

**Speech of Shri Suresh Kalmadi
Introducing The Railway Budget
for 1996-97, on 27th February, 1996**

Mr. Speaker,

Sir, I rise to place before the House, the Revised Estimates for 1995-96 and the estimated receipts and expenditure for 1996-97, and I deem it as an honour to be given this opportunity, by the hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao. The estimates for the next financial year are for the whole year, but at present, I seek from this august House only a "Vote on Account", sufficient to provide for the estimated expenditure for the first four months. The requirements for the remaining part of the year are to be voted separately, later on.

2. Sir, before doing so, it is my solemn duty to apprise this august House, about the manner in which, Indian Railways are going about meeting the growing rail transport demand. This, in essence, amounts to recounting the success story of our government since 1991-92, when our country launched its journey towards new horizons. The period since then, has been very significant for Indian Railways as much as for our nation. Under the visionary leadership of the hon'ble Prime Minister, Shri P.V.Narasimha Rao, our nation has embarked on the path of social, political and economic stability, leaving behind the memories of earlier upheavals on these fronts.

3. Our economy has for the first time registered over 6% rate of growth and our nation is emerging as a powerful economic force. The new economic policy initiatives, launched by our Government, have unleashed the hidden entrepreneurial talents of the people, which is evident in the spurt in economic and industrial activity. Since transport is a derived demand, in direct proportion to the economic growth, this spurt in economic activity, gets appropriately reflected in transport demand. The Prime Minister has injected the necessary dynamism and a sense of purpose, to confidently meet the challenges ahead.

4. With a sense of pride and satisfaction, I would like to inform the august House, that from an era of substantial Budgetary Support, Railways have come to be largely financially self-reliant, to support the developmental activities. Budgetary Support, which was 75% of the total Plan outlay, in the Fifth Five-Year Plan, has now come down to around 15% in this financial year. Indian Railways are now the world's only major Railway system, which runs without any direct subsidy from the General Exchequer. Railways have been funding majority of their own developmental works even while subsidising freight and passenger traffic and operating many unremunerative lines. The Railways play a vital role in country's economic development. Their good health is extremely important for the country's economy. Railways have been internally generating the resources of the order of more than Rs. 4000 cr. for varied developmental activities. To overcome the resource constraints, Railways have launched several innovative resource mobilisation measures, in order to ensure that the developmental activities do not suffer. Besides, Railways have been adopting strict financial control to cut down working expenses.

5. The major programme of country-wide gauge conversion is being mostly financed from internal resources. Our efforts towards promotion of private investments in Railway projects under 'Build-Own-Lease-Transfer' and 'Own-Your-Wagon' schemes have met with encouraging response. We are fine tuning our marketing strategy, to further encourage private investments in Railway projects, so that the growing transport demand is fully met.

6. Sir, despite the twin challenges of resource constraints and augmentation of transport capacity, Railways have been following a policy of restraint with regard to hiking fares & freight. Even in the Budget for 1995-96, there was only a moderate hike in freight and upper class passenger fares.

7. When the hon'ble Prime Minister launched the new economic policy initiatives in 1991-92, our government was inspired by his vision that the fruits of liberalisation must flow to all parts of the country and not just to the major cities. This could be ensured only if all regions of the country are served by an efficient transport infrastructure, so that the investors' confidence to set up industries in remote and backward areas of the country is built up. We have accordingly taken up the Project Unigauge in 1992-93 with the objective of moving towards unigauge, through selective conversion of Metre Gauge/Narrow Gauge lines into Broad Gauge.

8. The country-wide gauge conversion programme, is intended to be the main vehicle of economic liberalisation. Besides helping in the removal of regional economic imbalances, by redrawing the investment flows to the backward areas, it facilitates direct linking of mineral sources with industrial and commercial

centres on broad gauge, and also improves the overall transport efficiency of the railway system. It is also connecting various ports to the hinterland areas on broad gauge which would help in boosting the economy by facilitating exports and imports.

9. Project Unigauge is being implemented with all the seriousness and determination at our command. This could be seen from the fact that we have completed more than 5000 kms. of gauge conversion since 1992-93 as against only 3100 kms. of gauge conversion in the first 45 years since independence.

10. Sir, a system like Indian Railways cannot afford to live with obsolete technology, when it is required to meet the needs of a vibrant and modern economy like ours. Indian Railways, through indigenous efforts, have augmented the hauling capacities of locomotives to the optimum extent. The quantum jump through necessary integration, of the state-of-the-art technology was an imperative need to break the technology barrier. We have, accordingly, gone in for necessary technology transfer arrangements for production of 6000 HP 3 phase AC drive energy efficient state-of-the-art technology electric locomotives and 4000 HP diesel locomotives. We have also indigenously upgraded the existing electric locos from 4000 HP to 5000 HP and diesel locos from 1800 HP to 2300 HP and from 2600 HP to 3100 HP and have made them more fuel efficient.

Sir, even as we are strengthening our locomotives to carry more and more, the most powerful loco hauling our nation on the tracks of all round development is nonelse than the hon'ble Prime Minister himself.

11. The coach manufacturing technology, is also being modernised, to meet the passengers' demands for faster and comfortable travel and to bring it at par with facilities and amenities available in passenger coaches of advanced railway systems. The wagon stock is also being upgraded for faster freight movement. We have already successfully conducted trials with 160 kmph coaches and 100 kmph wagon stock. Signalling network is also being upgraded to handle the growing volume of traffic.

12. Time has come to be the essence of success in modern life. To keep pace with the changing time, we have already made considerable progress towards providing a 160 kmph high-speed corridor between Delhi and Allahabad. We are also taking up studies in consultation with foreign experts including from Japan for creating dedicated high-speed corridors fit for speeds of 250 to 300 kmph. Such corridors are being considered on Agra-Delhi-Jaipur, Amritsar-Delhi, Ahmedabad-Mumbai-Pune, Madras-Bangalore, Howrah-Rourkela, and Hyderabad-Tirupati-Madras routes.

13. Sir, Railways are guided not only by pragmatism but also a futuristic vision. In view of the fast depleting reservoirs of fossil fuels, it has become necessary to reduce our dependence on steam and diesel traction. Accordingly, due emphasis is being given on electrification of identified high traffic corridors for faster movement of trains. Electrification also helps in addressing ourselves to the growing environmental concerns. Railways have electrified 12,266 route kilometers of network till the end of last financial year. The target for electrification of 2,700 route kms set for the Eighth Five-Year Plan is expected to be achieved by March, 1997. Steam traction is being phased out. No steam loco is running on BG network any more.

In view of the nostalgic memories associated with steam locos, we are preserving some of them for the benefit of posterity, in rail museums which are being set up in different regions of the country in addition to the existing National Rail Transport Museum in New Delhi.

14. Sir, after this brief 'perspective appraisal', I would like to inform this august House about the estimates and the performance of Indian Railways in various sectors.

Financial Performance, 1994-95

15. Sir, the House will be glad to know that the Railways' financial performance has been excellent in 1994-95. The 'Excess' has gone up to Rs.2446 cr. from the Revised Estimates of Rs.1870 cr. Railways paid Rs.1362 cr. as dividend to the General Revenues. We further contributed Rs.1308 cr. to the General Exchequer by increasing the balances in various Railway Funds kept with them. The operating ratio also improved to 82.6% from 84.9% projected in the Revised Estimates.

Traffic Performance, 1994-95

16. Railways carried 365 million tonnes of originating traffic in 1994-95. This was a creditable performance.

Traffic Prospects in 1995-96

17. I am glad to inform the august House that due to higher economic growth rate consequent to removal of restrictions impeding private enterprise and redoubled efforts on our part, we are certain of achieving the revised freight target of 385 million tonnes for this financial year. This amounts to an incremental loading of over 20 million tonnes which will be a good performance. Average lead has also improved to 702 kms. from 684 kms. in the previous year.

Financial Prospects in 1995-96

18.1 I am happy to inform the House that the earnings are likely to be more than the Budget expectations. There is a distinct trend of buoyancy in earnings from passenger traffic. This reflects the success of the strategy of segregating long distance and short distance trains and introducing innovative services like Shatabdis, DMUs, MEMUs, etc. to cater to different segments of traffic. The passenger earnings are likely to improve by Rs.245 cr. over the Budget Estimates of Rs.5755 cr. There is a similar trend of improvement in earnings from other coaching traffic and sundries. Thus, the gross earnings are likely to be more than the Budget Estimates by Rs.405 cr.

18.2 Traffic suspense represents the quantum of unrealised earnings. The Budget for 1995-96 provides for the clearance of Rs.185 cr. from the traffic suspense. But some of the State Electricity Boards/Power Houses continue to default on payment of dues to Railways. The earnings outstanding against State Electricity Boards at the end of December, 1995 have gone up to Rs.1088 cr. The major defaulters being Badarpur Thermal Power Station, Delhi with about Rs.700 cr. and Delhi Electric Supply Undertaking (DESU) with Rs.108 cr. However, we hope to improve the position by end of March 1996 and keep it at least to the level of last year's balance. The gross traffic receipts, thus, are likely to go up by Rs.220 cr. over the Budget Estimates of 1995-96.

18.3 Ordinary Working Expenses have come under great strain in the current year as a result of post-budgetary factors like sanction of additional interim relief, enhancement in productivity linked bonus, etc. Sir, the House is already aware that Railways have been taking special measures to control their working expenses by stringent expenditure and cost control, stricter inventory control and improved utilisation of assets, etc. During the year Railways pursued vigorously the zero-base review to achieve maximum economies in the working expenses. As a result of these measures, Railways have not only absorbed the post-budgetary impact of about Rs. 450 cr. but also expect to save Rs.200 cr. The Ordinary Working Expenses have, therefore, been fixed at Rs.14,590 cr. as against the Budget Estimates of Rs.14,790 cr. which, I am sure, will make the Finance Minister quite happy.

18.4 The appropriation to Depreciation Reserve Fund is being raised to Rs.2060 cr. from the Budget Estimates of Rs.2000 cr. keeping in view the stress on replacement and renewals of assets.

18.5 Due to the increased outgo from Pension Fund on account of sanction of additional reliefs to the pensioners, the appropriation to Pension Fund is also being raised from Rs.1970 cr. to Rs.2090 cr. Total working expenses, thus work out to Rs.18,740 cr. as against the Budget Estimates of Rs.18,760 cr.

18.6 The Net Traffic Receipts come to Rs. 3435 cr. After adding Net Miscellaneous Receipts of Rs. 243 cr., the Net Railway Revenue works out to Rs. 3678 cr. Out of this, after meeting the dividend liabilities of Rs. 1360 cr. to General Revenues, Railways will be left with an 'Excess' of Rs.2318 cr. as against the Budget target of Rs.2055 cr. The additional amount of Rs.263 cr. thus available is being appropriated to Capital Fund to be used as a Plan resource.

18.7 The financial performance of Railways has been excellent throughout the VIII Five-Year Plan. All outstanding liabilities to General Revenues in the form of deferred dividend and loans taken for Development Fund have been fully liquidated by the end of 1992-93. In addition, the dividend due to the General Revenues has been paid in full. Railways are now financing their Annual Plan through internal resource generation and extra budgetary resources to the extent of 85%. I may incidentally inform the hon'ble members that dividend of Rs. 1360 cr. being paid for 1995-96 is more than the budgetary support of Rs. 1150 cr. for the year.

18.8 The total surplus generated during the first three years of the Eighth Plan period is Rs.4694 cr. During this period, Indian Railways also paid a dividend of Rs.4172 cr. to the General Exchequer. This indicates a growing self-reliance on the part of Indian Railways which needs to be continued. Railways' Plan outlay for 1995-96 follows a similar pattern. As per the Budget Estimates, the plan investment of Rs. 7500 cr is to be financed through generation of internal resources of Rs.4100 cr; budgetary support of Rs.1150 cr. and market borrowings through Indian Railway Finance Corporation of Rs.2250 cr. Whereas Railways'

internal resource generation would now be slightly higher at Rs.4423 cr., the allocation for IRFC has had to be scaled down due to the tight money market conditions. However, our efforts to raise private investment through BOLT and 'Own Your Wagon' schemes, are likely to garner Rs.577 cr. The balance of Rs.1350 cr. is likely to be provided by the IRFC through taxable and tax-free bonds. IRFC has also got the approval of Ministry of Finance for raising 50 million US dollars through external commercial borrowing. We expect that this would be raised by the end of March, 1996.

Safety

19.1 Sir, safety of train operations continues to receive our highest attention. The number of train accidents has come down from 812 to 501 in the last one decade ending 1994-95. The incidence of accidents per million train kilometers has also come down from 1.5 to 0.78. But there is hardly any room for complacency in this regard.

19.2 Sir, in the wake of the unfortunate train accident which took place at Firozabad station of Northern Railway on 20th August, 1995, Railways have intensified their efforts to improve the level of safety consciousness among the railwaymen on the one hand and introduced additional safety features in train operations on the other. Some of the important steps taken are :-

(a) Track circuiting from fouling mark to fouling mark at all railway stations on all trunk routes and important main lines is being done on war footing and will be completed by the end of March, 1996.

(b) Track circuiting from fouling mark to advanced starter on trunk routes and important main lines is also in progress and will be completed by the end of December, 1996.

(c) Modern communication facilities between driver and guard of a running train and the nearest station using optic fibre and VHF based universal train radio system are being increasingly provided. Satellite-based communication technology has successfully been tried on Delhi-Mumbai Rajdhani Express and 'Palace-on-Wheels' tourist trains. This offers immense potential for emergency communication besides helping travelling public to communicate any where in the world.

(d) Additional heavy duty 140 tonne cranes are being acquired to expedite relief and rescue operations.

(e) During the current year, additional works costing about Rs.100 cr. have been sanctioned to improve safety on Railways.

(f) An analysis of railway accidents has revealed that about 80 per cent of them are due to human failure. To effectively counter this, following steps are being taken :

- i) Surprise checks at all levels have been intensified.
- ii) Breath-analyser tests have been intensified.
- iii) Drivers have been classified into 'A', 'B' and 'C' categories and closer monitoring of drivers under 'C' category is being done.
- iv) Simulators have been provided for training the drivers.

(g) Accidents at unmanned level crossings, which primarily take place due to the negligence of road users continue to be a matter of concern to all of us. In an effort to address ourselves to this problem, solar-powered audio-visual alarm systems to alert road users, have been introduced on a trial basis. Their performance has been found satisfactory. After due system modifications, they will be introduced on a large scale to combat this problem.

19.3 I am happy to report to this august House that there has been a significant decline in accidents and casualties since Firozabad accident. Subsequently, accidents have declined by about 22% over the corresponding period of the previous year. The number of fatalities excluding in level crossing accidents has also drastically reduced from 65 to 7. This has become possible mainly because of strict vigil and effective monitoring through emphasis on field inspections. This does not, however, make us complacent and the state of 'ever- alertness' will be maintained.

19.4 The Safety Group, constituted by the Hon'ble Prime Minister after Firozabad accident has submitted its report and the same is under consideration. This group has studied the safety mechanisms of railway systems in some developed countries and also visited Japan and United Kingdom in this connection.

19.5 The assistance of French Railways (SNCF) was obtained for conducting a study of collisions on Indian Railways and suggest measures for reducing the same. Their report is expected shortly. It is also

proposed to conduct a safety study of the Calcutta Metro by foreign consultants before increasing the frequency of services.

Infrastructure Development (Project Unigauge)

20.1 This project has been taken up to cover the entire length and breadth of the country and it has so far generated over 50 million mandays of employment at the rate of 10,000 mandays per km. of gauge conversion work, helping in poverty alleviation and upliftment of the underprivileged and the poor in rural and backward areas. New long distance cross country north-south and east-west routes are being developed, helping the cause of economic integration besides generating considerable additional carrying capacity.

20.2 The Project Unigauge is promoting industrialisation as is evident from the large number of industries which are coming up at Aurangabad, Alwar, Hubli, Jaisalmer, Tuticorin etc. after the arrival of the broad gauge. The cement plants near Chittaurgarh and the limestone rich areas of Rajasthan are now served by broad gauge lines as a result of which limestone is now moving from Jaisalmer to Bhilai without transshipment.

20.3 Important pilgrim centres such as Pandharpur, Nanded, Ajmer, Dwarka, Sarnath, Goa, Madurai and Tirupati would now be directly accessible to the vast majority of the pilgrims of this country on the broad gauge network as a result of gauge conversion.

20.4 Broad gauge connections would also be available to Tuticorin, Marmagao, Kandla, Nagappattinam and Mangalore ports. Conversion of Muzaffarpur-Raxaul section now provides a direct land route to Nepal from various ports in India.

20.5 The extent of transformation of rail transport infrastructure, as a result of gauge conversion, could be better understood from the fact, that Rajasthan which had 77% of its network on MG at the start of project Unigauge, will have more than 80% on BG on completion of the on-going projects. About 1800 kms. of gauge conversion works have been planned in Rajasthan.

20.6 Similarly, in Karnataka too, the character of its railway network will radically alter from 78% of MG and NG lines to 98% BG. More than 2000 kms. of gauge conversion works have been taken up in Karnataka.

20.7 In Assam, 785 kms. of gauge conversion projects have been taken up which on completion would reduce the MG network in the state from 89% of the total to 29%. In Andhra Pradesh too, the MG network will come down from 29% to 5%. This only illustrates the magnitude of the need based gauge conversion activity in progress in various parts of the country. The first phase of the action plan under project Unigauge envisages conversion of about 14,000 kms. out of about 28,000 kms. of MG/NG lines. I am sure this thrust on gauge conversion will continue in future.

20.8 Sir, I had given an assurance on the floor of this House to ensure completion of gauge conversion of Samastipur-Darbhanga railway line by 31st January '96 and I am glad to inform that this assurance has been duly fulfilled and this new broad gauge section has been commissioned.

Doubling

21. In order to augment its carrying capacity, Railways have taken up doubling projects on a large scale particularly in states which already had predominantly broad gauge network at the start of project Unigauge. In Kerala, doubling of the 300 Kms long Mangalore-Kuttipuram-Guruvayur/Shoranur has been taken up, in addition to the doubling between Kayankulam and Trivandrum for which work is already in progress. New works taken up in Maharashtra include doubling of Diva-Vasai, Diva-Panvel, and Daund-Bhigwan. In Uttar Pradesh, doubling of Rampur-Bareilly has been completed and Ghaziabad-Moradabad, Muradnagar-Meerut, Tundla-Agra and Kanpur-Panki doubling has also been taken up. Doubling of several lines in Orissa and Madhya Pradesh to cater to heavy mineral traffic is also in progress on a war footing.

New Lines

22.1 Sir, it is generally said that railway tracks precede development. Our government has taken up construction of several new lines for the benefit of such areas with potential for development by being rich in natural resources but languishing for want of transport infrastructure.

22.2 In Orissa, our government has taken up construction of a record 672 kms. of new broad gauge lines between Talcher-Sambalpur, Daitari-Banspani, Khurda Road-Bolangir, Lanjigarh-Junagarh.

Construction of the 460 kms. long Koraput-Rayagada new broad gauge line in Orissa has been expedited by our government with substantial allocations in view of its importance for the development of the predominantly tribal inhabited region. This new line was recently commissioned by the hon'ble Prime Minister, Sh. Narasimha Rao who has been taking personal interest in the development of transport infrastructure in the backward regions of the country. Railways are penetrating in to the backward and poverty stricken areas like Kalahandi and Koraput with broad gauge network. I am told that some of the people in these remote areas had never seen a train and I am happy that Railways are now becoming an integral part of their lives. The House would be glad to know that about one third of total investments on new lines in 1995-96 is being made in Orissa by our government so that the underground mineral wealth of this State could be better used for removing the poverty above the ground.

22.3 Similarly in the remote backward tribal areas of Madhya Pradesh, we have taken up construction of a new line between Dallirajahara and Jagdalpur (235 kms). In the remote Jharkhand region of Bihar, we have taken up construction of a new line from Rampurhat to Mandharhill via Dumka.

22.4 In Andhra Pradesh, construction of a new line between Peddappalli and Nizamabad via Karimnagar (177 kms) has also been taken up which would help in the development of this tribal inhabited region of the State.

22.5 In Karnataka, a new line is under construction between Kottur and Harihar and in Maharashtra, we have taken up construction of Panvel-Karjat and Amravati-Narkhed new lines. Construction of a new line from Ahmednagar to Parlivajinath via Beed is also being taken up for the benefit of the backward Marathwada region.

22.6 In Punjab, we have taken up construction of Beas-Goindwal line to link the new industrial township of Goindwal as also the construction of Rajpura-Chandigarh line to fulfill the long standing demand for a direct link between Ludhiana/Patiala and Chandigarh. As this august House is aware, the Kashmir Valley is being brought on railway network by extending the Jammu-Udhampur line upto Srinagar and Baramulla. This project on its completion will catalyse economic development in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and will strengthen the bonds of national integration. The work on Udhampur-Katra section will commence soon which on completion will provide much needed relief to the pilgrims going to Vaishno Devi.

Konkan Railway

23. Hon'ble members will be happy to know that the work on the Konkan Railway Project is on the verge of completion. Out of the 760 Kms long line, Roha-Khed-Chiplun (128 Kms) and Mangalore-Kundapura sections (100 Kms) have already been commissioned. Physical progress of work so far has been about 94%. Linking has been completed for about 600 Kms. and work is progressing speedily in about 20 locations. Construction of all the 179 major bridges has been completed. 81 kms. out of 82.6 kms. tunnelling has already been accomplished. The remaining tunnelling work is being tackled on a war footing. I would like to assure the House that we are sparing no effort in providing the required assistance to the Konkan Railway Corporation and we are confident of completing this line at the earliest. This project, during construction, has generated considerable employment in four states and is likely to give massive fillip to employment in the fields of tourism and industry after the completion of project.

Railway Projects in North-East

24.1 The hon'ble Prime Minister has accorded special importance to the development of the infrastructure in the North-Eastern States. The entire MG mainline network south of Brahmaputra from Guwahati to Dibrugarh (830 kms) would get converted to BG by December '96. The Nar Narayan Setu Rail-cum-Road Bridge on the river Brahmaputra is progressing well and will be commissioned during the current year followed by completion of new BG line to Guwahati. Thereafter, we intend to take up the 4th Brahmaputra Bridge at Bogibeel near Dibrugarh.

24.2 The state of Nagaland has been brought on broad gauge network with the conversion of Guwahati-Dimapur section into broad gauge.

24.3 The conversion of the Rangia-Murkung selek section on the North Bank together with the branch lines to Tezpur in Assam and Bhalukpong in Arunachal Pradesh is included in Action Plan.

24.4 The proposal for gauge conversion of Lumding-Silchar which would benefit not only the people of Barak Valley in Assam, but also the States of Tripura, Mizoram and Manipur has already been sent to the Planning Commission. Meghalaya will be linked by rail on the completion of Dudhnoi-Depa line in 1997-98. We have also taken up the survey for a new rail line link to Byrnhat. The proposal for providing a

rail link to Agartala, the capital of Tripura, is also under consideration in consultation with the Planning Commission.

Surveys

24.5 Sir, there are a number of demands for surveys of new lines and gauge conversions. The surveys for new lines which have been completed are : Ara-Sasaram, Kadur-Chickmangalur, Nandyal-Yerraguntla, Kurmarghat-Agartala and Warora-Umrer. The surveys for gauge conversions for Lumding-Silchar, Siliguri-Jalpaiguri, Gandhidham-Bhuj and Mysore-Hassan have also been completed. The proposals to undertake these works have been sent to the Planning Commission.

24.6 Survey Reports in respect of Naupada-Gunupur, Ahmedabad-Ajmer via Udaipur and Sitapur-Bahraich are under examination.

24.7 The surveys in progress are : Lalitpur-Khajuraho-Satna, Mahoba-Khajuraho, Rewa-Singrauli, Dhule-Nardana, Biyara-Bina, Dholpur-Gangapur City, Ranchi-Gaya, Rajgir-Hisua, Giridih-Koderma, Kolayat-Phalodi, Bhanupalli-Bilaspur-Beri, Patiala-Jakhal via Samana, Nagore-Phalodi, Panipat-Meerut, Ganga Bridge at Patna, Digaru-Barnihat, Tellichery-Mysore, Kottayam-Punalloor via Sabarimala and extension to Trivandrum and a rail-cum-road bridge across the Gulf of Cambay.

24.8 The survey for new lines which have been taken up are : Manmad-Dhule, Wardha-Pusad-Nanded, Pune-Roha-Nasik, Sholapur-Tuljapur-Osmanabad, Talguppa-Hannowar, Eddapalli-Tirur and updating of the survey for Hubli-Ankola. A survey for providing a rail link to the holy city of Shirdi has also been taken up.

24.9 The surveys for gauge conversion of Indore-Khandwa, Purna-Ankola, Rewari-Ringus-Phulera, Ranchi-Lohardanga with extension to Tori, Bhavnagar-Surendernagar with extension to Pipava and Alang, Mansi Forbesganj and Mansi-Saharsa-Banmankhi-Katihar have been taken up.

Electrification

25.1 Projects completed in the current Five Year Plan Period are :-

Kazipet-Secunderabad
 Sabarmati-Gandhinagar
 Bina-Katni-Bilaspur
 5 Branch lines in Central Railway
 3 Branch lines in South Central Railway

25.2 Electrification has been completed on Delhi-Mumbai, Delhi-Calcutta, Madras-Delhi and Calcutta-Mumbai lines. Electrification of Madras-Calcutta line is in progress.

25.3 Besides, heavy density routes in and around the mineral-rich areas of Bihar, West Bengal and Orissa are all programmed for Electrification.

25.4 The projects on hand will indicate the investment being made in some of the states.

Bihar	Rs.409 Cr.
Andhra Pradesh	Rs.309 Cr.
Orissa	Rs.305 Cr.
West Bengal	Rs.161 Cr.
Uttar Pradesh	Rs.153 Cr.
Kerala	Rs. 91 Cr.

Metropolitan Transport Projects

26.1 I am indeed happy to inform the House that the prestigious Calcutta Metro Project, the dream and pride of the people of Calcutta, has been completed and fully commissioned. Started in 1972-73, this project has been completed in this financial year at a cost of Rs.1562 cr. Out of this huge investment, about 50 per cent of the allocation, i.e. Rs. 750 cr. has been made by our Government since 1991-92. Survey for extending the Metro from Tollygunj to Garia (8.4 kms) has been completed and the survey for its extension from Dum Dum to Barrackpore (16 kms) is in the final stages.

26.2 About the Mass Rapid Transit System for Madras, the section from Madras Beach to Chepauk has already been commissioned and the remaining portion upto Luz would be completed by December, 1996.

26.3 Sir, after Calcutta Metro and Madras MRTS projects, it is now the turn of Mumbai Suburban System which is bursting at its seams carrying about 45 to 50 percent of the total passenger traffic on Indian Railways. 55 lakh suburban commuters are using Mumbai suburban transport system out of the total passenger traffic of about 120 lakhs per day on Indian Railways. Mumbai suburban transport problem is a national issue warranting our immediate attention.

26.4 We have accordingly redoubled our efforts in identifying various works and projects which need to be taken up on short-term, medium-term and long-term basis to provide the much needed relief to this over-worked system. Various projects as approved in the Budget and Supplementary Demands for Grants for 1995-96 are being executed. These include construction of double line between Belapur and Panvel, Thane-Nerul new line, 5th line between Mumbai Central and Borivili, third and fourth lines between Borivili and Virar, doubling of Diva-Vasai and Diva-Panvel sections, Panvel-Karjat new line and fifth and sixth lines between Kurla and Thane.

26.5 Two studies were conducted by RITES in association with experts from Germany in the recent months. Various options such as elevated tracks over roads/railway tracks, underground Metro and laying of additional 5th & 6th lines on both Western and Central Railway systems were examined.

26.6 Based on the physical and economic viability of various options, decisions have been taken to expedite construction of 5th & 6th lines on both Western and Central Railway systems and a new Mumbai Metro (Underground) rail link from Colaba to Kurla via Worli, besides a new corridor from Carnac Bunder to Ravli Junction and Bandra-Kurla link. Construction of the under ground metro requires a detailed feasibility study. Such study has now been commissioned by RITES in association with leading foreign consultants to enable commencement of Metro planning, identification and shifting of existing services, detailed geological investigations etc. This report will be available by December, '96. Thus, the first important step, towards making Mumbai Metro underground railway a reality, has been taken, which I am sure will gladden the hearts of the people of Mumbai.

26.7 These long term projects require huge investments. Raising resources of this magnitude through commercial exploitation of railway land and of air-space over Railway tracks is under active consideration of the government.

26.8 Ministry of Railways and the Government of Maharashtra have agreed to share equally the expenditure to be incurred under BUTP-II schemes which is also to be funded through a World Bank loan. Five World Bank studies concerning the various railway projects in this regard are currently in progress and are also expected to be completed by December '96, coinciding with the studies on new Mumbai Metro, after which various investment decisions would be taken.

26.9 For undertaking these various long-term projects and to complete the same by the year 2001, General Manager, Suburban Rail Construction is being posted at Mumbai. Besides, in order to plan the various studies and to provide coordination between the Central and Western Railways and the State Government, a Director General, Mumbai Suburban is also being posted. I would like to assure the august House and the residents of Mumbai that no efforts would be spared to improve the suburban transport system.

26.10 Sir, most of the railway stations in Mumbai present a picture of overflowing mass of humanity particularly in the peak hours. These stations planned and built several decades ago are not able to cope up with the rapidly growing suburban traffic. Accordingly we have taken up remodelling and modernisation of many important stations including the Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus.

Passenger Amenities

27.1 Sir, rail users are our valued customers and they give us an opportunity to serve them. In this era of growing consumer awareness, a fresh thrust has been given to improve the amenities for the passengers. Allocation for the passenger amenities has been increased from Rs.24 cr. in 1991-92, Rs. 73 cr. in 1994-95 and further to Rs. 91 cr. in the current financial year. Similar thrust will be maintained. Efforts have been stepped up to ensure availability of waiting halls, benches, adequate lighting and drinking water supply arrangements, toilet facilities, proper platform surface, improvements in circulating area etc.

27.2 I am glad to inform the House that following concessions have been given to certain categories of passengers in the recent months:

(a) Our Government has all along been focusing on the welfare of the poor and weaker sections of the society. Licensed porters working at railway stations perform important duties and deserve to be helped

in view of their limited and uncertain income. Accordingly, they have been extended 50 per cent concession in second and sleeper class to visit any place of their choice once a year.

(b) Senior citizens were hitherto allowed concession in fare only beyond a distance of 500 kms. Sir, this august House would agree that after four to five decades of constructive contribution in various fields of nation building they deserve better consideration. Accordingly the distance restriction has been removed altogether.

(c) 75% concession in certain classes of travel available for Cancer, T.B., Thalassaemia and Leprosy patients has now been extended to the heart patients for surgery.

(d) The Country's defence has been of utmost concern to our Government. Our nation is obliged to all our great soldiers who are braving adverse climatic and physical conditions round the clock in the defence of our borders. In recognition of their valour and sacrifices made by them, the winners of gallantry awards like Param Vir Chakra, Mahavir Chakra and Vir Chakra have been extended free travel concession in first class at par with freedom fighters. I am also happy to add that the widows of posthumous gallantry award winners have also been extended this benefit.

(e) Fare concession to sports persons has now been increased from 50% to 75% in second class for participating in all sports events, and in first class for national and international competitions. In addition, the restriction on distance for travel by the sports persons has been removed.

(f) Arjun awardees have been extended free travel concessions in First Class.

(g) Artists play an important role in promoting national integration. To encourage them, it has been decided to extend them 50 per cent concession in first class and increase the present 50 per cent concession in second and sleeper class to 75 per cent. The existing restriction requiring a group of minimum of three artists to seek concession has been done away with.

(h) Sir, I am happy to inform that the long standing demand of former Members of Parliament for allowing them to travel by Rajdhani and Shatabdi trains has been accepted. They will also be allowed booking facility at the Parliament House reservation counter. I would, however, not wish that any hon'ble member of this august House would be a beneficiary of this facility in the near future.

Computerisation

28.1 Passenger reservation system on Railways has almost been fully computerised. By 31.3.95, 92% of the total reservation work load had been computerised. Computerised reservation facilities are available at 254 locations and covers all locations with more than 300 reservations per day. During 1995-96, 43 more new locations are likely to be computerised. A networking software is also under development which will provide return and onward journey facility at a large number of locations.

28.2 A computerised reservation office has been set up at Srinagar and efforts are on to provide similar facilities at more such State capitals which are not linked with rail. A computerised PRS centre has also been set up in Andaman and Nicobar.

28.3 Computerised Self Printing Ticketing Machines have also been introduced on certain important stations to ensure prompt issue of tickets to the unreserved passengers.

Passenger Services

29.1 Sir, this august House will be glad to know that a record number of 615 new train services have been introduced by our government so far. We continue to receive many demands for introduction of new trains, extension of run of trains and to increase the frequency of the trains. Despite tremendous pressure on Railways' resources, about 147 new trains have been introduced during 1995-96. Similarly, the run of 116 trains has been extended.

29.2 Frequency of 6 trains including New Delhi-Guwahati Rajdhani Express has been increased.

29.3 As was committed in 1995-96 budget, additional mainline electrical multiple units have been introduced in 9 sections. These services have been well received and it is proposed to manufacture more such mainline electrical multiple units for introduction in other sections.

29.4 Sir, Indian Railways are the true vehicles of national integration wherein we leave behind our social, cultural, linguistic, religious, and regional identities and move as one entity. In furtherance of this

spirit, we have launched 'Sadbhavana Rail Yatra' on the eve of the celebration of the 125th birth anniversary of the Father of Nation, Mahatma Gandhi by the grateful nation. We have launched the third phase of the Sadbhavana Mission from Porbandar, the birth-place of Mahatma on the 2nd of October last year and I had the privilege of receiving the Sadbhavana Yatris in New Delhi in December last. The Yatris covered various parts of the country spreading the message of peace, harmony and national integration, the values which were very dear to Mahatma.

Punctuality

30.1 Railways have regular machinery to monitor punctual running of mail/express trains. The punctuality of such trains has improved. With a view to improve it further, Railways have taken various measures including technological upgradation of track structure, dieselisation, electrification and improved signalling system.

30.2 Sir, it is a matter of concern to all of us that punctual running of trains is adversely affected by frequent agitations/bandhs, squatting on tracks, alarm chain pulling, etc. Railway Administration has taken steps to enlist cooperation of public and State Governments in this regard. I request the cooperation of hon'ble Members of the House in controlling this problem by educating the public.

Marketing Strategies

31.1 In this era of global economic integration, Railways have identified international trade as a major marketing thrust area. The cutting edge of the marketing strategy to capture high rated non-core sector traffic is through multi-modal container services. Wagon load and less than wagon load traffic has also been containerised.

31.2 Automobile traffic is now being carried in converted coaches. Movement of parcel vans has been rationalised. High rated parcel traffic is another thrust area for increased marketing effort. Spare capacity of brake vans is being leased out to private agencies.

31.3 Railways have already allowed purchase of tickets through credit cards. The scheme has become more broad based and customer friendly. The service charge hitherto levied for this facility has also been discontinued.

31.4 In keeping with the spirit of the times and to provide investment opportunities to mutual advantage, Railways have initiated action to run trains with special types of rolling stock owned by private firms. One such proposal is to run Road Railer trains as a multi-modal facility. The required formalities for running these special service are in the process of finalisation and the service is expected to be started soon.

Private Investment Promotion

32. In view of the depleting Budgetary Support as well as greater demand to augment Railways' transport capacity, alternative modes of financing are being resorted to by Railways.

'BOLT' Scheme

33. Under the 'Build Own Lease Transfer' scheme, several projects have been identified for construction and funding by the private agencies. Under this scheme, Railways would be required to pay only the lease charges during the lease period. The response so far from the private agencies for investing in identified projects for the gauge conversion, doubling, electrification, telecommunication, rolling stock, etc. has been quite encouraging. Project costing Rs.555 cr. have already been finalised and another Rs. 1175 cr. worth of investment proposals are under various stages of consideration. I am grateful to my esteemed senior colleague, the Finance Minister, for his help in extending the five-year tax holiday benefit, for railway projects also, which has helped the BOLT scheme to take off.

'Own Your Wagon' scheme

34. The scheme was launched in 1992, with a view to encourage rail users to fund the acquisition of the rolling stock. As a result of the experience gained, the scheme has been further modified to make it more attractive. The market reaction to the revised scheme has been quite encouraging, and orders for manufacture of more than 5,500 wagons in terms of 4-wheelers have already been placed.

Catering & Tourism

35.1 Sir, our country is rapidly emerging as a popular tourist destination for the enthusiastic foreigners. Domestic tourism is also on the upswing. The House will be glad to know that Indian Railways have taken major initiatives in the sphere of tourism so that it could help in the country's effort to earn more foreign exchange through foreign tourists. Seven new tourist train services are planned to be introduced on popular tourist circuits. Out of these, two such trains known as 'Palace on Wheels' and 'Royal Orient' have already been introduced in association with the governments of Rajasthan and Gujarat respectively.

35.2 Railways have offered Rs. 100 cr. investment opportunities to private sector in launching of five more such tourist trains. Agreements have recently been signed for running two tourist trains in association with the internationally renowned professional tourist operator. The "Royal Indian" tourist train in the northern sector covers important places like New Delhi, Agra, Gwalior, Jaipur, Varanasi, Lucknow etc. and the "Royal Indian" in the south covers Bangalore, Mysore (Hassan/Halebid/Belur), Madurai, Cochin, and Madras.

35.3 Indian Railways are also promoting domestic tourism in a big way. In collaboration with State Tourism Development Corporations, a series of rail week-end tours providing guaranteed rail travel facilities in both directions, accommodation and sight-seeing are being introduced. In the first phase, 12 such week-end tours have already been introduced.

35.4 To give fillip to pilgrim tourism, Indian Railways have introduced 20 new train services during these 5 years linking important pilgrim centres with major cities/towns. Some of the pilgrim centres so connected are Ajmer, Amritsar, Allahabad, Baidyanathdham, Guruvayur, Haridwar, Jammu Tawi, Nanded, Puri, Tirupati, Varanasi, etc.

We have also recently introduced 'Ala Hazrat Express' between Bareilly and Ajmer.

35.5 In addition, Railways are also running a week-end special train from Secunderabad to Belapur and back primarily for the passengers visiting Shirdi.

35.6 Efforts are already on to set up more Rail Yatri Niwas type budget hotels at 100 railway locations of tourism importance so that neat, clean and affordable accommodation can be provided at these places. These hotels would add 10,000 rooms to the existing capacity.

35.7 It is also proposed to set up a Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation with the objective of providing more efficient and professional catering services. Private sector coordination in the management and operation of Rail Yatri Niwas and to promote tourism is also being sought. Modalities for setting up such a Corporation are under finalisation.

Railways' Cleanliness Drive

36.1 Sir, the scale of operations on Indian Railways is of a colossal magnitude. About 1.2 cr. passengers are travelling daily on about 7000 passenger trains criss-crossing the country on a network of 63,000 kms. covering over 7000 stations. As we see daily, railway stations and trains are a kind of 'home away from home' for the lakhs of passengers. Millions of other rail users and public visit various stations daily for varied reasons. Though our cultural ethos suggest that "Cleanliness leads to Godliness" it is not adequately reflected particularly at the stations and on running trains. Sensitised by the concern of passengers and other rail users about cleanliness, we have launched a cleanliness drive to realise perceptible improvements in cleanliness standards, which is a daunting task. Involving sixteen and a half lakhs of railway employees and millions of travelling public, what we are addressing ourselves to, is basically an attitudinal change which could win us the battle against dirt. We recognise cleanliness as an integral component of passenger amenities as it adds to the feeling of comfort of rail users and we are committed to improve in this direction.

36.2 Deficiencies noticed with regard to drainage defects, platform conditions, leaking taps, maintenance of toilets, accumulation of garbage, scattering of parcels at platforms etc. are being remedied.

36.3 Emphasis is being given on modernisation of cleaning operations. Modern equipments like mechanised wet-floor scrubbers, vacuum driers, high power vacuum cleaners, jet-cleaning machines, flippers for manual sweeping etc. are being introduced. Environment friendly toilets provided with 'bio-degradation technology' have been introduced on experimental basis in some trains.

36.4 Intensified inspections/field visits are being undertaken to identify the lacunae and take

necessary remedial measures. I have inspected about 50 stations so far in a bid to demonstrate the seriousness of our cleanliness drive. Railway Board Members, Zonal and Division Railway Managers and other officers are also undertaking extensive inspections of stations. About 7000 inspection of stations and 5700 inspections of trains have so far been conducted by the officers. More than 3,000 toilets have been taken up for repairs and renovation. Pay-and-use system for toilets has been introduced at about 400 stations. Dustbins are being provided at various stations adequately to prevent throwing of litter in the open. About 1300 full-time/part-time additional safaiwalas have so far been engaged. Travelling safaiwalas have been introduced in about 300 trains. "May I Help You" booths have been set up at about 250 stations. To infuse a spirit of competition, an award scheme has been introduced for the best cleanliness effort at station, division and zonal level. Necessary follow up action is being taken on complaints and suggestions received, for which a Special Cell has been set up.

36.5 Sir, as this august House, would appreciate that cooperation of rail users and public is essential for the success of railways' cleanliness efforts. Accordingly, we have launched a multi-media campaign to seek public cooperation.

New Sports Promotion Policy

37.1 Railways have traditionally been at the vanguard of sports promotion in the country. A new sports promotion policy has been evolved to give a fillip to our budding sports persons to excel in the national and international sports meets. Salient features of the new policy are :

(a) Doubling of recruitment quota for outstanding sports persons in the railway cadres.

(b) Sports persons are being encouraged with better career opportunities. Prominent sports persons including M.D.Valsamma, Bahadur Prasad, Mohammed Shahid, V.J. Phillips, Wilson Cherian, Madhumita Bisht etc. who have brought laurels to the nation are being/have been promoted as officers in recognition of their meritorious contribution in the field of sports.

(c) Under 'Rail Khel Ratna' and 'Rail Khel Sri' scheme introduced recently, 50 budding sports persons with potential, will be offered increased stipend of Rs. 1000 to Rs. 2000 per month.

(d) Cash awards of Rs.25,000 and Rs.10,000 have been instituted to sports persons for setting up national records and railway records respectively. Coaches who contribute to improved performance of the railway team will be given an award of Rs.10,000.

37.2 The policy envisages stepping up of grants to railway sports bodies. The existing infrastructure of sports facilities at Calcutta, Delhi, Mumbai, Secunderabad, and Guwahati are to be upgraded and improved. Similar facilities are also planned at other major centres. With the new measures, it is hoped that the sports standards in Railways will improve further.

37.3 During the current year, Railways have already won 13 National Championships which include the prestigious events of athletics and volleyball, both men and women.

37.4 It is indeed a matter of pride that Indian Railways have been winning the National Women's Athletic Championship for the last 27 years in a row.

37.5 Sir, we are celebrating the centenary of one of the great sons of our country, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, who had played a sterling role in galvanising the spirit of independence of our people during the freedom struggle. By way of tribute to Netaji, in his centenary year, we have taken up the construction of Netaji Centenary Sports Academy (NCSA) for eastern and north eastern regions in Howrah at a cost of about Rs.9 cr.

Production Units

38.1 The performance of Production Units under the Ministry of Railways has been satisfactory during 1994-95.

38.2 **Chittaranjan Locomotive Works**, Chittaranjan achieved its production target of 150 electric locos. It has successfully completed design and engineering of uprated version of 5000 HP WAG-7 locomotives.

38.3 **Diesel Locomotive Works**, Varanasi, achieved its target of manufacture of 150 diesel locomotives. It has bagged export order for supply of 10 diesel locomotives to Bangladesh and two diesel locomotives to Sri Lanka. These locomotives are likely to be shipped out during the current year.

38.4 **Integral Coach Factory**, Perambur, manufactured 780 coaches. It has already exported 10 coaches to Vietnam during the current year. It has also developed designs for MEMUs, DMUs, OHE cars and prototype of on-board bio-friendly toilets.

38.5 **Rail Coach Factory**, Kapurthala, manufactured 775 coaches. It also manufactured 330 containers for Container Corporation of India. The air conditioned 3-tier coaches designed and manufactured at RCF have been well received by the passengers. Roof mounted air conditioned coaches are also being manufactured in this unit.

38.6 **Wheel and Axle Plant**, Bangalore manufactured 70,448 wheels and 34,582 axles. **Diesel Component Works**, Patiala re-built 72 locomotives.

38.7 The performance of Production Units during 1995-96 has been as per the target so far and all these units are expected to achieve their targets for the year.

Performance of Public Sector Units in 1994-95 (IRCON)

39. The Indian Railway Construction Company Ltd., recorded a turnover of Rs.392 cr. and earned a profit of Rs.41 cr. in 1994-95. It has secured prestigious contracts abroad during the year and earned foreign exchange worth Rs.32.90 cr.

BITES

40. Rail India Technical and Economic Services Ltd. registered a turnover of Rs.80.70 cr. in 1994-95. Its profit before tax was Rs.19.80 cr. The foreign exchange earned by the Company during the year was Rs.4.87 cr. It has paid a dividend of 50% on paid up share capital.

CONCOR

41. The Container Corporation has posted a very impressive growth and registered a turnover of Rs. 217 cr. as compared to Rs. 114 cr. in 1993-94. The traffic handled by the Corporation during 1994-95 has registered a growth of 69% over the previous year. Its profit before tax was Rs.47.12 cr. It has paid a dividend of Rs. 3.89 cr.

IRFC

42. In 1994-95, the Indian Railway Finance Corporation paid a dividend of Rs.27.80 cr. During 1995-96, it is to raise Rs.1350 cr. through taxable/tax-free bonds. Despite tight money market, all efforts are being made to raise this money.

Productivity Linked Bonus

43. Sir, I am glad to inform the House that Railways have revised upwards the ceiling for payment of Productivity Linked Bonus from Rs.1600 per month to Rs.2500 per month to railwaymen with effect from 1.4.93. Productivity Linked Bonus equal to 50 days wages, was paid in 1994-95. Railways have also paid the arrears of 1993-94 to the staff who got additionally covered as a result of upward revision in the ceiling limit for the PLB.

Industrial Relations

44. Industrial relations continued to be cordial during the year. Both the grievance redressal fora at the apex level i.e. Permanent Negotiating Machinery and Departmental Council under the Joint Consultative Machinery are functioning satisfactorily.

Participation of Railway Employees in Management

45. Sir, a greater stress has been laid on workers' participation in management. Our government has the distinction of associating the representatives of both the recognised unions with the highest policy deliberations conference of the General Managers and the Railway Board. In the 142 years history of Indian Railways, workers' representatives were for the first time invited to such a conference on the May day last year. We have made this a regular feature since then. The last conference of General Managers with the participation of federation leaders was held on the 5th of this month. Our government is committed to make our work force partners in our march towards new horizons. Zonal Railways have also been instructed to associate the leaders of both the labour federations in their apex meetings at zonal and divisional levels.

Use of Hindi

46. Indian Railways continue to make determined efforts to implement the Official Language Policy of the government. Various incentive schemes have been introduced to encourage usage of Hindi in the official work. I am happy to state that more than 80% of staff in about 2000 railway offices have acquired working knowledge of Hindi. More than 95% of documents specified in the Official Language Act are being issued in Hindi-English bilingual form. Codes, manuals and station working rules have been made available in Hindi.

Welfare Measures

47.1 I take the pleasure of informing the august House that the parcel handling porters employed by the contractors have been brought under the Group Insurance Scheme. This scheme is operated by the Life Insurance Corporation of India in coordination with the registered unions of porters as policy holders.

47.2 Sir, besides being the dominant means of transport, Railways are alive to the social obligations by way of bringing relief and succour to the needy and poor in remote and backward regions of the country. As a part of the social mission, Railways have launched "Life-Line Express" three years back in coordination with a leading voluntary organisation, for providing medical and surgical assistance including reconstructive surgery for Polio, restoration of vision and hearing etc. This mobile hospital has become immensely popular. Inspired by its success and propelled by our zeal to serve the poor, we propose to introduce more such health care trains.

Annual Plan 1996-97

48. The Plan outlay for 1996-97 has been fixed at Rs.8130 cr. This is higher than current year's Plan size by Rs.630 cr. This is to be financed through budgetary support from General Exchequer (Rs.1269 cr.), internal generation of resources by Railways (Rs.4111 cr.), investments through Indian Railway Finance Corporation (Rs.1850 cr.) and private investments under 'BOLT' and 'Own Your Wagon' schemes (Rs.900 cr.). The major thrust areas would be procurement of rolling stock, replacement and renewal of tracks and other assets.

Budget Estimates 1996-97

49.1 Sir, I shall now deal with the Budget Estimates for the financial year 1996-97. The Gross Traffic Receipts at the existing fare and freight rates are estimated at Rs.23,385 cr. This constitutes an increase of Rs.1210 cr. over the Revised Estimates for the current year. The increase in the Traffic Receipts is based on additional revenue earning originating freight loading of 25 million tonnes over the current year's revised target of 385 million tonnes and an estimated 4% growth from passenger traffic earnings.

49.2 The Ordinary Working Expenses for 1996-97 are estimated at Rs.16,457 cr., an increase of Rs.1867 cr. over the Revised Estimates of the current year. The proposed increase is mainly to cover the cost of fuel and other inputs for incremental traffic, the anticipated escalation in prices of materials, the effect of annual increments, additional payment of dearness allowance to Railway employees and higher lease charges payable to Indian Railway Finance Corporation. It is anticipated that these working expenses would increase substantially after the implementation of the 5th Pay Commission's Report likely to be submitted in 1996-97. The actual liability on this count affecting 16 and a half lakhs railway employees can not be determined at this stage.

49.3 The appropriation to Depreciation Reserve Fund has been kept at the level of Rs.2000 cr. keeping in view the anticipated outgo from the Fund for replacements and renewals of the assets.

49.4 The appropriation to Pension Fund has been raised to Rs.2350 cr. keeping in view the expected outgo from the Fund.

49.5 The Total Working Expenses in 1996-97 have thus been estimated at Rs.20,807 cr. The Net Railway Revenue is estimated to be Rs.2857 cr. The dividend payable to General Revenues has been estimated at Rs.1583 cr. The Dividend liability will be Rs. 1583 cr. The 'Excess' will be Rs.1274 cr. out of which, Rs.350 cr. would be appropriated to Development Fund. Rs.924 cr. will be appropriated to Capital Fund. It is also proposed to withdraw Rs.150 cr. from the balance left in the Capital Fund at the close of 1995-96. The requirement of funds under Capital Fund is Rs.1716 cr. in 1996-97.

49.6 Sir, as I am about to conclude my speech, I am aware of the animated suspense stalking the minds of the hon'ble members about the government's mind with regard to fare and freight charges. I do not

propose any increase in the existing fare and freight rates.

49.7 Memorandum on the rate of dividend payable to General Revenues on the Capital-at-Charge and other ancillary matters has already been submitted to the Railway Convention Committee for their consideration. Meanwhile provision for dividend for the year 1996-97 has been made at the same rates as adopted for the current year.

Conclusion

50.1 Sir, our country is heading towards new horizons of development as the process of national economic reconstruction has been set in motion since 1991-92 under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao. As the sleeping giant gets awakened and starts moving in the direction of new hopes and aspirations, it unfolds exciting opportunities for the Indian masses and for Indian Railways too. Sir, as the august House is aware, the history of Indian Railways is closely intertwined with that of the modern history of our country. During the freedom struggle, the Father of the Nation, Mahatma Gandhi made Indian Railways an effective vehicle for mobilisation of our masses with the cry for independence. It looks that the history is repeating itself as Railways are stretching their tracks to carry the juggernaut of economic development to every nook and corner of our country. On behalf of sixteen and a half lakhs of railwaymen, I would like to assure this august House that Railways will not be found wanting, in catalysing the task of national reconstruction, and launching our country into 21st century as a vibrant economic force, as the tracks of progress are being laid in that direction.

50.2 Sir, I am indeed proud to assist the hon'ble Prime Minister in this large railway family which has a long history of glorious traditions. The railwaymen's dedication, devotion and disciplined service has withstood the test of times. They have played a key role in forging the bonds of unity and national integration. The railwaymen deserve to be congratulated for keeping the wheels of progress moving round the clock despite trying and difficult circumstances. I am sure, this august House would share my confidence, that they will continue to acquit themselves creditably, in tune with the traditions, and continue to strive for a better, safer and cleaner rail travel.

50.3 Sir, I will be failing in my duty if I do not place on record my gratitude to this august House for the support they have been extending to the Indian Railways, from time to time.

50.4 With these words, Sir, I commend the Railway Budget for 1996-97 to the House.
