. the Speaker but to the Marshall. So my submission is

Mr. Speaker: Sometimes the Marshall also helps.

Shri J. R. Mehta: Only to enforce discipline.

Having dealt with this subject, I would crave the indulgence of the House to say a few words about backward areas. Much has been said on this subject. A few minutes back my hon. friend Shri Mahanty made out a very strong case for Orissa. I know that some of my friends from Rajasthan have spoken of areas in Rajasthan. There are probably some other areas also in the country, like Maharashtra, where the railway system is not very well developed. I refer to this subject because I am not satisfied with the assurance which the hon. the Railway Minister has given on this point. I know his difficulties. He said that because of lack of resources he is helpless. I agree with Mr. Mahanty that in this respect we should have some sense of proportion and some priorities. He cited the instance of electrification. I can refer to many other things. For instance, I plead that cultural programmes and social welfare programmes and things of that sort can certainly wait and the opening of backward areas should have precedence.

Just imagine the enormity of the crime we are committing against these areas. We are shutting them out of all sorts of progress, all sorts of civilising effects. Those areas can make no cultural or social progress. I will particularise by illustrating the

case of certain areas of Rajasthan, Jaisalmer and the adjoining areas. Some hon. Member the other day pleaded that just as we have a North East Frontier Zone, there should be North-West Frontier Zone. I would reiterate that request. There is no reason why we should not view it from human angle, because that is an area which is affected by famine. I may tell the House that the only merit of the present arrangement is that even if there are starvation deaths, this House never comes to know of them, because they are absolutely cut off. There are many people in those areas who have not seen the railways.

There is of course the strategic reason, but I would put forward another very strong reason. Hon. Members are aware that we are taking the Bhakra Canal or the Rajasthan Canal to Jaisalmer and it will not be long before millions of acres of land are brought under irrigation. I would ask the House what we are going to do with the crops. Are we going to allow them to rot? Or shall we be content if they are passed over to Pakistan? If there is no railway line there surely, one of these two things will result.

We are sometime told that it is the land of dacoits. Because I refer to dacoits, I hope hon. Members will not take it that I am in any way associated with them. But I submit to you in all humility that if you shut out all chances of development of those people, then what means are left to them to usher in the socialist pattern of society? They have no other means.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. Member's time is up.

Shri J. E. Mehta: Just one word about over-crowding. I do not want to reiterate everything that has been said. Many suggestions have been made and the hon. Minister has promised that he will look into them. I have one suggestion to make. I invite the attention of the hon. Minister and Railway Board to

the map of railways. If they just glance over it, they will find that in between parallel running railway lines there are certain missing links and short cuts. Just link up those short cuts. Then we shall be probably contributing a great deal to the lessening of the problem of over-crowding, because we shall be saving millions and millions of what we call passenger miles. If I may give a few instances, lines joining Merta Road to Ajmer, Kotah to Bhilwara and Talchar to Sambalpur in Orissa. There may be many other instances.

The last point I want to touch is about ex-State railways. My apology for opening this subject is that I come from an ex-State and I do not want to lose trust with my people. Other friends have referred to it in greater detail, I do not want to reiterate what they have said. Mr. H. C. Mathur said a lot about it. He along with Mr. Dasappa, though not in this session, has always been a very valiant fighter for the cause of the ex-State railwaymen. I am aware of the assurances which have been given on behalf of the hon. Minister by the hon. Deputy Minister that they are determined to see that all these cases are regularised, whichever deserve to be regularised. I welcome that assurance and I can only hope and trust that the hon. Railway Minister will kindly see to it that this assurance is implemented as early as possible.

He will excuse me if I remind him that even during the last budget discussion, he gave the assurance that he would see it through, but somehow or other, it has not been possible to do it. There may be difficulties, but this case has been hanging for the last five or six years. If I may not be guilty of any impertinence, I will say that the hon. Shastriji assured me so many times that he would see to it that this thing was regularised before he left. But unfortunately, he left...

Shri M. E. Krishna (Karimnagar—Reserved—Sch. Castes): Suddenly.

Shri J. R. Mehta:much earlier than was anticipated. Apart from the assurance which the hon. Railway Minister has been kind enough to give, I want a categorical assurance that none of these ex-State railwaymen whose cases have been delayed will be made to suffer on that account and that they will get the benefit of the next below rule in the matter both of seniority as well as emoluments. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Shri Radha Raman. I am giving priority to those who have not spoken in this session or those who have not spoken on the Railway Budget.

श्री राधा रमण (चांदनी चौक) :
प्रध्वक्ष महोदय, मैं माननीय रेलवे मंत्री का ध्यान दो चार बातों की ओर दिलाना चाहता हूँ जिनका सम्बन्ध मेरे घासपास के इलाके से और मेरे इलाके से है।

पहली बात जो मुझे भ्रज करनी है वह यह है कि दिल्ली के करीब शाहदरा टू शामली एक लाइट रेलवे बहुत दिनों से काम करती आ रही है। वैसे भारतवर्ष में रेलवेज का राष्ट्रीयकरण हुआ, लेकिन अभी तक इस रेलवे की तरफ हमारी सरकार का ध्यान नहीं गया है। इस रेलवे की जो इस वक्त समस्या है वह बहुत ही शोचनीय और दयनीय है। इस रेलवे का जो भी स्टॉक है, चाहे इंजिन हों, चाहे गाड़ियां हों या रेलवे की पटरियां हों, सभी बहुत पुराना और बोलीदा है। इन गाड़ियों में सफर करने वालों को हर तरह की तकलीफ होती है। इस रेलवे के मुलाजिमों को भी इस कारण तरह तरह के कष्ट उठाने पड़ते हैं जो कि घाज के जमाने में जबकि हम आजाद हैं, उनको नहीं उठाने चाहिए। हमारी राष्ट्रीय रेलवे में बहुत सारे सुधार हुए हैं जो कि हमारी सरकार ने किये हैं। मगर यह रेलवे बूँक एक प्राइवेट कम्पनी की है। इसलिए बहुत पुराने तरीके पर ही चलायी जाती है। उसमें वे तमाम तकलीफें मौजूद हैं

जो कि घाज के जमाने में बरबास्त करने के काबिल नहीं हैं। इसलिए मैं माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान इस ओर दिलाना चाहता हूँ कि इस लाइट रेलवे का भी राष्ट्रीयकरण किया जाये और इसके साथ ही साथ उन लाइट रेलवेज का भी राष्ट्रीयकरण किया जाये जिनके बारे में दूसरे माननीय सदस्यों ने माननीय मंत्री जी का ध्यान दिलाया है। अभी मुल्क में कई ऐसी लाइट रेलवेज हैं जिनका इन्तिजाम प्राइवेट कम्पनियों के हाथों में है। उन सबका राष्ट्रीयकरण होना चाहिए ताकि उनमें भी सुधार हो सके।

एक और बात में माननीय मंत्री जी से भ्रज करूंगा। मैंने यह बात पिछले साल और उससे भी पिछले साल सदन के सामने रखी थी। वह यह है कि दिल्ली के चारों तरफ कुछ बड़ी बड़ी सड़कें हैं। जिस जमाने में वे सड़कें बनायी गयी थीं उस समय दिल्ली की जनता की तादाद बहुत कम थी, कोई ६ या ८ लाख रही होगी। पिछले दस वर्षों में यह संख्या सास तीर से बढ़ी है। अब दिल्ली की जनसंख्या २० लाख के करीब है। और यह आबादी दिनों दिन बढ़ती जा रही है। यह उम्मेद की जाती है कि यह संख्या हर साल एक लाख बढ़ जायेगी। इन सड़कों में से कुछ को चौड़ा भी किया गया है लेकिन अभी बहुत सी सड़कें पुरानी हालत में ही पड़ी हैं। लेकिन जाने वालों को जो सबसे बड़ी असुविधा है वह वह कि सड़कों पर जो रेलवे लेविल क्रॉसिंग हैं उन पर उनको बहुत देर ठहरना पड़ता है। मोटर्स और दूसरी वैहीकिल्स को भी बहुत ठहरना पड़ता है और इससे जाने वाले को बहुत असुविधा होती है। मैंने पहले भी माननीय मंत्री जी से यह अनुरोध किया था कि इन सब लेविल क्रॉसिंग को या तो अन्डर पाउन्ड्स ब्रिज बना कर या ओवर पाउन्ड ब्रिज बनाकर हटा दिया जाये ताकि आमदोरपत रुके नहीं।

मथुरा रोड पर जब तिलपट का कैस हुआ उसके बाद सरकार ने फैसला किया था कि वहां पर कोई पुल बने और वह बना भी है

लेकिन अभी इस तरह के कई और लेबिल फ्रासिंग हैं जैसे किसानगंज का, सराय रुहिल्ला का, सफरजंग का जहां पर लोगों को यही विपत्त होती है। मैं यह प्रार्थना करना चाहता हूँ कि आज कल राजधानी के चारों तरफ ग्रामदोरफ्त बढ़ती जाती है और रेलवे के अलावा बहुत मोटर गाड़ियां और बसें आदि आती जाती हैं। ऐसी सूरत में अगर इन फ्रासिंग पर भीवर प्राउन्ड ब्रिज या अंडर प्राउन्ड ब्रिज बना दिये जायें तो ग्रामदोरफ्त में इतनी देर न लगे। इसके लिये मेरा अनुरोध है और मैं प्रार्थना करता हूँ कि माननीय मंत्री जी इस सम्बन्ध में विचार करेंगे और इसका कोई न कोई हल जल्दी ही हमारे सामने प्रार्थना।

तीसरी बात में यह प्रार्थना करना चाहता हूँ कि हमारे दिल्ली के मेन स्टेशन के साथ साथ कुछ छोटे छोटे स्टेशन हैं। यह खुशी की की बात है कि कुछ गाड़ियां नई देहली से आरी होने लगी हैं ताकि दिल्ली मेन स्टेशन के क्राउडिंग में कुछ कमी हो जायें। लेकिन मैं समझता हूँ कि अभी भी मेन स्टेशन पर बहुत क्राउडिंग है। पेंसिजर्स का क्राउडिंग है, गाड़ियों के आने जाने का क्राउडिंग है और इसका नतीजा यह होता है कि उत्तर और दक्षिण से आने वाली गाड़ियों को पास वाले स्टेशनों पर बहुत बहुत देर तक रुका रहना पड़ता है क्योंकि उनको लाइन क्लियर ही नहीं मिलता। गवर्नमेंट के पास इसके बारे में एक स्कीम भी है जिसकी कई बार घोषणा भी की गयी कि कुछ गाड़ियों को जो दक्षिण या उत्तर से आती हैं दूसरे स्टेशनों पर रोका जाय और कुछ माल गाड़ियों को और पंजाब से आने वाली गाड़ियों को हुमायूँ टम्ब के पास जो पुल बनने वाला है उस पर से ले जाया जायें। इस तरह की स्कीम सरकार ने घोषित की लेकिन उसकी रफ्तार बहुत स्लो है। मैं जानता हूँ कि तीन चार बरस से यह बात गवर्नमेंट से कर चुकी है कि हुमायूँ टम्ब के पास एक दूसरा पुल बनेगा और उस पर से बहुत सी मोटर बसें और उत्तर से और मेरठ से आने वाली

गाड़ियां जा सकेंगी जिसके कारण जमना ब्रिज पर जो भीवर क्राउडिंग है वह कम हो जायेगा। अभी जाने वाली सवारियों को जमुना पुल पर तीन चार मिनट रुकना पड़ता है। इसमें भी यह पुल बन जाने से कमी होगी। लेकिन उस स्कीम को पूरा करने की रफ्तार बहुत धीमी है। इस देरी को दूर कर के आने जाने वालों की तकलीफ को दूर करना सरकार का मुख्य कर्तव्य है। मेरी प्रार्थना है कि दिल्ली के आस पास के जो छोटे छोटे स्टेशन हैं उनमें सुधार किया जायें। वहां पर अभी पहले और और दूसरे दरजे के बेटिंग कम नहीं हैं। और तीसरे दरजे के मुसाफिरों के लिए जो मुसाफिरखाने हैं वे बहुत छोटे हैं। जब बारिश बगैरह होती है तो यात्रियों को बहुत तकलीफ होती है। इन तकलीफों को दूर करने के लिये इन स्टेशनों पर सुविधायें दी जायें। बहुत से यात्री इन्हीं स्टेशनों से यात्रा करना पसन्द करते हैं। अगर इन स्टेशनों पर सुविधायें बढ़ा दी जायें तो मेन स्टेशन पर क्राउडिंग कम हो सकता है। इसलिए मेरी प्रार्थना है कि इन स्टेशनों की तरफ ध्यान दिया जायें। और इन स्टेशनों में अन्य सुविधायें दी जायें।

एक बात और मैं प्रार्थना करना चाहता हूँ। वह यह है कि सरकार ने यह फैसला कर रखा है कि दिल्ली के चारों तरफ एक सरकुलर रेलवे बनेगी और इसी फैसले के परिणामस्वरूप कुछ लोकल ट्रेन्स चलती भी हैं जो कि दो चार स्थानों को जोड़ती हैं। जैसे दिल्ली मेन स्टेशन से मिटो रोड ब्रिज, हाडिंग ब्रिज, विनयनगर और लाजपतनगर के स्टेशनों को मिलाती है। लेकिन यह रेलवे अभी अधूरी है। मैं समझता हूँ कि उसको जल्द पूरा करना चाहिए ताकि तिलकनगर और तिहाड़ बगैरह को भी मिलाया जा सके। इन इलाकों से बस भी आती हैं पर उनमें बहुत भड़कती है। इसलिए लोगों को आने जाने में बहुत तकलीफ होती है। इसलिये मैं निहायत अदब से प्रार्थना करना चाहता हूँ कि यह सरकुलर रेलवे बनाने का जो गवर्नमेंट ने फैसला किया

[श्री राधा रमण]

है उसको शीघ्रातिथीघ्न पूरा किया जाये ताकि यह रेलवे दिल्ली के चारों तरफ हो जाये और बहुत से भादमी अपने काम काज के लिए भाराम से इस के द्वारा आ जा सकें ।

इस मिलसिले में मैं एक बात और भर्ज करना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार ने जो यह सर-कुलर रेलवे बनाने का फैसला किया है इसमें हीज खास, कुतुब और तुगलक फोर्ट को भी शामिल कर लिया जाये क्योंकि बहुत से लोग इन जगहों को जाते हैं और जाना चाहते हैं । इससे सरकार को आगे चल कर फायदा होगा नुकसान नहीं होगा क्योंकि यात्रियों की संख्या बहुत काफी होगी । हो सकता है कि पहले दो बरस में कुछ घाटा हो लेकिन आगे फायदा होगा इसमें सन्देह नहीं ?

इन बातों के साथ साथ मैं एक बात और भर्ज कर के बैठ जाऊंगा । मुरादाबाद-दिल्ली की गाड़ी के बारे में खास तौर पर और ग्राम गाड़ियों के बारे में ग्राम तौर पर पंचकुण्टी के डिक्लाइन होने की शिकायत सुनी जाती है । मैं समझता हूँ कि इस की तरफ खास ध्यान दिया जाना चाहिये । आज से पांच साल पहले एक वक्त ऐसा था, जब कि सारे हिन्दुस्तान में एक ऐसी हवा थी कि गाड़ियां बिल्कुल ठीक वक्त पर आती जाती थीं, लेकिन अब दिनों-दिन इस में कमी हो रही है आज हम देखते हैं कि बहुत सी गाड़ियां वक्त पर नहीं चलती हैं या आती हैं । बाज गाड़ियां तो दो दो घंटे लेट हो जाती हैं । जहाँ तक इस के कारण का सम्बन्ध है, माननीय मंत्री स्वयं देखेंगे, लेकिन मैं यह बताना चाहता हूँ कि मुरादाबाद-दिल्ली की गाड़ी तीस दिन में कभी भी ठीक वक्त पर नहीं आती है । उस गाड़ी पर बहुत से लोग आते जाते हैं । इसलिये उस की तरफ ध्यान देना चाहिये ।

ये चन्द बात भेरे दिमाग में थीं, जो कि मैंने भर्ज कर दी हैं । मुझे आशा है कि माननीय मंत्री इन की तरफ की ध्यान देंगे ।

Shri Tyagi (Dehra Dun) rose—

Mr. Speaker: I am sorry, I had already agreed to call the hon. Minister. The hon. Member will have many further opportunities.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: Sir, again mention has been made about accidents. Shri Mehta said something about comparison of accidents with other countries. As you are aware, I have not ventured to compare the incidence of accidents in India with those in other countries, or of the accidents in previous years with those in recent years—though one can profitably compare. I will only repeat what I have said, that whenever any accident takes place, it is a matter of anxiety and worry for every one and it is also for the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry. It will be our earnest effort by all possible means to minimise the chances of accidents. More than that I cannot say on that point.

Shri Ghose made mention of certain facts about the accident at Sonarpur in Sealdah Division. I will not go into details of that. I think that enquiry has not been completed by the Government Inspector of Railways. All the circumstances of the case will be looked into by him and he will submit his report. Whatever facts are brought to our notice by him, we will ask the officers to look into them. More than that I cannot say at this stage.

Then, questions have been raised about the speed of trains or the introduction of new trains in certain areas. I cannot give any definite answer to all these things at present. I will get them examined and see how

far we can speed up the trains in certain areas, or how far we can introduce new halts or introduce new trains or coaches in those areas.

Shri Mahanty again raised the question of electrification. I had given an answer to that on more than one occasion, and I do not want to repeat those very things. While making any comparison with the mileage of electrification in U.S.A., U.S.S.R., U.K. or other countries, the other conditions in those countries should also be taken into consideration. One should not forget that in U.S.A. it is not to their advantage to introduce electrification. They have large-scale dieselisation and they have plenty of diesel oil, and that is perhaps one reason why they not gone in for large-scale electrification. In U.S.S.R. they have just started electrification on a very long route. Then again, the pattern of traffic has also to be taken into consideration, whether electrification is necessary or not. As far as priorities are concerned, the Planning Commission is there which goes into very great details in fixing the priorities and determining them. And it is only after the Planning Commission had examined all aspects that the new lines to be undertaken by the Railways were decided upon and included in the Second Five Year Plan. So it will not be correct to say that these things are decided and allotment made without proper consideration of the priorities. There is, as I have said on previous occasion, need for the development of railway lines in many parts of the country. In certain areas, Railways develop due to certain factors which I need not mention here. Shri Mahanty made a grievance that whatever Railway line was constructed in Orissa was before Independence. That applies to most of the States in this country, because construction of new lines in recent years has been very meagre. Whatever construction has been done, I think Orissa has got a proportionate share therein.

Shri Fasigrabi (Puri): Only 13 miles.

An Hon. Member: We have got none.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: If they compare their population with the total population of the country and the proportion, they will find that Orissa has not been unjustly treated in this matter.

Some time ago, I had given certain figures. I do not mean to say that there is no case for new lines in these areas. The case of Titlagarh-Sambalpur is being pursued. That is linked with the development of the export or iron ore from that area. We have been anxious ourselves that in that area something should be done. I myself feel very much disappointed when I find that I am not in a position to undertake the construction of a few miles of railway line in certain areas where they are very urgently required. I am equally disappointed as hon. Members coming from those areas are disappointed. But, we have to find ways and means for that.

Shri Mahanty pointed out, why there is increase in staff. I leave it to him to compare the traffic both goods and passenger handled by the Railways four or five years ago and during the course of this year.

Shri Mahanty (Dhenkanal): May I know why these posts were not filled up so long and why they were held in abeyance? In case there is urgent need for appointing persons, why was there the delay in appointing the persons?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: This question is under constant review and whenever there is necessity for increasing the staff, it is increased. It is a constant and continuous process. The House would appreciate that increase in the staff is a continuous process because the Railways are expanding and traffic is increasing and with the increase in traffic, there should be a proportionate increase in the staff. Wherever there is increase in staff, naturally, there will be increase in

[Shri Jagjivan Ram]

the ranks of officers also. They are all related things. To that extent, there has been increase in the expenditure over staff. If one feels that we can do without staff, we can save money. But, the question is whether it is possible to do without staff when traffic increases. We have to have staff.

It will not be possible for me to take up all the individual questions that have been raised. But, I will try to deal with them as far as possible. The question of Barsi Light Railway and the employees of that Railway was dealt with in great detail here by Shri D. R. Chavan and other friends. While replying the other day, I said that the question of their seniority and the taking of their prior service on that Light Railway into account for that purpose has already been decided and their service on the Barsi Light Railway will be taken into consideration while determining their seniority on the Indian Railways. There are a few other questions which are under examination and decisions will be taken on them very shortly. The cases of a few individuals were also quoted here. When the integration of that Railway was done, a committee was set up and that committee went into the question of every employee. It went into the question of the employees mention of whom has been made in this House. It was only after taking into consideration their qualifications and experience that their salary on integration was determined. I will not mention that because that may prejudicially affect the interests of those employees, if I were here to quote their qualifications and all these things. But, I may assure the House that all these things were very thoroughly examined and then decisions were taken.

A question about the contract for wagon assembling to one firm, Dhiman Brothers, was raised by my friend Shri Sadhan Gupta. The other

day, it was raised by Shrimati Renu Chakravartty. I had told the House that I shall go into that question. After that, Shri Sadhan Gupta again repeated that, and tried to make out a case that here was a great scandal. I would like to give certain details about that contract. He said that the lowest tender was not accepted. It is a fact that the lowest quotation was from Messrs The Great Western Engineering Works, Bombay. The quotation of this firm could not be entertained as the firm was involved in irregular transactions which were under investigation and which have subsequently been proved. The next lowest offer was from Dhiman Brothers and the same was accepted. The contract for the assembly of 8800 imported broad gauge wagons to be assembled at Vizagapatnam was, therefore, awarded to Messrs Dhiman Brothers in July 1955.

It is true that security in the shape of bank guarantee had been proposed equivalent to the value of materials entrusted to him at any time. No such condition had, however, been laid down in the original tender notice. The contractor further represented that as, at any time, he may have in his hands materials for about 2,000 wagons, their value would be very large and it would be impossible to furnish bank guarantee for such a large amount. This condition was, therefore, waived. But, the interests of the Railway administration have been safeguarded by obtaining an Indemnity bond from the contractor. Cash security is being recovered from all progress payments to the extent of 20 per cent on each bill. The contractor is carrying out the assembly work within the Railway premises at Vizagapatnam. Adequate precaution is being taken to see that no railway material is disposed of in an unauthorised manner.

Out of about 12,000 wagons to be assembled, over 10,000 wagons have

been already delivered by him. Besides the Indemnity bond, the Railway administration has adequate cash security by deduction from all account bills to protect the Railway interest for the remaining number of wagons.

In regard to the suggestion that a large number of wagons were diverted from Vizagapatam to the contractor's workshop near Calcutta, it is pointed out that this diversion was done by the Administration entirely to suit the unloading facilities available from time to time as between Vizagapatam and Calcutta ports. At no time was any request received from the contractor for diversion of assembly work from Vizagapatam to Calcutta. The D.G., I.S.D., London, who was responsible for making arrangements for the despatch of these wagons in a knocked down condition told the Board that they were unable to obtain shipping to Vizagapatnam as a result of which 2369 wagons had to be diverted to the Calcutta port. There was, therefore, no question of realising any amount from the contractor for the so-called transport of wagons from Vizagapatam to the Calcutta Port.

This is the factual position regarding the contract to Shri Dhiman, and I do not think there has been anything done which may be termed as scandalous, but as I had said on the previous occasion, I want to go into this matter further and see whether there is any justification for such allegations.

13-41 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER in the Chair]

Shri Bharucha raised the question of the capital-at-charge and the contribution to the depreciation fund. On the previous occasion I had briefly dealt with that, but I would like to say this.

The House is aware that the Convention Committee of 1954 recommended that the contribution to the depreciation reserve funds should be raised from Rs. 30 crores to Rs. 35

crores during the five years commencing from 1st April 1955. This contribution was increased to Rs. 45 crores with effect from 1955-56 with the sanction of Parliament as the withdrawal from the funds was worked out as likely to be of the order of Rs. 293 crores during the quinquennium 1955-56 to 1959-60 and also to leave a balance at the end of the period equivalent to at least one year's expenditure on renewals and replacements. The contribution to the depreciation reserve fund will, of course, be reviewed by the Convention Committee which is scheduled to meet next year. That, I think, meets the point of Shri Bharucha in which he suggested that a committee should be appointed to go into the question of contribution to the depreciation reserve fund.

He also raised the point that there should be no further credit to the revenue reserve fund, that its ceiling limit should be fixed at Rs. 50 crores and the excess over that should be diverted to the depreciation reserve fund. It may be stated for the information of Shri Bharucha that except for interest charges—about Rs. 1½ crores a year on an average on the fund balances—there has been no appropriation to or withdrawal from the revenue reserve fund since the beginning of the Second Five Year Plan. The fund balances are expected to stand at about Rs. 51 crores at the end of 1958-59.

It may be stated that the Wedgewood Committee recommended that a general reserve of this kind should be built up to at least Rs. 50 crores. At the time of the Wedgewood Committee's report, the capital-at-charge on Indian Government railways was about Rs. 790 crores. The reserve, therefore, as recommended by the committee would work out to about 6.4 per cent. of the capital-at-charge. At this rate the revenue reserve fund should have a balance of over Rs. 80 crores at the end of 1958-59.

[Shri Jagjivan Ram]

The question regarding the size of the fund, *inter alia*, was also considered by the Convention Committee of 1954, and the committee did not consider it necessary to prescribe even the minimum limit for this fund. The question will no doubt be considered again by the Convention Committee which is due to meet next year.

Then, questions have been raised about the compensatory hill allowance on certain sections.—Palampur—Jogindernagar. Perhaps my hon. friend is not aware that the cost of living at these stations is not as high as at Palampur, and unless those stations are declared hill stations by the State Government, which has not been done and is not likely to be done, it cannot be expected from the railways to increase the allowance.

Shri Hem Raj: Those stations are as dear as the other ones are.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I think the State Government have better data to come to that conclusion than the hon. Member has, and when they have not declared it, it can be certainly presumed that their cost of living is not as high as at Palampur.

Then again, about the rates on the Darjeeling-Himalayan Railway. The House is aware that it was at the insistence of my friend Shri Tyagi that the inflated mileage charged on the hill railways was reduced by 25 per cent. last year.

Shri Tyagi: Only. It is still three times the normal rate on the Simla-Kalka line.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: It is not three times.

Shri Tyagi: Three times exactly. It was four times previously. You were pleased to reduce it by 25 per cent. It still remains three times—three times the normal rate on the plains.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: So, you got 25 per cent. reduction, though there has been no reduction in other things, so far as that is concerned.

Shri Tyagi: I was expecting 25 per cent. this year.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There cannot be any possibility of 25 now—33-1/3.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: There is no doubt my friend Shri Tyagi got a substantial concession for the hill railways so far as the inflated mileage is concerned.

Shri D. C. Sharma (Gurdaspur): That means that we must send our suggestions through Shri Tyagi!

Shri Jagjivan Ram: It was raised by my friends who represent Simla-Kalka and Kulu valley also. So, the credit should also go to my friends Shri D. C. Sharma and Shri Hem Raj.

Shri Hem Raj: We want something more.

Shri Tyagi: May I just interrupt a little? Could the hon. Minister kindly give us an indication as to whether the policy of the ...

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: At least one of them should sit down. Both should not remain standing.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: But when I was standing, it meant I was not giving way.

Shri Tyagi: That is my misfortune.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Then the hon. Member should have kept to his seat.

Shri Tyagi: Is there any possibility in future of Government reconsidering the position and normalising the over-charged rates on the hill lines because it costs the people in the hills very high?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: Let them first digest the concession granted last year.

Shri Manson (Darjeeling): What about the advisory committee in Darjeeling for the Darjeeling-Himalayan section of the N.E.F. Railway?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Those who got an opportunity to speak when the Demands were being discussed should not utilise this opportunity when the Minister is replying to give their speeches.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I was dealing with that, and my hon. friend must be aware that we have got a station advisory committee at Siliguri, and that advisory committee goes into the question not only of time-table and amenities of the passengers, but also into the question of traffic and commercial aspects. I think the committee is already there, and it is functioning, and there is no need for another committee.

Perhaps it was my hon. friend Shri Menon who raised the question of five engines that were on the Southern Railway and said that their performance was not quite satisfactory. Orders were placed for ten prototype engines in 1952, and they were delivered in 1955. Five of them were sent to the Southern Railway and five were retained by the Northern Railway. The performance of the five engines which have been stationed at Jullunder in the Northern Railway has been quite satisfactory. The performance of the five railway engines on the Southern Railway was also satisfactory except that some defect was noticed in the boilers of two of the engines. Two others have gone for intermediate check-up. It always happens that before we place any large-scale orders, we order a few prototypes in order to see their performance for some time, and if their performance is satisfactory, only in that case, the bulk order is placed with the manufacturer; or, if some minor adjustments are to be made, they are

also suggested to the manufacturers. So, these ten engines were the prototype engines brought here for trial, to see how they were working; and if their working is satisfactory, we will place further orders for them. That is the position regarding those engines, and it cannot be said that they are going to be scrapped in two years or three years. Normally, our engines work for fifty to sixty years quite satisfactorily. That is the position of those engines.

Then, questions were raised about under-bridges or over-bridges at many places. We have certain formulae for the construction of over-bridges or under-bridges, that the cost should be shared by the State Government or the local authority concerned and the railways in certain proportions. Even in regard to bridges, unless the co-ordination of the P.W.D. authorities and the State Government or the local authority is there, it will not be possible to have these over-bridges constructed, because the portion outside the railways' jurisdiction has to be maintained by a certain authority. So, the question of the under-bridge at Cuttack the over-bridge at Shoranur has been taken up with the State Governments, and as soon as matters have been finalised by the State Governments, they will be undertaken. That applies to other places also.

In many places, after the construction of the railways, certain facilities are provided, and then townships grow. Then, necessity is felt for a level-crossing or an over-bridge or an under-bridge. Everybody expects that the railways should provide it. In many cases, as I have said, there are the formulae and conditions according to which we have to provide it.

Shri Radha Raman: That applies to Union Territories also?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The same applies to Union Territories also, because the railways do not maintain the roads appertaining to the bridges;

[Shri Jagjivan Ram]

they have to be maintained by some other authority, and unless there is co-ordination with that authority, it is not possible to construct it, because the purpose will not be served.

The question of zones and divisions or the district set-up has always been raised. Today, Shri J. R. Mehta has raised something and replied to it also himself. The days of Tughlaks are gone, no doubt, but he tried to play the part of Tughlak and the criticiser both by himself. On the one hand, he supported the zonal set-up, and on the other, he also suggested how modification should be made therein. As I have said on previous occasions, there is no intention to undertake any large-scale reviewing or revising of the zonal set-up at present. As far as minor adjustments are concerned, as I have said on previous occasions, they will be taken with a view to rationalisation in certain smaller areas, wherever possible.

As regards location of certain divisions in certain areas, it will be very difficult for the railways to function, if the location of zones or divisional headquarters or district headquarters were to be decided on the basis of a State-wise division of the country.

Shri Mahanty: What should be the criteria?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The criteria are the operational facilities from the point of location, which can be provided for that area. That is the only criterion. Otherwise, considering the demands that the railways are getting for the location of zones or the creation of divisions, I think the only way to give satisfaction to the different States is to locate a zone in every State; but that will be impossible; the railways cannot function then. Whether it be Orissa or Bihar or Andhra Pradesh or Rajasthan, there is the demand; even from Karnataka there is the demand that there should be a zone there.

Shri Dasappa: We had it before.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: If that were to be done the railways cannot function. Therefore, I do not think that the demands of all the States can be satisfied by any railway system in this country; it is not possible.

At present, so far as Orissa is concerned, as I have said on previous occasions, there is no intention of divisionalising it, and the district pattern is continuing. There is no occasion for any anxiety being expressed thereon that Orissa's claim is not being considered. As I have said, whenever the divisional pattern is to be introduced, Orissa's claim also will be taken into consideration, if on operational grounds it is feasible to locate a divisional headquarters there also.

As regards ex-State railway employees, I have nothing to add to what the Deputy Minister said the other day. Most of the cases have been finalised, and a few cases which are still not finalised will, I think, be finalised during the course of this month. There is no occasion for the next-below rule. The formula that was announced by my predecessor was subject to certain conditions, and I think there has not been any inordinate delay in the implementation of that offer, because that was subject also to availability of vacancies. So, I do not think there is any case for the next-below rule or for giving them the benefit of seniority from any date prior to the date on which decisions would be taken.

Shri J. R. Mehta: But a certain percentage was reserved for them.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: That is why they are going to get it. I shall expedite it and see that it is finalised during the course of the month.

Shri Dasappa (Bangalore): In addition to normal promotions.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: I would like to make another appeal to this House.

Let us forget about these ex-State railway employees. Once having settled about these things, let us not, on the railways, for all times to come maintain two sets of employees, the Indian Railways employees and the ex-State railway employees. Once they have been integrated, let them take their chance on merit along with others. Let not the question be raised here every time that for all times to come they should be entitled to certain concessions. There is no doubt that the bulk of the ex-State railway employees have enormously benefited by the integration of the ex-State railways with the Indian railways. There may be a few cases here or a few cases there, where certain anomalies have arisen, but we shall always look into such cases of anomalies. But wherever any *ad hoc* decision is taken with a view to grant certain concessions, anomalies are bound to arise; there cannot be any such *ad hoc* concessional formula where there will be no anomaly.

That leads me to the upgrading which was announced last year. One hon. Member has said that it has done no benefit to the station masters and the assistant station masters. It was an amazing statement.

Shri Naushir Bharucha (East Khandesh): To some categories.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The categories cover assistant station masters and station masters. Of course, there is a large number of other categories also that are covered, but I am speaking of the station masters and the assistant station masters.

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I think a very large number of them has been benefited substantially by the upgrading announced last year. But if there are a few cases, marginal cases, where certain anomalies have arisen, the administration concerned will look into them if proper representations are made to

the proper authorities through proper channels. But I will not be surprised if there are cases where a Station Master will rather refuse to go on promotion to another station, if that station is not as good as the station on which he is posted at present. There are cases of refusal of promotion.

Shri Braj Raj Singh (Ferozabad): What are the reasons for this?

Shri Jagjivan Ram: The Station Masters know them best.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: The Railway Minister seems to know them best!

Shri Jagjivan Ram: There may be several considerations, several aspects, from which a person regards a station as a good station. Some considerations were urged by my hon. friend, Shri Ghose.

Shri Braj Raj Singh: Is income one of those considerations.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: As I said, upgrading has benefited a very large number of railway employees. If there are a few cases where anomalies have arisen, they should be brought to the notice of the proper authorities and they will be looked into.

I do not agree with the suggestion that the cultural and social welfare activities should be held in abeyance in order to save what? We spend a few lakhs over these. Why should after all any hon. Member of this House grudge the expenditure of a few lakhs over the cultural and social welfare activities of the staff.

Shri Basappa (Tiptur): Not in the Railway Ministry.

Shri J. B. Mehta: I was talking generally in respect of all departments.

Shri Jagjivan Ram: These activities in other Ministries also have their