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Ashadha 20, 1941 (Saka)

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

First Session

(Seventeenth Lok Sabha)

(Vol. II contains Nos.11 to 20)

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

Thursday, July 11, 2019/Ashadha 20, 1941 (Saka)

The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock.

[**HON. SPEAKER** *in the Chair*]

*ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: Question No. 261.

(Q. 261)

SHRI VALLABHANENI BALASHOWRY: Sir, my supplementary is relating to the six-laning of Vijayawada Bypass Section of NH-16. It is also called Vijayawada bypass road, Gundugolanu Section of NH-16 and locally it is called as Inner Ring Road.

The main objective of this road is to divert the trucks from entering into the city of Vijayawada and also bring down the pollution level.

Sir, there are two packages - Package III and Package IV. Under Package III, a 6-lane bypass has been proposed from Chinnavutupally to Gollapudi on Vijayawada - Gundugolanu Section of NH-16. Under Package IV, a 6-lane bypass has been proposed ... *(Interruptions)*

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* **For Questions, please visit** https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers .

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please take your seat for a minute. This question pertains to Chhattisgarh.

Hon. Member, you may speak on a general issue, but it would not be appropriate to speak on the question relating to Chhattisgarh. You may make general remarks, that is acceptable, but the question pertains to a specific State. It is not a question applicable to the whole of India. It has been specifically framed for Chhattisgarh. You may please see the question.

Our Minister is competent, therefore you may ask the question. There is no difficulty.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI VALLABHANENI BALASHOWRY: So, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister when will the construction of the Vijayawada 6-lane bypass road on NH-16 going to be taken up and completed on priority basis.

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: Sir, the Question relates to the road section of Chhattisgarh. Vijayawada bypass is one of the important roads but presently I do not have information about it. As

far as my knowledge goes, I do not know the facts of the case, and keeping in view the sentiment of the hon. Member I will look into this matter. I will call the hon. Member and resolve the issue and as early as possible we will start the work.

SHRI M. K. RAGHAVAN: Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you for giving me this opportunity. I would like to raise a significant issue regarding undue delay in the execution of six-laning project on NH - 266 at Calicut bypass passing through my constituency.

The 28.1-kilometre road construction project between Vengalam to Idimuzhakal was awarded to a Hyderabad based construction company in April 2018. I met the Hon. Minister last week in this regard. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister what step the Government proposes to take to complete this project without any delay.

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: The most important problem which we are facing particularly in Kerala is related to land acquisition. Cost of land acquisition is very high. We already had a meeting with the hon. Chief Minister and made two or three proposals.

SHRI M. K. RAGHAVAN: But the project has been awarded.

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: It has been awarded but land acquisition has still not been completed. Without 90 per cent of land acquisition in our possession, appointment date is not given. There are many projects where we are not getting land. Only when we get 90 per cent of the land, we give the appointment date. Already the project has been awarded but without the appointment date, we cannot start the work. It is probably related to land acquisition.

There are some issues with the State Government of Kerala. We have already discussed it with the Hon. Chief Minister. We have given him some alternatives and suggestions. I am waiting for his response and probably, after this Session, we will organise the meeting with the State Government and we will resolve the issue. I know that it is an important project. We will try to do it as early as possible.

SHRI M. K. RAGHAVAN: The land acquisition was completed 14 years ago.

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: Presently, I do not have information on the particular subject but my request to the hon. Member is to give me a letter on this. Every day, after the Question Hour, I will have a meeting with the Members of Parliament

belonging to different States. At that time, I will call you with the officers concerned and we will resolve the issue.

SHRI S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN: Sir, in India, many accidents are reported on National Highways. In the year 2018, there were about 4.61 lakh road accidents in which 1.49 lakh people were killed and five lakh people were injured. These accidents were caused mainly because adequate facilities are not available for crossing the roads.

In my Parliamentary Constituency, Arakkonam, on an average, 20 to 35 accidents are taking place daily at Visharam, Poottuthakku and Arcot located on Chennai-Bangalore National Highways which are thickly populated areas. Therefore, I wish to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal to provide necessary bridges or underpasses on the National Highways to avoid accidents in future.

SHRI NITIN JAIRAM GADKARI: Sir, in the whole country, I recognise the work done by the Government of Tamil Nadu. They have reduced the percentage of accidents by 15 per cent. It has happened only in Tamil Nadu and it is really one of the success stories. In other States, comparatively the track record is not good. In my Department, everything is excellent and we are going a good job

making a mark but as far as road accidents are concerned, the data is still not good. Accidents have been reduced only by 1.5 per cent to two per cent.

On the basis of the experiment in Tamil Nadu, we have prepared a DPR worth Rs. 14,000 crores identifying the black spots on the National Highways and assessed the underpasses and bridges required. We have submitted this data to the Ministry of Finance. Principally, they have accepted it. It will now go to the World Bank. We are spending Rs. 14,000 crores on black spots where we want to reduce the accidents and save the lives of people. It is the highest sensitive subject for the Government. For the last five years, we are trying our level best but our success ratio is not satisfactory. Again, under the project of the World Bank, we will definitely look into reducing the accidents and deaths.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Question No. 262, Shri Shankar Lalwani ji.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: There will be a debate on this subject at the time of discussion on the Demands for Grants. I will give you full time then.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: At present, the subject relates to Chhattisgarh.

... (Interruptions)

(Q. 262)

SHRI SHANKAR LALWANI: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister for constituting the Ministry of Jal Shakti on this occasion. In the Address of the Hon. President, concern has been expressed regarding the problem of water. The Union Government is running the campaign of providing a tap in every household and ensuring water in every tap.

I would like to ask the Hon. Minister as to what plan the Government has prepared to address the problem of water in the country. The groundwater level is continuously declining. Is there any plan to deal with this issue? Only about eight or nine per cent of rainwater is conserved in the country, while the rest goes to waste as we are unable to conserve it. The Hon. Minister may kindly inform the House whether any plan has been formulated in this regard.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Member has sought to know what plan the Government has prepared to address the water crisis and the challenges faced by the country. It is a fact that 18 per cent of the world's population and 18 per cent of the livestock population are in India, whereas we have only 4 per cent of the total potable water available. It is also true that if this water is assessed in terms of pollution levels, India ranks very

low in the list. However, under the guidance of the Hon. Prime Minister, we have undertaken two sets of programmes to deal with this issue in a holistic manner. First, we are focusing on maximising water conservation and recharge of groundwater. For this purpose, under the guidance of the Hon. Prime Minister, we have launched the Jal Shakti Abhiyan, which will be implemented in its first phase till 15 September. Among the blocks in the country where groundwater is measured, there are around 1,500 blocks which are in a critical or over-exploited position. These are spread across 256 districts. In these areas, teams of officers from the Union Government, in coordination with the State Governments, have prepared a comprehensive plan to assess the situation, to explore how groundwater can be conserved and recharged, and to address related issues. This includes identifying and restoring traditional water bodies and simultaneously undertaking an extensive afforestation programme. All these aspects have been integrated into a single programme. In addition, as the Hon. Member has mentioned, the scheme to provide drinking water to every household has been announced by the Hon. Finance Minister in her Budget Speech. This is a very large and comprehensive programme

undertaken by the Union Government and, with the cooperation of the States, this programme will certainly be successful.

SHRI SHANKAR LALWANI: Thank you, Hon. Minister. I would like to further ask the Hon. Minister that a survey has been released which states that in some of the country's 21 major cities, the groundwater level will either fall drastically or reach zero in the coming years. In such a situation, with regard to the measures being taken by the Central Ground Water Board for rainwater harvesting and the methods prescribed by the Board, I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister that these methods are very old. I myself worked for nearly 15 years in a Municipal Corporation and made efforts to implement this method for water recharge, but the desired results were not achieved. I would like to ask the Hon. Minister whether any master plan is being prepared or whether any new methodology is being developed in this regard.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to inform the House that under a major programme of the Central Ground Water Board, we are undertaking aquifer mapping of all the blocks in the country. However, I have instructed my officers that the work relating to the critical and over-exploited blocks should be completed by 30 March so that a

comprehensive plan can be prepared. I agree with the Hon. Member that a uniform methodology cannot be effective everywhere, because the geological strata differ from place to place. At the same time, I would like to inform the House that with regard to the 21 cities which are repeatedly mentioned by NITI Aayog in the context of this issue, suggesting that a water crisis would arise in these cities after two years and that there would be no drinking water available, we have examined the list of these 21 cities. Out of these 21 cities, there are 17 cities where there is a dual source of water supply, where both surface water and groundwater are used for drinking water purposes. In most of these cities, the share of surface water ranges from 80 to 90 per cent, while the contribution of groundwater is very small. As for the remaining four cities, surface water is available in close vicinity. Whenever such a crisis arises, the State Governments will make arrangements accordingly. Certainly, these cities can be shifted to surface water based schemes. I accept that this is indeed a challenge, but if the entire country comes together to address this challenge, we still have immense potential. There are many countries in the world where groundwater availability is less than ours and precipitation is not even one-fourth of what we receive.

Those countries have ensured water security through their Governments and public participation by creating awareness among the common people. I believe that if this House rises above political commitments with a sacred spirit and works as water leaders in their respective areas, we can certainly achieve success in this endeavour.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members wish to place their views on the Ministry of Jal Shakti. They want to ask questions during Question Hour and, as demanded by the Hon. Members, time will certainly be allotted for discussion under Rule 193. At that time, you may discuss the matter for as long as you wish, even till late at night. Full time will be given. At present, the original questioner may ask the question. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to give a detailed reply during the discussion under Rule 193. For now, let the original question be completed so that questions relating to other Ministries, for which there are neither Demands nor discussion under Rule 193, may be taken up first.

[English]

SHRI P. RAVEENDRANATH KUMAR: Hon. Speaker Sir, according to the Composite Water Management Index report released by the NITI Aayog in 2018, 21 major cities of our country including Tamil Nadu, are racing to reach zero ground water levels

by the year 2020. This is going to affect nearly 100 million people in our country. I would like to raise a question, through you, to the Hon. Minister whether the Ministry has any proposal about adoption of compulsory rainwater harvesting including check dams, close to the agricultural lands for direct use in irrigation, and in areas of low rainfall regions, where average annual rainfall is below 600 mm.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Water and agriculture are both State Subjects as per the Constitution. So, this type of initiatives can be taken by the States only. We can only issue the advisory, which we have already issued in many of the Subjects.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SATABDI ROY (BANERJEE): Sir, you are very kind.

In my parliamentary constituency of Birbhum, there are many areas where there is no water, even though a river is located nearby. However, no project can be undertaken there through the MPLADS funds. I would like to ask what planning your Ministry has in this regard. By when and in what manner will water be brought there from the river so that the problem can be resolved? Further, with reference to the first phase that you have mentioned, I would like to know whether West Bengal will be covered under it or not.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I say this with deep regret that under the guidance and leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the water conservation campaign that we have undertaken across the country, if in any one State there is still resentment regarding it or it has not been implemented, as reflected in the question raised by the Hon. Member, I would like to urge her to come forward in her State and extend cooperation through public participation for this comprehensive programme, and also to make an appeal in her State for its effective implementation.

(Q. 263 and 278)

SHRI MAHABALI SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, in the reply given by the Hon. Minister, he has stated that in the Budget Speech this Government has announced that by the year 2024, arrangements will be made to provide a tap and water in every household. Sir, the Government has made this announcement today, but in Bihar, under the 'Saat Nischay' programme, this scheme was initiated by the respected Shri Nitish Kumar nearly four years ago. What I wish to say is that water must be available in the country first, only then will water reach the tap.

If there is no water at all, from where will water come into the tap and how will the people of the country get drinking water? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please ask your question.

SHRI MAHABALI SINGH: Sir, I am coming to the question itself. What I mean to say is that we accept that the Government is serious. Considering the drinking water crisis in the country, the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has constituted the Ministry of Jal Shakti. This is a very big and commendable step.

However, I am saying the same thing again, that only if water is available will it reach the people through taps. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Now please ask your question.

SHRI MAHABALI SINGH: Sir, I come from Bihar. The districts of Aurangabad, Rohtas, Kaimur, Gaya, Nawada and Nalanda in Bihar are plateau regions and are also affected by Naxalism. Naxalite movement continues in these areas. Every year during the summer months, people in four or five of these districts suffer severely due to lack of water, and animals and birds reach the brink of death. This year, the heat was so intense that hundreds of people died due to heatstroke and lack of water. Therefore, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister whether any such plan has been prepared to provide drinking water in these four or five districts where human beings as well as animals and birds are dying due to scarcity of water. Sir, kindly inform the House as to what such plan is.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I believe that both the question and the answer of the Hon. Questioner are contained within his own submission. He has stated that the Government of Bihar has been implementing this programme for the last four years. I would certainly like to commend the Government

of Bihar and the Hon. Chief Minister for initiating such a scheme earlier, based on the resources of their State, with the resolve to provide water to every household. As I have also stated in reply to the previous question, water is primarily a State subject. If the State Government prepares any special plan for those districts, then, as I mentioned earlier, the water-stressed districts from Nalanda to Aurangabad, which have just been referred to by the Hon. Member, have all been included in the index of approximately 256 water-stressed districts. We are working in coordination with the State Governments to prepare a comprehensive plan for all these districts.

SHRI MAHABALI SINGH: Sir, with regard to the problem that I have mentioned to the Hon. Minister, the geographical structure of Bihar is such that North Bihar is affected by floods, while South Bihar is affected by drought. Is the Union Government formulating any such plan whereby flood water may be diverted, through appropriate arrangements and construction of dams, to drought affected areas? This would ensure that there is neither drought nor flooding. I would like the Hon. Minister to kindly inform the House whether any such arrangement is being made by the Government.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, this is an ideal situation and it is true that almost one-third of the

country is affected by floods nearly every year, while nearly two-thirds of the country remains water stressed. It is also true that out of the last 17 years, there has been a monsoon deficit in 13 years. As the Hon. Member has stated, apart from Bihar, from where he comes, there are several other States facing a similar situation. Karnataka is also one such State, where some parts experience floods every year while other parts face drought. To address this situation, under the National Perspective Plan, around 30 links were identified, for which Detailed Project Reports have been prepared. During the tenure of the previous Government, when the respected Shri Nitin Gadkari was in charge of this Ministry, extensive consultations were held with the States. However, the level of cooperation that is required from the States on this issue, particularly for inter-State plans and initiatives, has not been forthcoming to the desired extent. Even with regard to intra-State projects, the necessary initiatives have been somewhat lacking. If all the States come together and work collectively, these problems can certainly be addressed.

HON. SPEAKER: Dr. Bharati Pravin Pawar - Not present.

Shri Giridhari Yadav - Not present.

Shri Hibi Eden.

SHRI HIBI EDEN: Hon. Speaker, Sir, in the Address of the Hon. President, it was stated that the 'Har Ghar Jal Project' is a policy decision of the Government. Under the 'Har Ghar Jal Project', has the Department identified sources in each State? *[English]* If you want to make sure that every household gets safe drinking water, there should be a source of water whereby you can actually get water to the houses. If there is no proper source or a master plan for this project, how can the Government ensure that 'Har Ghar Jal' project is successful?

At major places, in the urban areas and poor districts, where there is huge shortage of water, you can have desalination plants set up.

So, is there any project for the Government to make sure that 'Har Ghar Jal' project is based on these aspects?

[Translation]

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to inform the House, the Hon. Member and the country that there are a total of 6,881 blocks in the country in which we assess underground water four times a year. There are more than 13,500 structures through which this monitoring is carried out. I would like to inform the Hon. Member that out of these 6,881

blocks, there are 4,310 blocks which are still in the safe zone today, where groundwater is available in ample quantity, on the basis of which such schemes can be sustained and implemented with ease. As for the remaining blocks, as I have stated earlier, there are 1,186 over-exploited blocks where there is a possibility of storing water in the aquifers, but due to imbalance between groundwater recharge and groundwater extraction, such a situation has arisen. Similarly, there are around 1,300 blocks which fall under the semi-critical or critical category, where such arrangements can also be made. Keeping this in view, we have undertaken this comprehensive programme of groundwater conservation, conservation of water on the surface, and recharge of groundwater in such areas, so that we can easily develop and implement such localised schemes.

The suggestion made by the Hon. Member is highly commendable, because India has a very long coastal line and along this coastal line we can easily undertake desalination and convert seawater into potable water for drinking purposes. We have carried out such experiments at a few places. Plants of this nature have been set up in Chennai. We have also undertaken some such programmes in the Union Territories. However, due to the high cost of electricity, these projects do not become viable. At present, certain new

technologies have emerged in which power consumption will be lower. With a view to demonstrating all such technologies together and studying them, a comprehensive plan has been prepared. The State of Gujarat has undertaken a scheme of captive power generation and consumption for desalination, which reduces the cost of power by half, thereby making such projects viable. Certainly, in the coming times, comprehensive plans can also be formulated in this direction.

[English]

DR. SUBHAS SARKAR: Sir, I would like to gather information from the Minister of Jal Shakti as to whether the water level has decreased considerably in Bankura, Jhargram, Purulia, Paschim Medinipur, Darjeeling and Alipurduar districts of West Bengal State during the past few years; and if so, what are the district-wise details thereof?

Have any special steps been proposed for Bankura, Jhargram, Purulia, Paschim Medinipur, Darjeeling and Alipurduar districts? If so, what are the details thereof?

[Translation]

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I seek your indulgence to state that I do not have information relating to every district readily available with me. However, with regard to the districts about which the Hon. Member is seeking information, arrangements will certainly be made to ensure that the Hon. Member is provided with the requisite details.

KUNWAR DANISH ALI: Hon. Speaker, Sir, a recent study has found that about 2.34 crore people in the rural areas of Uttar Pradesh are exposed to high levels of arsenic in groundwater. Around 78 per cent of the population resides in rural areas and nearly 40 districts are exposed to high arsenic levels. Through you, I would like to ask the Hon. Minister as to what steps the Government is going to take to deal with this crisis.

SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH SHEKHAWAT: Sir, the Government's programme, the National Rural Drinking Water Programme, was already in operation. Under that programme also, there was a sub-mission for quality-affected areas. For regions affected by arsenic, fluoride and nitrate, such sub-missions were already being implemented. Under the forthcoming programme, 'Nal se Jal', a piped water scheme has been envisaged for every

household. Under this programme as well, the States can, according to their requirements, accord priority to quality-affected areas and implement the programme accordingly.

(Q. 264 and 267)

SHRI SANJAY SADASHIVRAO MANDLIK: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the civil aviation industry in the country is growing at a rapid pace and has become the world's third largest domestic civil aviation market.

Through you, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister that despite the increase in air passengers, the market share of Air India is declining and, despite continuous efforts by the Government, what are the reasons for Air India continuing to incur losses. Further, what steps is the Government taking to reduce the expenditure of Air India and to bring Air India into profit?

[English]

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, the hon. Member has focussed on two aspects. One is the growing domestic civil aviation market and the second is the situation of Air India.

In so far as the domestic civil aviation market is concerned, I would like to inform the hon. Member that except for a four-month period, around April, when Jet Airways ceased operation, the domestic civil aviation market has been growing at a combined

annual growth rate of approximately 17 per cent. So, there is a very healthy growth in the domestic market.

I also want to place, in perspective, some of the narratives out in the market place. After Jet ceased operations, the number of aircraft in the skies has not been diminished. In fact, when Jet Airways was flying, at that period, we had 540 aircraft in the Indian aviation sector. Today, we have between 560 to 580 aircraft and we are, in fact, adding airplanes every month. So, the domestic market has not been affected too adversely because the other carriers have been able to pick up their business vacated by Jet Airways.

In so far as the loss of Air India or the profitability or the financial crunch is concerned, I would like to mention to the hon. Member that it is not just Air India - if I were to be asked the Question, which I had been in the Rajya Sabha, which I did not have an opportunity to answer but it is in the written answer also - but most of the Indian airline companies are, in fact, facing financial difficulties; almost all of them. And there are several reasons for this.

Approximately 40 per cent of the operating cost of an airline is made up of aviation turbine fuel. The VAT on ATF in some states is as high as 28 per cent to 38 per cent. Then, in addition, there is the

price of crude internationally and there are exchange rate fluctuations. We have an interesting situation where everyone, the original equipment manufacturer, the airports and the lessors are all insulated against risk and they all make money. In fact, Boeing and Airbus, I am sure, are doing extremely well financially. The airports are doing very well but the airlines which are running the operations are all operating on very thin margins because they have a very high capital cost and they have a lot of uncertainty due to variables which I have just mentioned. For instance, the closure of Pakistani airspace has resulted in Air India cumulatively taking a loss of something like Rs. 490 crore. Then, whenever there is a civil disturbance somewhere or due to geo-political factors, the insurance premium goes up.

So, all I can say is that we are in a situation where Air India's operating loss this year - that is the financial year which is closing on March 31, 2019 - is something over Rs. 7000 crore. These are provisional figures but I hope to get the audited figures also within the next few days. So, the Government is committed to the strategic disinvestment of Air India. We hope, this time, as soon as we have the provisional figures and as soon as the alternative mechanism for disinvestment of Air India is set in motion, we will start the process

for strategic disinvestment of Air India. We believe that Government's scarce resources should be utilised in other development schemes and this is an area where privatisation or disinvestment will work.

[Translation]

SHRI SANJAY SADASHIVRAO MANDLIK: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know from the Hon. Minister the reasons for the Government's failure to attract bidders for the disinvestment of Air India during the previous year, and what steps are being taken afresh for the sale of Air India.

[English]

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member, through you, that it is not the Government which has failed to attract passengers. Air India, in fact, is a first-class asset. Air India has 125 planes. It owns half of them. It is flying to about 40 international destinations and 80 domestic destinations. It is doing extremely well. The problem is that it has now taken an unsustainable debt burden. It is the servicing of that debt burden which is the problem insofar as Air India is concerned.

Now, when we go to disinvest this time, we would have learnt lessons. There was a consultant who was appointed: Ernst & Young. We have a report from them. We have done our internal studies. May be some of the mistakes we made during the last occasion like wanting to retain 24 per cent of the shares and wanting to do some other things, I think, we will not make those mistake again. But that is not a decision which the Minister has to announce from the floor of Parliament. That is a decision which the alternative mechanism will take as soon as it is established.

I can also tell you, Sir, and through you the hon. Member that, in fact, after Jet Airways ceased operation, Air India becomes an even more attractive acquisition. Apart from its inherent strength, it also has excellent civil aviation access to foreign routes. I am convinced that this time around, we will make the effort to reach out to potential investors who have already identified themselves. We are in the process of drawing up a list of others who would be potentially interested and I am sure disinvestment of Air India this time will succeed as has been on the cards for quite some time.

[Translation]

SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you at the outset.

The Hon. Minister has given a detailed reply. Air India is providing better air services in the country, but due to the losses being incurred by the Company, difficulties are being faced in its operations.

I would like to know whether the Government is formulating any plan to improve its financial position by utilising the land or other resources available with Air India.

[English]

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, Air India, as I mentioned, is not only in and of itself a first-class asset as an airline company, but, as the written reply to the question says, it also has some other very valuable assets. There are, I believe, 111 parcels of land out of which, I think, 30 have been sold; 81 will be put up for sale. I can mention to the hon. Member that amongst these valuable assets are the Air India building at Nariman Point and CIDCO land in Navi Mumbai which is 25 acres. There are other retail parcels. There is a parcel of land of 3.5 acres at Baba Kharak Singh Marg. There is a property at Vasant Vihar which is 30 acres. My assessment - this is based on the analysis I have seen - is that Air India could raise about Rs. 7000 crore from the sale of these assets which I have mentioned.

A mention also comes in the Press sometimes about some very valuable art that Air India owned. I want to inform the hon. Member, through you, Sir -because that is also a very valuable asset - that a curator has been through the entire list. It has all been arranged and properly packaged.

Air India's paintings and other art will be given to the National Gallery of Modern Art as part of an Air India collection which we hope to establish very soon.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Question No. 267 is also being clubbed with this.

Shri Rajeshbhai Naranbhai Chudasama - Not present.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY: Sir, arrangements may be made for a special half-an-hour discussion on this subject. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: You may submit it in writing.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Let the original questioner submit it in writing.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: Hon. Speaker Sir, with your permission, I would just like to make three quick points before I ask my question to the hon. Minister.

Number one, the disinvestment of Air India in May, 2018 had collapsed.

Number two, in reply to a question on the 27th June, 2019, Mr. Speaker Sir, the Minister has stated that for the past three years, all the seven verticals of Air India are making profit. Mr. Speaker Sir, I will just read out three or four lines of that answer because that is very germane.

> "Government has approved a revival plan for Air India with financial support which focusses on building a competitive and profitable airline group. The financial support, *inter alia*, includes a cash support of Rs. 3,975 crore to Air India, transfer of debt amounting to Rs. 29,464 crore from Air India limited to a special purpose vehicle, that is Air India Assets holding Limited company, providing Government guarantee of Rs. 7,600 crore to Air

India Financial Limited, and Rs. 1,300 crore to SPV to meet the interests of quarter three and quarter four of financial year 2018-19. Also, the entire debt of this SPV would be serviced by the Government for the financial year 2019-20 for which Rs. 2,600 crore has been provided."

Mr. Speaker Sir, if Air India has been making profit for the past three years and the Government has created a special purpose vehicle whereby the debt of Air India has been taken off the table, what is the rationale then for the disinvestment of Air India?

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, I would like to inform the hon. Member that the fact that the attempt to privatise Air India or to disinvest it in May, 2018 did not succeed. That is a fact. Whether I would use a word like collapsed or not is something that I can discuss with the hon. Member later. What I had said earlier was that when the previous alternative mechanism was established, it had been decided to retire Rs. 29,000 crore of the debt and transfer it to the special purpose vehicle. I would like to inform the hon. Member that that is the entire debt. The clearly visible debt of Air India today is Rs. 58,000 crore. If you look at the books, then there is probably another Rs. 20,000 crore or so as current liabilities. This year alone,

as I had mentioned to the hon. Member in response to an earlier repartee, the Air India's provisional figures which I have is that of a loss of about Rs. 7,365 crore. Now, the hon. Member should know that it is entirely possible to run several verticals profitably and still not make money because you have got unsustained huge debt burden to service that debt. Then, on top of that, you come against other factors which are the cost of ATF, air space, additional expenditure, and obligations that you have to take. So, the Government has decided it for whatever reason. This is not a situation of our making. The Government has decided to privatise it.

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: For whatever reason, you decided to privatise it. What are you saying Mr. Minister? …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, please do not reply to the supplementary questions raised by them.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, out of the profit making subsidiaries of Air India, ground handling is clearly profitable, Air

India Express is profitable, AIATSL is profitable. These are the three profit making verticals. …*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MANISH TEWARI: Mr. Speaker Sir, in his answer, he has stated that all the seven verticals are profitable. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, please do not reply to every question.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Gopal Shetty, you may speak.

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing stated by the Hon. Member shall go on record.

… (Interruptions)[*]

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: Sir, thank you very much. I am surprised that some airlines are making profits, while some airlines which have been established for many years are incurring losses. I had the opportunity to work on the Finance Committee along with Shri Nishikant Dubey, and certain things are being heard in the public domain. It is being said that airline companies purchase aircraft from abroad at highly inflated prices. What has come to be referred to as 'cut money' is taken there, and on that basis, loans of the same inflated amount are taken from banks here. If an aircraft worth one lakh is shown as being purchased for two lakh, then a loan of two lakh is taken from the bank. As interest keeps increasing on such loans, the company inevitably goes into losses. I would like to urge the Government, and the Hon. Minister is very competent and does not require briefings, as he has come from within this system, to clarify what are the reasons why some companies make profits and why such large companies incur losses. Is what I am stating correct? If it is correct, then stringent cases should be instituted against such

[*] Not recorded.

persons and they should be sent to jail. Companies that perform well should receive the support of the Government. A company like Jet used to say, when we worked in finance, that it was making substantial profits. If Jet has been shut down, then why should it not be run through SBI? Why should the Government not evolve such a mechanism? Large-scale bank loans have been given to these companies. Why should banks not run such airline companies and provide services to the public? In such a large country, such large companies have shut down, and we merely continue to hold debates. I would like to request the Hon. Minister that Jet be immediately handed over either to Air India or to IndiGo, or to whichever company is performing well, so that public convenience is ensured.

[English]

SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI: Sir, providing facilities to the travelling public is certainly a concern of the Government. But the Government does not make the business model for the private airline operators. The private airline operators conduct their own businesses. They take loans. They have agreements. If two partners in a private business enterprise fall apart, it is not for the Government to step in. Yes, the Government will take other safeguard actions. The Government interferes from time to time to

ensure that airfares do not go up. We do that and we have succeeded. In fact, airfares on the trunk routes between Delhi and Mumbai have not gone up for the last 20 years. It is still Rs.5,100.

When the hon. Members often ask me to say that a certain question has been wrongly given, perhaps, they do not even read the question they asked or the exact wording. But if there is an answer, which is capable of being interpreted in a different way, the Government has no intention of stepping in to sort out the finances of private operators.

Insofar as the Government's decision on Air India is concerned, we have taken a conscious decision to privatise the operation because the debt it has incurred over a period of time is huge. We can have a separate discussion and I will be happy to point out why we have reached that impasse. It is not a situation of our making. It has been happening for many years. It is not in the Government's and in the people's best interest that scarce Government resources are used for this purpose. Those can be used for development purposes. But we will privatise in a manner that we get a very good return on Air India and that it remains in Indian hands so that the Indian public will benefit. Whether the airline is ultimately purchased by another Indian entity or some new entities which come

into the airline sector, it is not for me to speculate. The Government will take those decisions as soon as the alternative mechanism has been established. ... *(Interruptions)*

(Q. 265)

[Translation]

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR: Hon. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like first of all to congratulate the country's dynamic Prime Minister. The details placed before the House by the Hon. Minister have been provided in great detail. From the information given, it is evident that the country is steadily moving towards self-reliance in the energy sector. Over the past five years, first under the leadership of the Hon. Shri Piyush Goyal and thereafter under the leadership of the present Hon. Minister, the manner in which work has been carried out in this sector has yielded tangible results. As a consequence, in almost all regions of the country, whether it be the western region, against a demand of 1,05,213 megawatts, a supply of 1,05,212 megawatts was provided.

Only a shortfall of one megawatt remained. Similarly, in the southern region, against a demand of 90,037 megawatts, a supply of 89,999 megawatts was provided, which means there was a shortfall of only 38 megawatts. Likewise, in the eastern region, against a demand of 39,841 megawatts, a supply of 39,772 megawatts was made available. The underlying reason for this achievement appears to be that under previous Governments, coal was not supplied to

power generation companies in a timely manner, resulting in a gap between demand and supply. This Government considered the matter seriously and ensured timely supply of coal to power companies, as a result of which we have today achieved all the targets.

Sir, today power generation companies have surplus coal stocks sufficient for 15 days of their requirement. Despite this, in the northern region, which includes a very large part of the country's population, such as Chandigarh, Delhi, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, from where I come, the requirement in the northern region was 1,08,462 megawatts, against which a supply of 1,07,233 megawatts was provided. There is still a shortfall of 1,229 megawatts. If I specifically refer to Uttar Pradesh, from where I come, the requirement was 36,022 megawatts, against which a supply of 35,804 megawatts was made available. A shortfall of 218 megawatts still remains. This amounts to a deficit of 0.6 per cent of the total demand.

I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, as the Hon. Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has announced in the General Budget the launch of a scheme under which the annadata of

this country will now also become an energy provider, whether the Government is considering addressing this shortfall by associating farmers with solar energy to meet this requirement. Further, keeping in view the shortfall in the northern region, I would also like to know by when this country will be able to become self-reliant in the energy sector.

SHRI R. K. SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, there are two or three points I would like to make. At present, the national level energy shortage is 0.4 per cent. This is not because we are unable to generate electricity. We have adequate generation capacity. We supply electricity to every State according to its requirement. Different States draw power as per their needs. We have a market as well as sales mechanisms in place, and States can purchase as much power as they require. There is no longer any transmission constraint. We are now able to transmit power from any corner of the country to any other corner.

Hon. Speaker, from the year 2014 till date, we have installed generation capacity of 1,20,586 megawatts. Today, we are also exporting power because availability is adequate. In the transmission system, we have connected every part of the country. In the last five years, we have constructed 1,23,522 circuit kilometres of

transmission lines and interconnected the entire country. There is no difficulty in transmitting power. However, there were difficulties in the distribution systems of the States. Uttar Pradesh also faces the same issue. During the tenure of previous Governments in Uttar Pradesh, no investment was made in the distribution system, which the Hon. Member would be well aware of. Over the last four to five years, through the Union Government, schemes amounting to Rs. 47,000 crore have been approved for Uttar Pradesh under the Deendayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana, IPDS and the Saubhagya Scheme. Uttar Pradesh is strengthening its power distribution system and significant improvement has taken place. At present, the energy shortage in Uttar Pradesh stands at 0.6 per cent.

The same energy shortage stood at 14.5 per cent in the year 2013. We have reduced it to 0.6 per cent. There is no shortage of energy. The distribution system is being improved and this remaining 0.6 per cent will also be eliminated.

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR: Sir, the Hon. Minister has replied that there is no shortage whatsoever in generation for supplying electricity to every corner of the country and that the need is to rectify the distribution system.

Sir, for supplying electricity to the people in the States, electrification work has been initiated by the Union Government through the Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya Scheme, the Saubhagya Scheme and the RDSS Scheme. For this purpose, adequate funds have also been provided to the States. In the year 2019, due to elections, many hamlets remained unelectrified. An order was issued from your Ministry that the remaining materials procured by the companies up to 31 March 2019 under the scheme should be utilised for electrification of villages and hamlets.

Sir, I would also like to inform the Hon. Minister and seek clarification that the entire Government machinery was engaged in the 2019 elections, due to which some electrification work was left incomplete at certain places. In particular, if I speak about Uttar Pradesh and my Lok Sabha constituency of Kaushambi, there are around 1,200 hamlets which are still unelectrified. I have also written to you in this regard. I would like to know whether any scheme will be formulated for the villages or hamlets which have remained unelectrified, or whether the Government will extend the same scheme further to ensure electricity reaches every household. ... *(Interruptions)*

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Why did you include the name of West Bengal in your question? ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI R. K. SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, with your permission, the Hon. Member may ask his question. ... *(Interruptions)* Why are other Members asking him questions? ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI VINOD KUMAR SONKAR: Am I not an Indian? ... *(Interruptions)* Can I not be concerned about Bengal? ... *(Interruptions)* Is concern for Bengal yours alone? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please take your seat.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have repeatedly ruled that Members should not engage in debate among themselves. The Member whom I permit may stand up and ask the question.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI R. K. SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, after the elections, the Hon. Minister from Uttar Pradesh and his officers met me and informed me that a substantial amount of electrification work had remained pending due to the Model Code of Conduct during the elections. Work relating to strengthening of the system was underway and the material had already been procured, but it could not be installed. We

have conveyed to them that whatever arrangements and permissions are required for installation will be provided by us. We have already made provision for funds. In fact, the amount we have provided to Uttar Pradesh is perhaps more than that given to other States. Therefore, there is no shortage of funds. Yes, there is a need to extend the time period of the scheme, which we will do.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Saugata Roy.

You are a senior Member. I would once again like to request you that whenever you wish to ask a question, I will give you the opportunity, but please do not speak while seated. I have been observing for the last two days that you are speaking while seated.

[English]

PROF. SAUGATA ROY: Sir, I want a clarification with regard to West Bengal. The Questioner, in his Question, has included the State of West Bengal. He has asked:

> "Whether the State of West Bengal has a peak demand-supply gap which is more than the all-India average and the highest in the country after two-three small States."

12.00 hrs

In your reply, you have said that as against All India average of 0.6 per cent power shortage, there is no peak shortage in West Bengal and further while there is energy deficit of 0.4 per cent at All India level, there is 0.3 per cent energy shortage in West Bengal which means that West Bengal is better place than many of the States. I think that question has some mischief about West Bengal. *…(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON SPEAKER: Please take your seat.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

PROF. SOUGATA RAY: Will the hon. Minister clarify the position? I would like to know whether West Bengal has surplus power and is able to export power to other States like Bihar and Odisha. Will you clarify this position?

[Translation]

SHRI R. K. SINGH: Hon. Speaker, Sir, the situation as it stands has already been explained by us in our reply. We do not discriminate against any State in any manner. Whatever amount was

required by West Bengal, we have approved schemes of that magnitude for strengthening its system as well. However, I would like to state that funds were sanctioned for strengthening the electricity system in Kolkata and for construction of certain substations, but due to law and order issues and obstructions by some people, that work has not been able to progress. ... *(Interruptions)*

Another point is that their per capita consumption is lower than the national average. Their per capita consumption is around 700 units, whereas the national average is approximately 1,200 units. There is a need to increase this. If it is increased, then there will be a requirement for additional electricity as well.

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HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have received notices of Adjournment Motions from some Members on various issues. Although these matters are important, it is not necessary to disrupt today's proceedings for them. These matters can be raised on other occasions. Therefore, I have not given consent to any notice of Adjournment Motion.

*WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Starred Question Nos.266, 268 to 277, 279 and 280

Unstarred Question Nos. 2952 to 3181

* **For Questions, please visit** https://sansad.in/ls/questions/questions-and-answers .

12.02 hrs

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

HON. SPEAKER: Now, papers will be laid on the Table. Shri Kiren Rijiju.

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MINORITY AFFAIRS (SHRI KIREN RIJIJU): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Sports Authority of India, New Delhi, for the year 2016-2017, alongwith Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Sports Authority of India, New Delhi, for the year 2016-2017.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 208/17/19]

(3) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

(i) Detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Minority Affairs for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 209/17/19]

(ii) Detailed Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 210/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER, MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SKILL DEVELOPMENT AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP (SHRI R.K. SINGH): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Forum of Regulators, New Delhi, for the years 2012-2013 to 2014-2015, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Forum of Regulators, New Delhi, for the years 2012-2013 to 2014-2015.

(2) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (1) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 211/17/19]

(3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (for the State of Goa & Union Territories), Gurgaon, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Joint Electricity Regulatory Commission (for the State of Goa & Union Territories), Gurgaon, for the year 2017-2018.

(4) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (3) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 212/17/19]

(5) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

(i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Power Finance Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Power for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 213/17/19]

(ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited and the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 214/17/19]

(6) A copy of the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (Grant of Connectivity, Long-term Access and Medium-term Open Access in inter-State Transmission and related matters) (Seventh Amendment) Regulations, 2019 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. L-1/(3)/2009-CERC in Gazette of India dated 28th January, 2019 under Section 179 of the Electricity Act, 2003.

(7) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (6) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 215/17/19]

(8) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 216/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):-

(i) Memorandum of Understanding between the NBCC (India) Limited and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 217/17/19]

(ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Housing and Urban Development Corporation Limited and Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 218/17/19]

(2) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of Section 394 of the Companies Act, 2013:-

(i) Review by the Government of the working of the Noida Metro Rail Limited, Noida, for the year 2017-2018.

(ii) Annual Report of the Noida Metro Rail Limited, Noida, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 219/17/19]

(4) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Civil Aviation for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 220/17/19]

(5) A copy of the Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property (Amendment) Rules, 2018 (Hindi and English versions) published in Notification No. G.S.R.133(E) in Gazette of India dated 20th February, 2019 under Section 22 of the Requisitioning and Acquisition of Immovable Property Act, 1952.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 221/17/19]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (GEN DR. V. K. SINGH) (RETD.): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy each of the following Notifications (Hindi and English versions) under Section 11 of the National Highways Act, 1988:

(i) S.O.6392(E) published in Gazette of India dated 31st December, 2018, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.689(E) dated 4th April, 2011.

(ii) S.O.6393(E) published in Gazette of India dated 31st December, 2018, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 233 to National Highways Authority of India.

(iii) S.O. 6394(E) published in Gazette of India dated 31st December, 2018, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 233 to National Highways Authority of India.

(iv) S.O.07(E) published in Gazette of India dated 2nd January, 2019, en-trusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 148C to National Highways Authority of India.

(v) S.O.08(E) published in Gazette of India dated 2nd January, 2019, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 10 to National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Limited.

(vi) S.O.09(E) published in Gazette of India dated 2nd January, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.1096(E) dated 4th August, 2005.

(vii) S.O.301(E) published in Gazette of India dated 15th January, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.1096(E) dated 4th August, 2005.

(viii) S.O.361(E) published in Gazette of India dated 4th January, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.689(E) dated 4th April, 2011.

(ix) S.O.379(E) published in Gazette of India dated 24th January, 2019, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 354 to National Highways Authority of India.

(x) S.O.380(E) published in Gazette of India dated 24th January, 2019, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National

Highway Nos., mentioned therein, to National Highways Authority of India.

(xi) S.O.381(E) and S.O.382(E) published in Gazette of India dated 24th January, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.1096(E) dated 4th August, 2005.

(xii) S.O.383(E) published in Gazette of India dated 24th January, 2019, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 179A to National Highways Authority of India.

(xiii) S.O.509(E) published in Gazette of India dated 30th January, 2019, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of National Highway No. 148NA to National Highways Authority of India.

(xiv) S.O.694(E) and S.O.695(E) published in Gazette of India dated 5th February, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.689(E) dated 4th April, 2011.

(xv) S.O.886(E) and S.O.887(E) published in Gazette of India dated 18th February, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.689(E) dated 4th April, 2011.

(xvi) S.O.969(E) and S.O.970(E) published in Gazette of India dated 22nd February, 2019, making certain amendments in the Notification No. S.O.689(E) dated 4th April, 2011.

(xvii) S.O.1891(E) published in Gazette of India dated 31st May, 2019, entrusting the stretches, mentioned therein, of New National Highway No. 354B in the State of Punjab to National Highways Authority of India.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 222/17/19]

(2) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 223/17/19]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF JAL SHAKTI; AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI RATTAN LAL KATARIA): Hon. Speaker, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Jal Shakti for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 224/17/19]

(2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Polavaram Project Authority, Hyderabad, for the year 2017-2018.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Polavaram Project Authority, Hyderabad, for the year 2017-2018.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing the reasons for the delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 225/17/19]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF MICRO, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FISHERIES, ANIMAL HUSBANDRY AND DAIRYING (SHRI PRATAP CHANDRA SARANGI): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table:-

(1) A copy of the Memorandum of Understanding (Hindi and English versions) between the National Small Industries Corporation Limited and the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 226/17/19]

(2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises, Mumbai, for the year 2017-2018, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) Statement regarding the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises, Mumbai, for the year 2017-2018.

(3) Statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for delay in laying the papers mentioned at (2) above.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 227/17/19]

(4) A copy of the Detailed Demands for Grants (Hindi and English versions) of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises for the year 2019-2020.

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 228/17/19]

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12.03 hrs

BUSINESS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

3rd Report

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): I beg to present the Third Report of the Business Advisory Committee.

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12.03 ½ hrs

STATEMENT CORRECTING REPLY TO STARRED QUESTION NO. 87 DATED 27.06.2019 REGARDING DISINVESTMENT OF AIR INDIA*

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND URBAN AFFAIRS, MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): I beg to lay a Statement (Hindi and English versions) correcting the reply to Starred Question No. 87 given on 27th June, 2019 asked by Shri Anto Antony, MP regarding 'Disinvestment of Air India'.

* Laid on the Table and also placed in Library, See No. LT 229/17/19.

STATEMENT CORRECTING ANSWER IN RESPECT OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 87 DATED THE 27TH JUNE, 2019 BY SHRI ANTO ANTONY, MP REGARDING 'DISINVESTMENT OF AIR INDIA'.

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CIVIL AVIATION (IC) (SHRI HARDEEP SINGH PURI): Sir, I request to make a statement correcting the reply to the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 87 dated 27th June, 2019 tabled by Shri Anto Antony, MP regarding 'Disinvestment of Air India'.

I had answered the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 87 regarding 'Disinvestment of Air India' tabled by Shri Anto Antony, MP for answer on 27th June, 2019.

Information was sought in the question regarding (a) whether the Government intends to disinvest Air India and its subsidiaries and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; (b) the present stage of disinvestment and the steps taken by the Government in this regard; (c) whether the Government has taken any steps to improve Air India's operations and financial performance; and (d) if so, the details thereof including the financial assistance given to Air India during each of the last five years and its resultant impact on the financial health of Air India?

In the third paragraph of the reply to Part (a) and (b) of the Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 87 dated 27th June, 2019 tabled by Shri Anto Antony, MP regarding 'disinvestment of Air India', the date i.e. 18th June, 2018, on which, the Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) decided the further course of action for strategic disinvestment of Air India and its subsidiaries/JV, was inadvertently not indicated. The information has been reconciled. A copy of the revised reply to the Parliament Question incorporating correcting is enclosed.

The inconvenience is regretted.

STATEMENT TO BE MADE BY THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR CIVIL AVIATION (IC) CORRECTING THE ANSWER TO PART (A) & (B) OF THE STARRED QUESTION NO. 87 GIVEN IN THE LOK SABHA ON THE 27TH JUNE 2019 REGARDING 'DISINVESTMENT OF AIR INDIA'.

Part of the question	For	Read
(a) whether the Government intends to disinvest Air India and its subsidiaries and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; (b) the present stage of disinvestment and the steps taken by the Government in this regard; (c) whether the	(a) & (b): NITI Aayog in its recommendations, on Strategic Disinvestment of the Central Public Sector Enterprises in May 12, 2017 had given the rationale for the disinvestment of Air India and has referred to the fragile finances of the company, among various other reasons. Air India has been incurring continuous losses and has huge accumulated losses. Further, NITI Aayog in its report on Air India has stated that further financial support in a mature and competitive aviation market would not be the best use of scarce financial resources of the	(a) & (b): NITI Aayog in its recommendations, on Strategic Disinvestment of the Central Public Sector Enterprises in May 12, 2017 had given the rationale for the disinvestment of Air India and has referred to the fragile finances of the company, among various other reasons. Air India has been incurring continuous losses and has huge accumulated losses. Further, NITI Aayog in its report on Air India has stated that further financial support in a mature and competitive aviation market would not be the best use of scarce financial

Government has taken any steps to improve Air India"s operations and financial performance; and (d) if so, the details thereof including the financial assistance given to Air India during each of the last five years and its resultant impact on the financial health of Air India?	Government. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), in its meeting held on 28.06.2017, had given an in-principle approval for considering strategic disinvestment of Air India and its five subsidiaries. CCEA constituted an Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) to guide the process on strategic disinvestment from time to time and decide issues which, inter-alia, include treatment of unsustainable debt of Air India, hiving off of certain assets to a shell company, demerger and strategic disinvestment of three profit making subsidiaries, the quantum of disinvestment and the universe of bidders.	resources of the Government. The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), in its meeting held on 28.06.2017, had given an in-principle approval for considering strategic disinvestment of Air India and its five subsidiaries. CCEA constituted an Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) to guide the process on strategic disinvestment from time to time and decide issues which, inter-alia, include treatment of unsustainable debt of Air India, hiving off of certain assets to a shell company, demerger and strategic disinvestment of three profit making subsidiaries, the quantum of disinvestment and the universe of bidders. The Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM) for inviting Expression of Interest

	The Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM) for inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for the strategic disinvestment of Air India including its shareholding in Air India Express and AI SATS was issued on 28th March, 2018. No EoI/ bid was received till the last date of receipt of bids i.e 31/05/2018. The Government remains committed to the disinvestment of Air India. In this regard, the Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) has decided as follows: In view of volatile crude prices and adverse fluctuations in exchange rates, the present environment is not conducive to stimulate interest amongst investors for strategic disinvestment of Air India in immediate near future. The issue would be revisited once global economic indicators including	(EOI) for the strategic disinvestment of Air India including its shareholding in Air India Express and AI SATS was issued on 28th March, 2018. No EoI/ bid was received till the last date of receipt of bids i.e 31/05/2018. The Government remains committed to the disinvestment of Air India. In this regard, the Air India Specific Alternative Mechanism (AISAM) has decided as follows: "In view of volatile crude prices and adverse fluctuations in exchange rates, the present environment is not conducive to stimulate interest amongst investors for strategic disinvestment of Air India in immediate near future. The issue would be revisited once global economic indicators including oil prices and forex conditions stabilize." **The aforesaid decision was taken**

	oil prices and forex conditions stabilize.; Further, AISAM has, inter-alia, approved the contours for sale of subsidiaries of Air India and directed to expedite the sale of AIATSL. Subsequently, the Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM) for inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Disinvestment of Air India Air Transport Services Limited was issued on 12th February, 2019. (c) & (d): Government has prepared a revival plan for Air India which includes a comprehensive financial package. The Revival Plan of Air India focuses on the operational efficiencies so that	**by AISSAM in its meeting held on 18th June, 2018.** Further, AISAM has, inter-alia, approved the contours for sale of subsidiaries of Air India and directed to expedite the sale of AIATSL. Subsequently, the Preliminary Information Memorandum (PIM) for inviting Expression of Interest (EOI) for the Disinvestment of Air India Air Transport Services Limited was issued on 12th February, 2019. (c) & (d): Government has prepared a revival plan for Air India which includes a comprehensive financial package. The Revival Plan of Air India focuses on the operational efficiencies so that substantial increase in revenue or cost saving can be achieved. The Revival Plan, inter-alia, comprises several major elements including:

	substantial increase in revenue or cost saving can be achieved. The Revival Plan, inter-alia, comprises several major elements including: (i) Higher levels of operational efficiency by strengthening management and implementing best practice business processes (ii) Robust organizational and governance reforms to be implemented by an eminent Board (iii) Differentiated business strategies for each Air India's core businesses (iv) World-class HR practices to ensure a talented and motivated workforce and (v) Sale of non-core real estate assets and strategic disinvestment of subsidiaries such as Air India Air Transport Services Ltd. (AIATSL). The details of the funds infused into Air India by the	(i) Higher levels of operational efficiency by strengthening management and implementing best practice business processes (ii) Robust organizational and governance reforms to be implemented by an eminent Board (iii) Differentiated business strategies for each Air India's core businesses (iv) World-class HR practices to ensure a talented and motivated workforce and (v) Sale of non-core real estate assets and strategic disinvestment of subsidiaries such as Air India Air Transport Services Ltd. (AIATSL). The details of the funds infused into Air India by the Government and profit/loss earned by Air India during the last 5 years are as under : Year Amount Profit/(Loss)

	Government and profit/loss earned by Air India during the last 5 years are as under : Year / Amount (Rs in Crore) / Profit/(Loss) (Rs. in Crore) 2014-15 / 5780.00 / (5859.91); 2015-16 / 3300.00 / (3836.78) 2016-17 / 2465.21 / (6452.59) 2017-18 / 1800.00 / (5348.18) 2018-19 (Prov.) / 3975.00 / (7635.46) The continued support from the Govt has resulted into improvements in the financial as well as operational performance of the company. As per the last audited accounts of FY 2017-18 of Air India as per Indian Accounts Standard System (INDAS), net loss of Air India has decreased by Rs. 1104.73 crore from Rs. 6452.90 crore in 2016-17 to Rs. 5348.17 crore in 2017-18. Further, Company has	Year / Amount (Rs in Crore) / Profit/(Loss) (Rs in Crore) 2014-15 / 5780.00 / (5859.91); 2015-16 / 3300.00 / (3836.78) 2016-17 / 2465.21 / (6452.59) 2017-18 / 1800.00 / (5348.18) 2018-19 (Prov.) / 3975.00 / (7635.46) The continued support from the Govt has resulted into improvements in the financial as well as operational performance of the company. As per the last audited accounts of FY 2017-18 of Air India as per Indian Accounts Standard System (INDAS), net loss of Air India has decreased by Rs. 1104.73 crore from Rs. 6452.90 crore in 2016-17 to Rs. 5348.17 crore in 2017-18. Further, Company has earned an Operating Profit of Rs.105.00 crores in F.Y 2015-16 and Operating Profit of Rs 298.03

	earned an Operating Profit of Rs.105.00 crores in F.Y 2015-16 and Operating Profit of Rs 298.03 crores in F.Y 2016-17.	crores in F.Y 2016-17.

The inconvenience caused is regretted.

12.04 hrs

SUBMISSION BY MEMBER

Re: Farmers facing severe distress in Kerala

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI (WAYANAD): Thank you Speaker, Sir, for allowing me to speak. Farmers are suffering throughout the country. I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the terrible plight of farmers in Kerala.

It hurts me to inform this House that just yesterday Shri Enkittan, a farmer in Wayanad committed suicide due to crushing debt. In Wayanad alone, bank notices for non-payment of loans have been given to almost eight thousand farmers. They are facing the threat of immediate eviction, under SARFAESI Act, their properties are attached against their bank loans. This is resulting in A spate of farmers suicides.

In Kerala, 18 farmers have committed suicide since banks began recovery procedure one and half years ago. The Government of Kerala has announced a moratorium on repayment of farm loans for all Kerala farmers till 31st December, 2019. Meanwhile, the

Government of India is refusing to direct the RBI to consider this moratorium and get it implemented.

Meanwhile, in the last five years, the BJP Government gave Rs.4.3 lakh crore in tax concessions and waived Rs.5.5 lakh crore for rich businessmen.

Why is this shameful double standard? Why does the Government act as if our farmers are inferior to the rich? I was sad to see that no concrete step was taken in this Budget to provide relief to farmers.

I would like to request the Central Government to direct the RBI to consider the moratorium declared by the Kerala Government, and ensure that the banks don't threaten the farmers with recovery notices. The Prime Minister also made certain commitments five years ago to the farmers of this country on prices, farm loan and other issues. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, you have already made your point.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI: I am just concluding my point. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Now please conclude.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI: I am saying something. ...*(Interruptions)* I am replying. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDY (SARAN): You cannot reply. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI: I am replying by addressing the Chair. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please speak by addressing the Chair.

... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI RAHUL GANDHI: So, there is a terrible situation of farmers in this country. The Prime Minister has made commitments to these farmers. So, I would request the Government of India to fulfil these commitments. Thank you.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Shri N.K. Premachandran is permitted to associate with the issue raised by Shri Rahul Gandhi.

Hon. Defence Minister will answer this.

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI RAJNATH SINGH): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to state that as far as the condition of farmers is concerned, it is not that their plight has arisen only in the last one or two years or even four or five years. Those who governed the country for a long period are responsible for the distressing condition of farmers. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI B. MANICKAM TAGORE (VIRUDHUNAGAR): Sir, what is this? …*(Interruptions)* He is asking about loan waiver. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

… (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNATH SINGH: I would like to state that ever since the Union Government was formed under the leadership of Shri Narendra Modi, continuous efforts have been made to double the income of farmers. ... *(Interruptions)* I can say with full confidence and conviction that the extent to which the Minimum Support Price has been increased by our Hon. Prime Minister within a span of five years has never been done by any Government in the history of independent India. ... *(Interruptions)* Not only this, under the Kisan Maan-Dhan Scheme, the decision to provide a sum of Rs. 6,000 to all farmers, irrespective of the size of their landholdings, has been taken and has also been implemented. ... *(Interruptions)* Sir, on the basis of a report, I would like to state that this has resulted in an increase of 20 to 25 per cent in the income of farmers. ... *(Interruptions)* This is a Government that has worked for farmers. ... *(Interruptions)* Much more still needs to be done. ... *(Interruptions)* But a great deal has also been accomplished. ... *(Interruptions)* If the highest number of suicides by farmers occurred, they occurred earlier. ... *(Interruptions)* Hon. Speaker, during the last five years, I can state with confidence that the number of suicides has declined. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, when an Hon. Member has raised an issue, you should also listen to the reply given by the Hon. Minister. I have permitted him to speak out of turn, therefore you should listen to his reply as well. This manner of functioning is not appropriate. You should listen to the reply.

... (Interruptions)

12.07 hrs

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, the matters under Rule 377 may be laid on the Table. Only those matters which Members are able to lay on the Table within twenty minutes shall be deemed to have been laid on the Table. The remaining matters shall be treated as lapsed.

* Treated as laid on the Table.

(i) Need to establish Kendriya Vidyalayas in Jammu Parliamentary Constituency, Jammu and Kashmir

SHRI JUGAL KISHORE SHARMA (JAMMU): I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government towards my parliamentary constituency of Jammu. In the Jammu region, there are many areas where, due to the absence of Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan schools, children are compelled to travel long distances to attend school and face several hardships. In the hilly areas, children from villages are unable to attend school.

I would, therefore, like to request the Union Government to open Kendriya Vidyalayas in Poonch, Bishnah and Nowshera in my parliamentary constituency of Jammu, so that children in these areas are able to attend school.

(ii) Need to set up extension centre of Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari (Bihar) at Bettiah in West Champaran district of the state

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (WEST CHAMPARAN): It would be in public interest to open an extension education centre of the Mahatma Gandhi Central University, Motihari, at Bettiah in West Champaran district. A large number of students from West Champaran district have to go to other places to pursue higher education. Establishment of such a centre would provide quality education locally, lead to savings for students and their families, and also generate employment opportunities. On the completion of 150 years of Mahatma Gandhi's arrival in Champaran, this would also be a true tribute to him. It is well known that during his Champaran sojourn, Mahatma Gandhi spent most of his time in West Champaran district, where he worked to awaken and mobilise farmers. About 100 acres of land belonging to the State Government is available at Bettiah, and no expenditure would be required from the Union Government towards acquisition of land.

(iii) Need to include Bhojpuri language in Eighth Schedule to the Constitution

SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL (DOMARIYAGANJ): Bhojpuri, Rajasthani and Bhoti, which are spoken in various States of India, have not yet been included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, even though all these three languages have already received recognition at the international level in foreign countries. Not only this, the previous Government had also given an assurance in the Lok Sabha regarding inclusion of the Bhojpuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution, but no action has been taken in this regard so far. Bhojpuri is spoken in various parts of the country, mainly in western Bihar, eastern Uttar Pradesh and northern Jharkhand. According to estimates, nearly 20 crore people in India speak Bhojpuri. Across the world, the Bhojpuri language is spoken in countries such as Brazil, Fiji, Guyana, Mauritius, South Africa and Tobago.

I, therefore, demand that the Union Government include the Bhojpuri language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

(iv) Need to develop a monitoring mechanism to weed out alleged corrupt elements with regard to implementation of social welfare schemes

SHRI RAVI KISHAN (GORAKHPUR): Under the dynamic leadership of the respected Hon. Prime Minister Narendra Modi, various welfare schemes such as the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, the Ujjwala Scheme and the programme for provision of toilets in every household are being implemented for those standing at the last rung of society and deprived of basic amenities, so that qualitative improvement may be brought about in the lives of the poor.

As a result of these schemes, there has been substantial improvement in the lives of people living below the poverty line. They now have access to basic amenities of life. However, information is repeatedly received that a network of middlemen has allegedly developed between the general public and the Government offices responsible for implementation of these schemes, which allegedly appropriates a part of the total amount of the scheme in the name of providing facilities. This alleged system of corruption flourishing in the implementation of such ambitious schemes of the Hon. Prime Minister needs to be checked. For this purpose, it is

necessary for the Union Government and the State Governments to jointly develop an effective monitoring mechanism.

(v) Need to develop a mechanism to unearth benami property in the country

SHRI GANESH SINGH (SATNA): The Government led by Shri Narendra Modi has tightened the existing law relating to benami property. With regard to involving the general public as informants in this matter, I have a suggestion that a dedicated software application be developed through which information may be sought from the general public. Provision may be made to reward the informant while maintaining complete confidentiality. This would be beneficial because neighbours generally possess accurate information about the location and ownership of benami property, but face difficulty in making such information public. If information is collected confidentially and, on the basis of the information so gathered, official records are brought to light, benami property can be effectively exposed.

(vi) Need to undertake doubling of Madhupur-Giridih-Kodarma railway route

SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI (KODARMA): I would like to draw the attention of the House to the problems arising due to the existence of a single railway line on the Madhupur-Giridih-Kodarma rail section (137 kilometres) in my parliamentary constituency of Kodarma. This rail section connects five major districts of the State of Jharkhand. At present, the Madhupur-Giridih-Kodarma rail section is a single line, due to which the Railways are facing considerable difficulties in operating Mail/Express and Passenger trains. It has become extremely difficult to operate Mail/Express trains and Passenger services on this section as per their scheduled timings. Mail/Express trains as well as up and down Passenger trains have to be halted at one station or another, resulting in delays to all other trains. Owing to frequent delays of daily Passenger trains on this rail section, commuters have, on several occasions, expressed their resentment.

I, therefore, in public interest, request the Ministry of Railways, Union Government, to issue the necessary departmental orders for undertaking the work of doubling of the Madhupur-Giridih-Kodarma rail section on a priority basis.

(vii) Need to facilitate payment of dues to the investors of Adarsh Credit Cooperative Society

SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA BAHERIA (BHILWARA): Adarsh Credit Cooperative Society has been working in the cooperative sector for the last 20 years. It is a multi-State financial cooperative society and has branches at several places across the country, including my Lok Sabha constituency of Bhilwara. This Society had been accepting deposits from investors and was making payments up to October, 2018. However, payments have been stopped after October, 2018. The Society states that this has occurred because its accounts have been seized by the Income Tax Department. After maturity, the amounts of the investors are being credited to their savings accounts, but the investors are not able to withdraw the money from these accounts and the amounts remain deposited therein. Around 20 lakh investors across the country, including those from my Lok Sabha constituency, are affected by this situation. Investigations by the Income Tax Department, the SOG and the SFIO are underway against Adarsh Credit Cooperative Society, due to which the bank accounts of the Society have been seized and restrictions have also been imposed on the sale of

properties owned by the Society. I request that the Union Government take over the Society, restore its operations and make arrangements for payment to the investors, so that about 20 lakh investors across the country may receive their matured deposits at the earliest.

(viii) Regarding sanction and disbursement of Central share of insurance claims under PMFBY-WBCIS for Mrug Bahar year 2018 in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra

[English]

DR. SUJAY VIKHE PATIL (AHMEDNAGAR): The Government of Maharashtra had implemented Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojna, through its Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme for fruit crops to be taken in MrugBahar for the year 2018, vide its Resolution dated — 25th April 2018 for which 50% of funds are to be shared by State & 50% by Central Government.

The Maharashtra Government had released 50% funds as a share of state vide GR dated 13th June 2019 for disbursement to the eligible beneficiary farmers.

In Ahmednagar district, 30,700 loanee and Non-loanee farmers had applied and paid full premium of the scheme of SBI General Insurance Company for the fruit crops like Orange, Sweet Orange, Guava, Pomegranate, Sapota etc.

Out of which, only 15,448 beneficiary farmers received the benefit of the scheme and 15,252 farmers are still waiting, due to 50% share of amount which is receivable from the Central

Government. The poor and needy farmers of Ahmednagar District frequently ask the Insurance Company for compensation, but the company is showing reason as non-receipt of funds from the Central Government.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government, towards the sanction and disbursement of the amount of insurance claims under PMFBY-WBCIS for MrugBahar year - 2018 in Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra at the earliest.

(ix) Need to include banana crop under Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana

[Translation]

SHRI PARBHUBHAI NAGARBHAI VASAVA (BARDOLI): Banana is regarded as a universally accepted fruit. It is a nutritious fruit rich in protein and is widely consumed across India as well as abroad. India is the largest producer of bananas in the world, contributing about 23 per cent of the total global production. Gujarat is among the major banana producing States in the country, which includes my constituency of Bardoli in the Lok Sabha districts of Surat and Tapi. Banana cultivation is carried out on a large scale in this region. Bananas produced here are supplied to several States in the country and are also exported to many countries across the world. However, whenever cyclones, drought conditions or extreme heat occur, the banana crop is completely destroyed. This creates serious difficulties for both small and large farmers in sustaining their livelihood and they are compelled to face numerous hardships. In many cases, farmers are driven to the extent of contemplating suicide. I, therefore, request the Hon. Minister that the banana crop may also be included under the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

(x) Need to start flight services from Chitrakoot in Uttar Pradesh

SHRI R.K. SINGH PATEL (BANDA): Chitrakoot Dham in Uttar Pradesh is visited by lakhs of tourists every month. In the absence of air connectivity, tourists face considerable inconvenience. Construction of an airport at Chitrakoot Airport has been completed. It is requested that the aircraft operating from Delhi to Khajuraho via Varanasi may also have a halt at Chitrakoot for the benefit of tourists, so that passengers travelling to and from Delhi and other destinations may be facilitated.

I, therefore, request the Union Government to open Chitrakoot Airport at the earliest for the convenience of the general public.

(xi) Regarding implementation of Government schemes and programmes by Autonomous bodies

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY (MUMBAI NORTH): Our country is the world's largest democratic nation, where governance is of the people, by the people and for the people. Democracy is a system of governance under which the people have the right to choose their rulers according to their will. The rulers elected by the people implement various welfare schemes for the overall development of the country. However, it has often been observed that in the implementation of welfare schemes run by the Government, certain autonomous bodies unnecessarily create obstacles, which is not appropriate for a democratic country.

Autonomous institutions of the country, to which funds are allocated by the Government for the discharge of their functions, have a moral responsibility to act positively and proactively in cooperation with the Government to ensure speedy implementation of welfare schemes for national development, rather than creating impediments.

In this context, I request the Union Government to take necessary steps in public interest to ensure that such autonomous

institutions, which create hurdles or obstacles in the implementation of welfare schemes for national development or disregard the Government’s advice, do not impede the operation of welfare schemes and do not ignore the Government’s guidance.

(xii) Regarding opening of Gold Mines in Karnataka

[English]

SHRI S. MUNISWAMY (KOLAR): The Bharath Gold Mines Limited is in Kolar. The Sharath Gold Mines Limited, KGF is a PSU under the administrative control of the Ministry of Mines and is now closed. It was set up in 1972 to operate the Kolar Gold Mines and was taken over by the central government from the Government of Mysore. It was primarily engaged in gold mining from its captive mines in the Kolar Gold Fields located mainly in Karnataka but partly also in Andhra Pradesh. Towards its last years, the company also undertook mine development, shaft sinking, manufacture of mining machinery and other fabricated items for outside clients for which it set up a Mine Construction and Engineering Division. Until the time of its closure, SGML was the only world class gold mining operation in India.

Thousands of families were employed by SGML and indirect employment was also boosted. After SGML closed, these families become unemployed and in search of jobs, the young generation of are travelling far away to Bengaluru. Government has to set up a SEZ industrial hub in KGF.

I kindly request the Government to take action to reopen KGF so that economic activity in Kolar, Karnataka could be boosted.

(xiii) Need to develop and promote tourism in Uttarakhand

[Translation]

SHRI AJAY BHATT (NAINITAL-UDHAM SINGH NAGAR): Uttarakhand has immense potential in the tourism sector, as there are numerous destinations such as Jim Corbett National Park, Valley of Flowers, Rajaji National Park, Govind National Park, Askot Wildlife Sanctuary, Kedar Wildlife Sanctuary, Sona River Wildlife Sanctuary and Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary, where thousands of tourists visit every year to witness wildlife as well as to enjoy the natural beauty. At the same time, there are vast possibilities for mountaineering, paragliding, rafting and trekking. Uttarakhand is also known as Devbhoomi. Several renowned temples and Shakti Peethas of the Mother Goddess are located here, such as Badrinath, Kedarnath, Joshimath, Mansa Devi Temple Haridwar, Yamunotri, Gangotri and Dhari Devi Temple, which are visited by devotees in large numbers every year. There is a need to develop these places by providing adequate facilities and to bring them to the attention of the world. In the present times, tourism has emerged as a major industry. There is an urgent need for development as well as promotion of both religious and natural tourist destinations in Uttarakhand. If proper publicity is undertaken and basic infrastructure is developed at these

tourist centres, it will not only generate employment opportunities for the youth of Uttarakhand, but will also bring about improvement in their standard of living and, to a large extent, help address the problem of migration, which is one of the most serious challenges facing Uttarakhand today. I request the Union Government to give due attention to the development of tourism in Uttarakhand, keeping in view its geographical characteristics, and to kindly allocate adequate funds for the promotion and development of tourism in the State.

(xiv) Need to establish Zonal office of Railways in Ranchi, Jharkhand

SHRI SANJAY SETH (RANCHI): I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government towards my State of Jharkhand and request that, on the lines of the South Coast Railway, a Railway Zonal Office be opened at Ranchi at the earliest. Jharkhand contributes more than Rs. 20,000 crore to the Railways by way of freight revenue alone, but the people of the State do not receive commensurate benefits. For this reason, it is imperative that the capital of Jharkhand, Ranchi, should have a Railway Zonal Headquarters. This can be achieved either by shifting the Zonal Office of the South Eastern Railway from Kolkata to Ranchi, or by creating a new Railway Zone headquartered at Ranchi by bringing the Dhanbad Railway Division, which presently falls under the East Central Railway, under Ranchi. If a Zonal Office is not established here at the earliest, the people of Jharkhand will not be able to derive adequate benefit from the State's abundant mineral resources and the State will continue to be remotely controlled from Bihar or West Bengal. Jharkhand was carved out of Bihar with the objective of ensuring its all-round development. The time has now come to

develop Railway infrastructure in Jharkhand independently of Bihar and West Bengal and to create employment opportunities in the State. It is pertinent to mention that Railway Zonal Offices have been opened in the neighbouring States of Chhattisgarh and Odisha, which has led to significant improvement in infrastructure in those States.

I, therefore, request the Hon. Minister of Railways to open a separate Railway Zonal Office at Ranchi in Jharkhand at the earliest, on the lines of the South Coast Railway established in Odisha.

(xv) Need to expedite the development of a Dry Port at Niphad in Dindori Parliamentary Constituency, Maharashtra

DR. BHARATI PRAVIN PAWAR (DINDORI): An announcement was made for setting up a dry port at Niphad in my parliamentary constituency of Dindori at a cost of Rs. 500 crore over an area of 250 acres. This is a rail based port to be implemented by the Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust. Establishment of this port will promote exports of grapes, pomegranates and onions, which are produced in large quantities in Nashik, thereby helping to double farmers' income and make them more prosperous. The Maharashtra GST authorities have also accorded approval for this project, and for this purpose, land of a defunct cooperative sugar mill at Niphad has been acquired. Setting up of this dry port will encourage fruit production in the region.

I request that the remaining works relating to the establishment of the dry port at Niphad in my parliamentary constituency of Dindori be completed at the earliest in the interest of farmers of the area.

(xvi) Regarding problems posed by erosion

[English]

SHRI ABDUL KHALEQUE (BARPETA): I urge Union Government to declare erosion as national problem and calamity as lots of people are being rendered homeless, jobless and shelter less every year because of it. I also request the Government to sanction Flood and River Management Scheme of River Manas and Beki which were sent to the Central Water Commission several times.

(xvii) Regarding widening of NH 66

SHRI T. N. PRATHAPAN (THRISSUR): I wish to highlight the concerns about the decisions on land acquisition and alignment of road by NHAI for widening of NH 66.

(xviii) Regarding improving railway services in Mavelikkara Parliamentary Constituency, Kerala

SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH (MAVELIKKARA): The longstanding demands of the people of my Constituency to avail increased facilities with regard to rail infrastructure and improved access to train services must be considered by the government on priority. Daily service, of Ernakulam-Velamkanni Express (Train No. 6016), provisioning of new coaches and rakes for Kanyakumari express train is required. Stoppage is required for Kollam Egmore express at Avaneeshwaram, and Kanyakumari passenger train stoppage at Kuri (Madurai division). Rail Over Bridges are required at Mynagappalli, Nalukodi, Thakazhi, Kallumala, Avaneeshawaram. Level crossing is required at Kariyara and village office Junction at Mylam.

(xix) Regarding implementation of Chennai -Bengaluru Industrial Corridor

SHRI S. JAGATHRAKSHAKAN (ARAKKONAM): Agriculture is the backbone of the economy while industries are its energy. The rapid development of capital goods industries promotes the growth of agriculture, transport and communication. It also eliminates our dependence on other countries for the supply of essential goods. Therefore the industrial sector is one of the main sectors that contributes to the Indian GDP. The Government of India initiated action to establish the Chennai- Bengaluru Industrial Corridor project. The corridor accounts for 6 per cent of India's Gross Domestic Product. The goal set for the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor is 12-15 per cent corridor growth in the next 20 years and 25 per cent contribution to the GDP. The long-term vision of the Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC) is to develop itself as a globally competitive manufacturing hub that promotes sustainable development by creating at least 22 million additional jobs in the next 20 years. The project will drive the growth of both large industries and SMEs within the corridor and boost exports from the region by focussing on sectors like leather industries, electronics, automobile, textiles and food processing, according to the Integrated

Master Plan for CBIC. This project will benefit Arakkonam, Arcot, Ranipet, Katpadi, Thirutani and Sholingar assembly constituencies which falls under the above Industrial corridor of Arakkonam Parliamentary Constituency which I represent.

I, therefore, request the Hon. Minister of Commerce and Industry to implement the project immediately without any further delay.

(xx) Regarding construction of protection wall in Kakinada Parliamentary Constituency, Andhra Pradesh

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH (KAKINADA): Andhra Pradesh is having a lengthy costal line which is a blessing to my state for development.

But the villages and people living adjacent to costal line are facing severe problems due to high tides and cyclones.

Konapapapeta village in my constituency is also facing problems. Nearly 4000 people are living in this village out of which 90% belong to fisherman community. For the last many years, Konapapapeta village, seriously affected by sea erosion, many fishermen have been rendered homeless as a part of the village merged into sea. A stretch of 4.50 Km is affected by sea erosion in this village. It is, therefore, requested that sea protection wall (GeoTube Wall) may be erected to safeguard the coast line of the village. Rectification of existing Geo Tube Wall is required in Uppada Village.

In 2011, 1463 meter Geo Tube Wall was completed at Uppada village. After construction of wall three major cyclones, and other

cyclones occurred during the last 8 years. However, the protection wall functioned well and protected Uppada village from sea erosen.

Now it has been damaged severely due to lack of proper maintenance. So it is necessary to protect Ubbampeta, Surada Peta, Mayapatnam in Aminabad and Tammayyapeta in Amaravilli Village. Rectification of Geo Tube Wall is urgent.

(xxi) Regarding gas leakages in East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh

SHRI MARGANI BHARAT (RAJAHMUNDRY): In a span of one week, three or four gas leakages occurred in ONGC pipeline at Malkipuram. Due to these leakages, local residents feared for their lives. It is not the first time such incident of gas leakage has happened. It is a common occurrence in East Godavari district. The local residents are demanding that gas leakage should be stopped immediately. In the past also at Sakhinetipalli, ONGC gas pipe leaked. Again at Gollapalem, ONGC gas pipeline leaked. There is a perception among the people of these villages that the concerned authorities do not bother about such gas pipeline leakages until a mishap occurs.

Therefore, I urge upon the Government to set up an emergency cell in that part of the region so that residents of those places could live without any fear.

(xxii) Need to construct a road between Tembhurni and Latur in Maharashtra

[Translation]

SHRI OM PAWAN RAJENIMBALKAR (OSMANABAD): There are several pilgrimage centres in my parliamentary constituency, which are visited by a large number of devotees from within the country and abroad. However, due to the absence of good roads, they face considerable inconvenience. For their convenience, it is necessary to connect these pilgrimage centres with good quality roads.

National Highway No. 48 starts from Koregaon in Satara district and extends up to the Hyderabad border. Tembhurni is the main gateway to Marathwada. On this highway, there is a need to construct a 164 kilometre road from Tembhurni to Latur. An allocation of Rs. 927.69 crore is required for construction of this highway. Once this road is constructed, it will greatly facilitate movement, promote agriculture, industry and trade, and ease traffic. This road is extremely important for travel to Marathwada and, therefore, its construction is essential.

I hope that the Union Government will take an appropriate decision in this regard, keeping in view the sentiments of the general

public, so that tourists, traders and the local population travelling to and from this region may benefit.

(xxiii) Need to start services of superfast trains from Sitamarhi in Bihar

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR PINTU (SITAMARHI): In view of the heavy rush of rail passengers travelling from Sitamarhi Railway Station, located in the border area of Bihar adjoining Nepal, a long-standing demand has been raised for running Superfast trains from Sitamarhi. This demand can also be met by extending Superfast trains presently operating from Muzaffarpur, Darbhanga and Raxaul up to Sitamarhi. Sitamarhi, being a historically significant and sacred place, is also a major centre of tourism, with tourists from within the country and abroad visiting the area regularly. Therefore, there is an urgent need to operate Superfast trains from Sitamarhi.

(xxiv) Regarding problems being faced by professionals in Kuwait

[English]

SHRI P.K. KUNHALIKUTTY (MALAPPURAM): I would like to invite the attention of the Government towards a very alarming situation where thousands of Indian Engineers, including IlTians, are on the verge of possible job loss in Kuwait. It is given to understand that Kuwait has decided to recognise degrees only if lndia's National Board of Accreditation (NBA) has approved the courses. The decision by Kuwait authorities has brought degrees by prestigious Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) under the invalidation scanner. For India, engineers were to be issued no objection certificates only if the course had been accredited by the NBA. It is quite alarming that degrees awarded by prestigious institutions like IITs are not recognised unless there is accreditation by NBA.

Recently a similar issue had cropped up in UAE where thousands of Teachers were on verge of losing their jobs on the basis of their degrees as private students and not as regular students.

I would urge upon the Ministries of HRD and MEA to immediately intervene in the matter and take up the issue with the

Kuwait authorities in the larger interest of the professionals working in Kuwait.

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[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL) Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to request you that Item No. 13, which relates to the Discussion and Voting on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways for 2019-20, is listed at Serial No. 13. ... *(Interruptions)* One of our legislative items, namely, the Central Universities (Amendment) Bill, is also listed. I would request that Item No. 13 be taken up first instead of Item No. 11, as many Hon. Members wish to speak on the Railways. ... *(Interruptions)* That would be more appropriate. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Very well, Hon. Member.

12.09 hrs

MOTION RE: SUSPENSION OF RULE 331G

HON. SPEAKER: Item No. - 12

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Sir, I beg to move the following :-

> "That the Rule 331G of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in its application to the discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants for 2019-2020 be suspended.".

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: The question is :-

> "That the Rule 331G of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in its application to the discussion and voting on the Demands for Grants for 2019-2020 be suspended.".

The motion was adopted.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, Rule 331 (G) of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha has been suspended. The Demands for Grants may be passed without being referred to the Departmentally Related Standing Committees. However, after the constitution of the Standing Committees, the Demands for Grants shall be deemed to have been referred to them, so that the Committees may commence examination and present their reports, enabling the recommendations made by the Committees to be utilised in the preparation of the Demands for Grants for the next year.

... (Interruptions)

12.11 hrs

At this stage Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury and some other hon. Members left the House.

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

... (Interruptions)[*]

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[*] Not recorded.

12.12 hrs

UNION BUDGET, 2019-2020

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS

Ministry of Railways

HON. SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

... (Interruptions)[*]

HON. SPEAKER: Item No. 13, discussion on the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Railways. Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Adhir Ranjan ji, one minute please.

The House will now take up for discussion and voting Demand for Grant No. 82 relating to the Ministry of Railways. Hon. Members present in the House who have given notices of Cut Motions in respect of the Demands for Grants relating to the Ministry of Railways, and who wish to move their Cut Motions, may

[*] Not recorded.

send slips to the Table within fifteen minutes, indicating the numbers of the Cut Motions which they wish to move.

A list indicating the serial numbers of the Cut Motions so presented will be displayed on the Notice Board shortly thereafter. If any Member finds any discrepancy in that list, the same may be brought immediately to the notice of the officer present at the Table.

The motion was:-

"That the amounts exceeding the amounts authorised in column 4 of the Demands for Grants, relating to Revenue Account and Capital Account, in respect of Demand No. 82 relating to the Ministry of Railways, as shown in column 2 of the List of Demands for Grants, be granted to the President out of the Consolidated Fund of India to meet the expenditure during the year ending the 31st March, 2020."

Demand for Grant for 2019-2020 in respect of the Ministry of Railways submittedto the vote of Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grant on Account voted by the House on 31st March, 2020		Amount of Demand for Grant submitted to the vote of the House	
1	2	3		4	
		Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.	Revenue Rs.	Capital Rs.
82	Ministry of Railways	92040,83,00,000	76200,77,00,000	180194,57,00,000	151193,47,00,000

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: Only the remarks of Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury will go on record.

... (Interruptions) *

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, please. Do not speak while seated.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: I have permitted Shri Adhir Ranjan Chowdhury to speak. I have not permitted you. Please take your seat. Hon. Member, please take your seat.

* Not recorded.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY (BAHARAMPUR): Sir, I rise to dwell on the Demands for Grants for 2019-20 under the control of the Ministry of Railways.

Sir, Indian Railways is an institution of great pride for all of us. For the last three years, the Railway Budget and the General Budget have been presented in a combined manner. At times, I feel that - *[English]* the scene and glamour which was visible in the railway budget has been lost because insofar as railways is concerned, we used to get a little nostalgic.

[Translation]

Our association with the Railways is not of recent origin. It dates back not only to Independence but even earlier, to the year 1832. *[English]* Sir, Indian Railways has multi-gauge, multi-traction system covering 67,368 km of route lane as on March, 2017. Out of 67,368 km, 22,021 km has double and multiple tracks, 25,367 km route lane is electrified i.e. 38 per cent. India’s track density at 45.74 per sq.km is comparable to the track density in the United States but much lower than that of Germany, Russia, China and Canada.

Railways runs about 13,300 passenger trains and 9,200 freight trains covering around 7,200 stations daily. These trains carry 23 million passengers and around 3 million tonnes of freight every day. Each kilometre of track caters to 19,133 people in India. In this context, I would like to submit the following.

[Translation]

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member, Adhir Ranjan ji, please take your seat for a minute.

Hon. Members, I will now call Members by name. While an Hon. Member is speaking, Hon. senior Members are crossing in front of him. Once a ruling has been given in this regard, all Hon. Members should comply with it. If any Hon. Member now crosses in front of the Member who is speaking, I will call out his name in the House.

Hon. Adhir Ranjan ji, you may now speak.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, I was saying that if all the people who travel by trains in our country in a year are added together, that number would be almost more than the total population of the world. What I mean to say is that every year, more

passengers than the entire population of the world travel on our Railways. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON SPEAKER: Hon. Member, Abdul ji, the House is in session. You may speak for one second while standing, but you are continuously speaking while standing. Nishikant Dubey ji, you are a senior Member. Please do not come into the aisle and speak. All Hon. Members are equal for me.

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, that is absolutely correct.

HON. SPEAKER: Even if any Hon. senior Minister does so, I will respectfully request him as well.

[English]

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: Sir, there is no denying the fact that Indian Railways still has been suffering from capacity constraints which was also often alluded to by our hon. Railways Minister inside the House. We would not disagree with it that the traffic flow on the rail network is highly uneven and imbalanced. For example, passenger trains utilise 65 per cent of the network capacity but contribute to less than 30 per cent of the revenue. The Golden Quadrilateral and Diagonals connecting the four major metros

together constitute 16 per cent of the network but account for around 50 per cent of the freight and passenger traffic.

Line capacity is severely constrained due to introduction of more trains over the year. Since Independence, while railways' Route Kilometres have increased by 23 per cent, freight loading has increased by 1,344 per cent and passenger travel in terms of kilometres has increased by 1,642 per cent. Capacity constraints and oversaturation in the network also affect railway's ability to meet customer expectation. For example, speeds of freight trains have continued to remain between 25 to 30 kmph over the last three decades. Indian Railways also does not operate heavy haul freight trains on the network as the network is common to both freight and passenger trains.

Indian trains carry a maximum gross load of 5400 tonnes as compared to 20,000 to 37,000 tonnes carried by trains in China, South Africa, Brazil and Australia.

[Translation]

Sir, our railway network ranks fourth in the world. Owing to capacity constraints, the idea of the Dedicated Freight Corridors was conceived during the UPA period. Because of these capacity

constraints, efforts were initiated in the first phase to electrify all broad gauge routes.

Sir, what we have done must be stated, but we do not like showing dreams in the course of speeches, nor do we want the Government to keep showing dreams to the common citizens of India at every turn. The approach of this Government has changed. The Government is saying that to save the Railways, there should be a PPP model and that privatisation should be undertaken. You seek to save the Railways by placing before the House the issues of privatisation and corporatisation. Our Hon. Minister of Railways is generous at heart. He says that we will spend Rs. 50 lakh crore. That is good, and if such resources actually materialise, that would indeed be a different matter. But considering the present condition of the Railways, when it is said that Rs. 50 lakh crore will be mobilised, it appears to me like a situation where there is no mat to sleep on at night, yet there is a demand for a tent. That is how your statements seem to me. I repose my trust that you will certainly succeed in this endeavour, but one must cut one's coat according to one's cloth.

Shri Goyal ji, before you, Shri Prabhu ji was the Minister of Railways. Prior to Shri Prabhu ji, Shri Sadananda Gowda ji held that responsibility, and after Shri Sadananda Gowda ji, Shri Suresh

Prabhu ji took over. When Shri Suresh Prabhu ji presented the Budget, he indicated an expenditure of around Rs. 65,000 crore. Subsequently, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji stated that an expenditure of Rs. 8.5 lakh crore would be incurred. Now Shri Suresh Prabhu ji is no longer here; you are here. Both of you are from Mumbai. I would like you to tell the House what outcome emerged from the promise made by Shri Suresh Prabhu ji to spend Rs. 8.5 lakh crore and the expenditure that was actually incurred. Along with that, you have now added another Rs. 50 lakh crore. One feels as if money is raining upon you from the heavens. From where will you bring such a huge amount? There is no provision for this in the present Budget. Are you confident that by selling everything, by monetising all assets, you will generate the required funds and then carry out these works?

Sir, your approach is clear: sell everything, privatise, proceed with privatisation and corporatisation. You may say that our Government had also contemplated this. Yes, we had certainly deliberated on these issues. You would be aware that our Government had constituted committees, the Pitroda Committee, the Kelkar Committee, and committees on railway safety, security and network expansion, and we had attempted to design programmes on

that basis. You are now proceeding by borrowing from those very ideas. We had committed to an expenditure of Rs. 1 lakh crore, that is, Rs. 20,000 crore per year. You have not even been able to spend that amount. Your financial position is entirely constrained. You now say that you will privatise the Railways. In the year 2014, our revered Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi himself, while standing in Varanasi, categorically stated that whatever else may happen, the Railways would never be privatised. This is not my statement; it is the promise made by the Hon. Prime Minister, and it was made at the holy city of Varanasi. At the very least, you should honour that promise. Otherwise, even your own position may become uncertain, because the Railways has turned into something like a musical chair, where one never knows who will remain and who will not.

Sir, I would like to raise two or three more issues. If we are to assess the efficiency of the Railways, we will also have to identify appropriate parameters to measure that efficiency.

One key parameter is the operating ratio. I would like to ask whether the operating ratio at its present level is sustainable and whether it is remunerative. Your Budget itself clearly shows that the operating ratio is not sustainable. During your tenure, in the year 2017-18, the operating ratio rose to 98.4 per cent. This means that in

order to earn Rs. 100, you had to spend Rs. 98.40. Goyal ji, you are a Chartered Accountant yourself. You may kindly tell the House. Thereafter, for the year 2018-19, it was revised to 96.2 per cent. This means that while the actuals for 2017-18 were 98.4 per cent, the Budget Estimate had been 92.8 per cent. You were not able to achieve that target. In the Revised Estimate, it went up to 96.2 per cent. I am placing before the House figures provided by you. You are now stating that you will again bring it down to 92 per cent. What is the basis for such confidence? Where should we repose our trust? Whenever you have fixed targets, you have not been able to fulfil them.

If we look at total internal revenue, for the year 2018-19 you had given a Budget Estimate of Rs. 2,01,090 crore, whereas in the Revised Estimate it came down to Rs. 1,97,214 crore. This clearly indicates a shortfall there as well. If we look at the net surplus on the expenditure side, where the Budget figure was Rs. 12,999 crore, it came down to Rs. 6,014 crore in the Revised Estimate, which amounts to a negative variation of 54 per cent. This is the kind of situation in which you have placed the Railways, yet you do not refrain from showing dreams. Very well, continue to show dreams. We want those dreams to be translated into ground reality.

I am raising two or three issues relating to the failure of the Railways. Everyone knows that the Railways require funds. *[English]* Over the years, Railways has been in need of massive funds for developing its core operational sector. “Highest-ever funding of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore for Railways - MoU signed with LIC. A big step forward to make Indian economy more robust: Suresh Prabhu, announced the Government on March 11, 2015.” *[Translation]* Goyal ji, you had signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Life Insurance Corporation of India. *[English]* The next information we found was on October 27, 2015, wherein the Railway Minister acknowledged receiving one instalment from LIC of Rs. 2,000 crore. No further information is available on any further instalments released by LIC till March 2018. I do not know whether any information is available with you.

As per, another Press Release from the Railway Ministry, “The Ministry of Finance has approved Government guarantee of Rs. 5,000 crore in the current financial year for Indian Railway Finance Corporation bonds to be subscribed by LIC”. Even if we consider that this amount has been released to IRFC, still the net assistance till February 2019 is only Rs. 7,000 crore. Where is the rest of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore promised in the March 2015 headline?

You speak of foreign collaboration. That aspect also needs to be examined. *[English]* Several foreign MoUs have been signed, but we are yet to see any impact on Railways, except one rake of Telgo coaches being test run in some sectors. During Modi-ji's visit to France in April 2015, a protocol was signed to seek cooperation for semi-high-speed rail and station renovation. There has been no further news on this. Again, during Modi ji's trip to China in May 2015, an MoU was signed for specific cooperative initiatives within the financial year 2015-16. There was no action. The latest one is a Memorandum of Cooperation, signed with Russia in October, 2018. Other than development of Multi-Modal Terminals, higher education for Railways' employees was also mentioned in the MoC. The Government release said that this MoC was to carry forward the activities taken up under MoU signed between the two countries in December, 2015.

From Memorandum of Understanding to Memorandum of Cooperation, the Modi Government took almost three years. there is no news of any execution on this. *[Translation]* This Government has become a Government of MoUs and keeps showing dreams to the common people, asking them to give votes and a majority with the promise that all their aspirations will be fulfilled. Why are you

proceeding towards privatisation and corporatisation of seven production units? These include the Rae Bareli Modern Coach Factory and the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works. All these seven production units are profit-earning units. Why are you moving so rapidly towards corporatisation of units that are already generating profits? From the very day the Railway Budget was combined with the General Budget, the path towards privatisation began. After corporatisation, you will proceed towards privatisation. At present, you make reassuring statements, saying that no one's job will be lost and that there is nothing to worry about because this is the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi. But who will trust you? Is there any guarantee or any credible mechanism? There is widespread anxiety among the common people and unrest among the workers. You may say that such decisions were taken earlier as well and that it was the strategic viewpoint of the previous Government. But today, you are openly and indiscriminately attempting to sell public assets. That is where the difference lies. We had a strategic perspective, whereas you have none. Your only perspective is to sell. The Hon. Minister for Civil Aviation had stated that Air India would be sold. .... *Where will we go? ...*(Interruptions)* You make pleasing

* Not recorded.

statements. You say that the seven production units will be converted into Indian Railway Rolling Stock. It sounds attractive, but whom should we trust? In 2014, the Hon. Prime Minister went to Varanasi and declared that the Railways would never be privatised. Yet, in the Budget, you indicate Public Private Partnership, disinvestment and corporatisation. In such circumstances, on what basis do you expect people to repose trust in you? You may kindly tell the House. *[English]* The profitability of Railways decreased by 7.8 per cent. Indian Railways reported the worst ever operating ratio of 98.4 per cent in 2017-18. I have already mentioned it. In reply to an RTI query in 2018, the Ministry of Railways said that while 3,591 trains were cancelled during 2014-15, the number was up six times during during 2017-18, that is, 21,053. These figures support what Minister of State for Railways Shri Rajen Gohain told Parliament that while Railways carried 8.317 billion passengers in 2013-14, the number came down to 8.116 billion in 2016-17. Also, some 30 trains were running late in 2017-18.

Track renewal is the most vital part of railway safety. In reply to an RTI query in February 2019, it was said that only in 2017-18 did the Railways cross the track renewal figure that the UPA-II had achieved in its first year of 2009-10. Indian Railways have a network

of more than 1.17 lakh kilometres; some of it is aged and some over-burdened. Only 4,000 kilometres of track, that is 3.5 per cent of the total rail lines has been renewed.

As for electrification, the first three years of the Modi Government were wasted. In 2017-18, only 4,087 kilometres of railway tracks were electrified. These are the achievements of the Government during the tenure that is called Modi-I and Modi-II. Now, they have forgotten to call themselves the NDA. Now everything is to be named after Modi *ji*, like Modi-I, Modi-II, and lastly, Modi-0.

[Translation]

I would like to place before Goyal ji two or three comparative statements. Goyal ji is well aware of these facts, but he may choose not to speak about them. Let me now come to the issue of track renewal. During UPA-II, between 2009 and 2014, we carried out track renewal at the rate of 3,357 kilometres per year. Between 2014 and 2018, you have carried out track renewal at the rate of 3,027 kilometres per year. You have not even been able to match our performance. *[English]* As of April, 2013, 35.98 per cent, that is 23,541 km. out of 65,436 km. of track was electrified. As of

December, 2018, 44.85 per cent, that is 30,212 km. of track was electrified.

[Translation]

You have now decided that complete electrification will be achieved by the year 2020. That is a good objective and you may go ahead and achieve it. However, when you and your Members repeatedly claim that nothing happened during fifty years of Congress rule and that everything has been achieved in your five years, I wish to submit that had we not undertaken electrification, had we not laid tracks, how would you be travelling by trains today? How would you now be dreaming of a bullet train? How would you be speaking of complete electrification? To indulge in self-praise and aggressive publicity over such matters amounts to beating one's own drum, and it appears rather strange.

I have said this earlier as well. There has been a steady increase of 3,591 cancelled trains and berth cancellations. Now I come to the manifesto. *[English]* Railways have performed poorly under the BJP Government. you had said that the freight corridors and the attendant industrial corridors will be expedited. *[Translation]* You had stated in your manifesto that the Dedicated Freight Corridors and the attendant industrial corridors would be expedited. *[English]* The

Railways, under BJP, have failed several times to meet the deadline of constructing 334 km. of dedicated freight corridor along trunk routes and have set April, 2020 as the new target. The Scheme was originally started by the INC. *[Translation]* Do you know what INC stands for? It stands for the Indian National Congress. The BJP has rebranded it and is selling it as its own brainchild. This is precisely your feat. Whatever we have done, you claim as your own, even though all these initiatives were built up by us. The other day, someone said that the Congress had done nothing. The person who said this was Shri Jayant Sinha, the son of Shri Yashwant Sinha. I would like to ask him to tell the House this: if the Congress had not existed, how would he have gone to America to get educated? He may kindly explain this to the House.

[English]

Under the Diamond Quadrilateral Project of high-speed train network, it is called Bullet Train, proposed high-speed projects between Delhi-Chandigarh, Delhi-Bhopal, Delhi-Kolkata, and Delhi-Mumbai are yet to take off.

The Vande Bharat Express has the capacity to run at 160 km. per hour but is running at the maximum speed of 110 -130 km. per hour. Due to absence of high-speed track, the upgradation project

has been stuck despite completion of all survey and project reports. *[Translation]* You yourself are well aware of this.

You had promised that an Agriculture Railway Network would be created. It was election time, so the promise was made. But what will you do now? At present, you seem to be caught in a difficult situation. *[English]* Among the top 21 commodities moved by rail and road, fruits and vegetables have the lowest share of transportation via railways; 1.9 percent of perishable fruits and vegetables are transported through rail and 97.4 percent by road. *[Translation]* 97.4 per cent of freight today is being transported by road. This clearly shows how the modal share between road and rail is steadily declining. A fall in the Railways' modal share indicates a failure on the efficiency front. This share should have increased. We may accept that we could not achieve everything, but even then, during our time, the Railways' share was around 89 per cent. Yes, we do want the share of road transport to increase and the share of Railways to reduce to some extent, but there must be a reasonable balance. Why are people shifting to road transport? Your share is continuously declining.

Is this not a failure on your part? You may kindly tell the House. We raise these issues about the Railways because we all come from

villages. *[English]* The Railways are capable of covering longer distance in short duration, thereby expanding the market reach of farmers. You speak about farmers; we also speak about farmers. This will enable farmers to transfer surplus to areas where the demand is higher, thereby rationalising prices and ensuring that farmers do not make losses despite high yields. The BJP has made no progress in this area in their five years of power, but that is in consonance with their over all policy to do nothing for farmers. *[Translation]* You speak of doubling farmers' income, but from where will this doubling come? If we do not provide adequate facilities in the Railways, how will farmers' income be doubled? Will a farmer carry paddy, goods, fruits and vegetables in a Volvo vehicle? That is why trains are essential, but you are not addressing this requirement. At present, you are talking about Tejas trains, where the fare for travel is higher than even airfare, and these too are being moved towards privatisation. In your Budget Speech for the year 2017-18, *[English]* you had said that a new Metro Rail Act will be enacted by rationalising the existing Act. In 2017-18, in your Budget Speech, it was promised that a new Metro Rail Act will be enacted by rationalising the existing laws. The status is that it was not delivered.

In 2017-18 Budget Speech, it was said that by 2019, all coaches of the Indian Railways will be fitted with bio-toilets. Have you done that? The National Green Tribunal changed the deadline for installation of bio-toilets in all trains to December 31, 2019 and asked the Union Railway Ministry to do the job on war-footing. Only 1.8 lakh toilets were installed, out of over 2.2 lakh planned toilets.

It was promised that 500 stations will be made differently-abled friendly by providing lifts and escalators. Only 199 stations had escalators and 179 stations had lifts as on January, 2019. You assured that in the next five years, your priority will be to significantly improve capacity on the existing high density. In 2018-19, the punctuality rate reduced to 68.91 as against 70.55 per cent in 2017-18 and 76.67 per cent in 2016-17 according to Railways' data. *[Translation]* This means that punctuality is lacking. Trains are being cancelled, speeds have come down, and yet you keep saying that this should be sold and that should be sold. You had promised that the average speed of the network would be increased. *[English]* You promised that network average speed will increase. Trains will become more punctual. even though Rs.100 crore Vande Bharat Train has a capacity to run at 160 kilometres per hour, it is running

at a maximum speed of 110-130 kilometres per hour between Delhi and Varanasi in the absence of semi-high speed track. *[Translation]* What is happening now? More than 23,000 cattle have been crushed to death under trains. Cows and the Ganga are increasingly becoming a serious indictment of your governance. Trains in India have crushed over 23,000 cattle because there is no adequate protection, no fencing along railway tracks. ... *(Interruptions)* Sir, this is official Railway data. Shri Rajnath Singh, this data comes from the Railways themselves. Do you know that on the very day an inauguration was scheduled, that programme had to be cancelled because a cow came in front of a train and was run over? Am I saying anything incorrect? ... *(Interruptions)* Have I stolen this data from Railway offices? This clearly reflects the priority you accord to the Railways. The clearest evidence of how much importance you give to the Railways is found in Volume II of the Economic Survey. Out of 278 pages, only two pages have been allocated to the Railways. You may verify this yourself. Just two pages. There is no vision, no mission.

You speak of stopping the use of plastic, installing lifts and so on. From this itself it becomes evident how much importance you attach to the Railways. This Government makes tall claims, but the

ground reality is quite different. That is why I wish to draw the attention of the Government to these issues. Your Budget, which reflects the microeconomic picture, reveals everything. Look at the DRF. The Depreciation Reserve Fund is a crucial component for railway safety. You have reduced allocations to the Depreciation Reserve Fund. Am I wrong in saying this? Goyal ji, you may yourself reflect on it. You had constituted the Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh for railway safety. *[English]* With Railways struggling to meet the expenditure and declining internal revenues, it is unclear how the Railways will continue to fund the Railways *Sanrakshan Kosh*. *[Translation]* The fundamental problem of the Railways is that it does not generate adequate internal resources. It relies heavily on borrowings and extra-budgetary resources. Unless you are able to increase your own earnings, it will be difficult to put the Railways on a sound footing. You used to make tall promises, but if there is no money in the pocket, one has to go to moneylenders or depend on borrowings. Borrowings carry interest, which further burdens the system. Since you are unable to allocate sufficient funds to the Rail Safety Fund, why are allocations to the Depreciation Reserve Fund, which is extremely important for safety and security, being reduced? The growth rate in the Railways' earnings from its

core business of running freight and passenger trains has been declining. This is clearly borne out by the Budget that has been presented. *[English]* This is due to general decline in the growth of both freight and passenger traffic.

[Translation]

Sir, kindly give me two minutes. If you so direct, I will immediately take my seat. *[English]* However, in 2017-18, there was an increase in the growth of both freight and passenger traffic. *[Translation]* The point is that whenever you do good work, we acknowledge and appreciate it. We are not narrow-minded. When you perform well, we will certainly commend you. But when you fail, we are bound to speak out. ...*(Interruptions) [English]* Indian Railways does not have an institutional arrangement to attract aggregate traffic of smaller parcel size. Therefore, it has been losing out on high potential market such as FMCG, hazardous materials, automobiles and containerised cargo. Most of this traffic is transported by roads. *[Translation]* This means that small consignments, FMCG, what are referred to as consumer goods… ... *(Interruptions)*

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS AND THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI PIYUSH GOYAL): Sir,

let me inform him what FMCG means. FMCG stands for Fast Moving Consumer Goods. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: I said the same thing. I was referring to consumer goods only. The freight basket is also limited to a few commodities. I am giving you these suggestions because we also want you to do good work, to do what is beneficial for the Indian Railways. I am referring to FMCG because this is where the share is shifting. If you dream of a bullet train, why do you not dream of freight trains? We had dreamt of that, which is why we attempted to realise the vision of the Dedicated Freight Corridor. Is that wrong? You may tell the House. You have not been able to carry out this work. *[English]* The freight basket is also limited to a few commodities, most of which are bulk in nature. for example, coal contributes about 44 percent of freight revenue, 25 percent of the total internal revenue. Therefore, any shifting transport pattern of any of these bulk commodities could affect Railways' finances significantly. *[Translation]* I would like to caution you. This is a challenge before the Railways and you should not forget it. The Railways is our social commitment and it is also through the Railways that we render social service. It is not merely a

commercial undertaking. Yes, it is certainly a commercial undertaking, but at the same time, it also carries a social obligation.

[English]

That is why, it is said that:

> "The Committee on Restructuring Railways, 2015 had noted that the methods of calculating the cost of running passenger business are not scientific and accurate. Therefore, it is difficult to compute the accuracy levels of under-recoveries."

The NTDPC Report, 2014, had noted that in India, the average freight revenue per NTKM is one of the highest in the world, second only to Germany. In comparison, the average realisation per PKM is one of the lowest in the world.

Railways should bear social obligations when it works as a commercial department under the government. *[Translation]* The NITI Aayog wants that everything should be left to the general public. If there is a need to increase fares for travel, then it should be left to the people. But we have certain social obligations, and we must safeguard these social obligations. I would certainly like to state this.

Along with this, Goyal ji, you are not allocating funds to Bengal. You should also provide some funds to Bengal. Bengal is also a part of this country. If the BJP wants to demonstrate something in Bengal, then before that, please make arrangements to take the Railways there. Once trains start running there, you too will be able to travel there by train from Delhi. At present, you are not providing funds to Bengal. In my district of Murshidabad, there is a Kasim Bazar station. Because of an engineering fault there, the kind of hardship people are forced to undergo is something I cannot even describe before the House. Therefore, I would like to say this to you: from our side, there will be no lack of cooperation for the progress of Indian Railways. But your intent and your policy must be clear. If you put your policy and intent in order, there will be no shortage of cooperation from our side, because Indian Railways belongs to you, to me and to all of us. Thank you. ... *(Interruptions)*

TEXT OF CUT MOTIONS

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH): I beg to move

(TOKEN)

THAT THE DEMAND UNDER THE HEAD MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (PAGE 277) BE REDUCED BY RS. 100. 82

1. Need to sanction funds for construction of model railway stations at Tarakeshwar and Kamarpukur in Arambagh constituency. (1)
2. Need for Construction of high speed rail corridors between East-West and/or East-South parts of the country. (2)
3. Need for construction of halt station at Bolondi in West Bengal. (3)
4. Need to construct new railway link line between Arambagh and Burdwan in West Bengal. (4)
5. Need to sanction more funds to speed-up railway project between 'Tarkeswar and Bishnupur' in West Bengal. (5)
6. Need to provide halt stations at Rasulpur in Pursura, West Bengal. (6)
7. Need to re-introduce Izzat monthly tickets on the basis of income certificate issued by the Member of Parliament. (7)
8. Need to attach more new coaches to Rajkot Express (train no. 19580). (8)
9. Need to attach more new coaches to Chetak Express (train no. 12981). (9)
10. Need to upgrade and develop Kamarkundu Railway Station under Eastern Railway. (10)
11. Need to construct level crossing/underpass at Chandanpur Railway Station in Haripal. (11)
12. Need to provide extra coaches for all incoming and outgoing trains in West Bengal. (12)
13. Need to launch special recruitment drive for filling up the vacancies for SC, ST and OBC in Railways. (13)
14. Need to check alleged corruption in the Indian Railways. (14)
15. Need to ensure cleanliness of stations, train coaches and toilets of Indian Railways. (15)

SHRIMATI NUSRAT JAHAN RUHI (BASIRHAT): I beg to move

(TOKEN)

THAT THE DEMAND UNDER THE HEAD MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (PAGE 277) BE REDUCED BY RS. 100. 82

21. Need to sanction funds to speed-up construction work of railway extension project from Hasnabad to Samsernagar of Sealdah Division in the current financial year. (21)

22. Need to sanction funds to construct railway flyover at Lebutala between Barasat and Hasnabad Suburban Division in the current financial year. (22)

23. Need to sanction more funds to speed-up construction work of railway flyover at Bhyabla Halt Railway Crossing in the current financial year. (23)

SHRI MANISH TEWARI (ANANDPUR SAHIB): I beg to move

(TOKEN)

THAT THE DEMAND UNDER THE HEAD MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (PAGE 277) BE REDUCED BY RS. 100. 82

24. Need to construct a rail link from Garhshankar to Sri Anandpur Sahib in Punjab under Northern Railways. (24)

25. Need to construct a rail link from Rahon to Ropar in Punjab. (25)

26. Need to construct a rail link from Rahon to Samrala in Punjab. (26)

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH (CHATRA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I rise to speak in support of the Demands for Grants relating to the Railways.

Indian Railways may be described as a thread that binds the entire nation into one, reflecting the country's integrity, uniqueness and all-India character. It is the second largest railway network in the world. Nearly two crore thirty lakh people travel by Indian Railways every day, which is equivalent to the population of Australia. With the dedication of around thirteen lakh employees, Indian Railways has been able to scale new heights continuously. On the one hand, Indian Railways plays a crucial role in fulfilling the fundamental transportation needs of the country, and on the other hand, it serves to connect different parts of the nation. Whether it is Katra, the abode of Mata Vaishno Devi, or Kanyakumari; Somnath to Jagannath Puri; Delhi to Itanagar; or Delhi to Agartala, Indian Railways performs the vital task of weaving the entire country into a single thread.

12.53 hrs (Shri N.K. Premachandran *in the Chair*)

We may state that another distinctive feature of Indian Railways, which had not been adequately highlighted before our Government came to office, is its role in strengthening the spirit of India's

national unity. After the formation of our Government, the manner in which India's culture, civilisation and distinctive features have been reflected at railway stations and railway offices shows that we have undertaken new construction on the foundation of the old. When we speak of the old foundation, Adhir ji, kindly note that you seek to compare the Railways of 1832 with the Congress of 1885 and wish to place them on the same footing. However, building upon the old foundation, guided by our ethics, our education system, our culture and our way of functioning, we have been able to shape the Railways of a 'New India' for the coming century.

Therefore, we may say that the Railways represent an expression of our cultural nationalism. I am not sure what meaning you ascribe to cultural nationalism, but in reality, the Railways are a living expression of it. At the same time, during times of national calamities, the Railways has consistently played a vital role, for which we are all grateful to it.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister Narendra Modi for articulating dreams aimed at taking India's journey of development to the highest peak. While those dreams were a subject of ridicule a short while ago, our

Government has played a significant and meaningful role in realising those dreams and in taking the country forward. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI ADHIR RANJAN CHOWDHURY: We have not ridiculed anything. We want to dream as well. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: We will fulfil those dreams. We dream with our eyes open. ... *(Interruptions)* Adhir ji, you referred to the musical chair. Let me also respond to that. In the great saga of India's development, our Hon. Prime Minister has accorded the Railways a pivotal role in the creation of a New India. While outlining the construction of the Railways of New India, I would also like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister for recognising, for the first time, the capacity, efficiency and managerial competence of more than 13 lakh railway employees and for placing trust and confidence in them. The Railways which, according to you, did not function effectively during your 55 years of governance, is today setting new benchmarks and establishing new milestones on a daily basis.

I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and Shri Suresh ji for constituting Team India for Railways, which has worked to make the impossible possible. The Hon. Prime Minister has had a very clear vision regarding the

Railways. He has stated that Indian Railways is the growth engine of the nation's development journey. Hon. Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that the country will gain speed through the Railways and will also achieve progress through the Railways. I would like to quote the Hon. Prime Minister's words regarding the Railways. He has said that the Railways, and perhaps the Post Office as well, are two institutions with an extremely vast network, and if these are used wisely, significant improvements can be brought about in rural areas. In our country, the Railways has always been viewed merely as a mode of transport. We wish to view the Railways as the backbone of the country's economic development. To translate this vision into reality, it may be stated that under the leadership of Shri Piyush Goyal, Team India for Railways has been consistently discharging its responsibilities and moving steadily forward. Today, the Railways is more organised, better nourished and receiving improved funding than before. Rail travel today is safer, cleaner, more convenient, more accessible and faster. Anyone can make a comparison and see that railway stations today are cleaner. New and latest technologies are being adopted. Digital facilities have been provided to rail passengers, and at the same time, the Railways has worked to connect every part of the country.

Adhir ji, no one says that your Government did not work. However, the pace at which you functioned did not view the entire country as a single unit. During your 55 years of governance, several regions were left behind and have had to suffer neglect, including the North-East and my own parliamentary constituency of Chatra.

13.00 hrs

I will explain this with an example. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI (KALIABOR): Dr. Manmohan Singh had declared all those projects as National Projects. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: I am aware of that, Gaurav ji. ... *(Interruptions)* You may speak yourself.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: He is yielding. You can speak.

[Translation]

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, he is repeatedly causing disturbance. This is not appropriate.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No, he is yielding to him. That is why I am allowing.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Adhir ji, you are repeatedly interrupting, and your colleagues are also doing the same. I find it surprising that when it is your turn to speak, you are not prepared to

listen to others. I know that you are impatient. At times, this impatience goes too far, and even from your speech it appeared that you were recounting the saga of the failures of your Governments over the last 55 years. You have not taken into account what our Government has done in the last five years, nor what was achieved during the Government of Atal Bihari Vajpayee. You spoke about a musical chair. ... *(Interruptions)* During the UPA Government, the Railways suffered from a lack of capital, due to which incomplete projects could not be completed. In your ten years, ten Railway Budgets were presented. If we assess them honestly, it becomes clear that out of the promises made by the UPA Government to the people of India, less than even ten per cent were actually fulfilled. The reasons are evident. There was a lack of political will and administrative incapacity. There was also a deficiency in your commitment towards the promises made to the people. Along with this, it can be said that the earlier Railway Budgets were shaped by vote bank politics and the influence of pressure groups and constituent parties. The truth is that during your ten-year tenure, instead of working in coordination with the Government and the Indian economy, the Railways functioned as an independent entity. It was run almost like a colony, because for you the party, the vote

bank and region-specific political considerations were paramount. Leaders mattered more. You distributed Railway benefits according to the wishes of leaders and political interests. You never placed national interest at the priority of Nation First. We are people who believe in the principle of 'Sada Vatsale Matribhume'. We have adopted the principle of Nation First and we work in national interest, not for any individual leader or pressure group. Swami Vivekananda had also said that attachment arises only when we expect something in return. In the greed for votes, you repeatedly turned the Railway Budget into a spectacle. During the tenure of your Finance Minister Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, a question arose and a debate began in the country that if Railway Budgets continued to be misused in this manner, the day would come when the Railway Budget itself would be abolished. We abolished the separate Railway Budget precisely to bring the Railways into the mainstream. You were influenced by colonial ideas and thinking inherited from British rule. During British times, the Railways was merely a source of revenue and had no social responsibility. You continued to run it in the same manner and worked with that very approach. You mentioned the musical chair. During your ten years of governance, the Railway Ministers were Lalu Prasad Yadav in 2004-05, again

Lalu Prasad Yadav in 2005-06, Lalu Prasad Yadav in 2006-07, Mamata Banerjee in 2009-10, Dinesh Trivedi from 2010 to 2011-12, followed by Pawan Kumar Bansal and Mallikarjun Kharge as Railway Ministers.

The truth is that if any terminology is to be used to describe your ten-year tenure, it can aptly be called, from the Railways' perspective, *a decade of black dilemma*. It was like a dark tunnel of confusion, where there was neither clarity nor direction. ... *(Interruptions)* Shri Mukul Roy was also a Railway Minister. There are so many names that some get left out. ... *(Interruptions)* During your tenure, there was a continuous decline in freight earnings and in the share of Railway revenue. ... *(Interruptions)* It is being said that he was not a full-fledged Minister. ... *(Interruptions)* He was a Minister of State, but even today, his own party does not appear to recognise him as a Floor Leader. ... *(Interruptions)* Even when he speaks, Members from his own side stand up and interrupt. ... *(Interruptions)* For them, leadership does not seem to come naturally at all. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, please address the Chair.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: The truth is that even the revenue which the Railways used to receive from freight in 1987 declined during your tenure. If, during your period in office, you had completed the projects which you yourselves had initiated within the stipulated time, then today you would not be raising doubts about our target of Rs. 50 lakh crore. Had you made arrangements even for Rs. five lakh crore at that time, those projects would have been completed. However, due to a lack of political will, you failed to complete those projects.

The reality is that instead of completing projects on a priority basis, you made announcements of an ever-increasing number of projects for political reasons. If one looks at the announcements made by your Railway Ministers, all the Railway Ministers of the UPA Government can aptly be described as ‘declaration-oriented Railway Ministers’.

During the thirty years prior to 2014, out of 676 projects, only 317 were completed, and to complete the remaining 359 projects, an amount of Rs. 1,82,000 crore was required. However, you had neither the capacity nor the wisdom to accomplish this.

In this very House, I would like to quote the respected Shri Gadkari ji. When he presented the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Road Transport, you had raised the question as to where such huge capital would come from. Under our Government, the Hon. Shri Gadkari ji brought that capital from global markets and set a record by completing the work. Questions flow readily from your side, but when those challenges are successfully met, no words of appreciation follow.

You had raised similar doubts about the four-lane highway project of Shri Vajpayee ji, citing lack of funds, but we accomplished that as well. Therefore, the promises we make and the announcements we place before the people are rooted in a culture of planning in advance and planning in detail. The organisational philosophy that we have studied emphasises meticulous planning of every aspect, examining the finer details, anticipating possible obstacles in implementation, assessing the materials to be used and carefully estimating the costs involved. Accordingly, we follow the principle of planning in advance and planning in detail. In line with this approach, without any embellishment and without yielding to pressure politics, our Government has worked sincerely to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of the people of India. If we have shown

dreams, we also possess the resolve to realise them. That is why the completion rate of works under your Government remained below 50 per cent. You spoke about a musical chair. I would like to enumerate the announcements made during the Budgets under your Government. In the year 2004-05, Shri Lalu Prasad ji announced nine new railway lines, 67 surveys and 32 new trains.

In the year 2005-06, 58 surveys and 46 trains were announced. In the year 2007, five new railway lines, 28 surveys and 40 trains were announced. In the year 2008-09, four new railway lines, 27 surveys and 63 trains were announced. Thereafter, I would like to speak about the year 2009-10. Now, Sougata da is not present here, otherwise he would have become angry as to why we are taking the name of West Bengal. ... *(Interruptions)* You have made West Bengal independent like a Territorial Army, where only your rule will prevail and no one else can even take its name. ... *(Interruptions)* This is the misfortune of democracy. ... *(Interruptions)*

Sudip da, when Mamata ji was the Railway Minister, she announced seven new railway lines, 17 gauge conversions, 68 surveys and 69 new trains. ... *(Interruptions)* In the year 2010-11, 42 new railway lines, 64 surveys and 97 trains were announced. ...

(Interruptions) In the year 2011-12, 40 new railway lines, 20 gauge conversions, 35 double gauge conversions and 251 surveys were announced. ... *(Interruptions)* The number 251 is considered auspicious, perhaps that is why it was done. ... *(Interruptions)* However, there is irritation with 'Jai Shri Ram'. ... *(Interruptions)* And 99 new trains were also announced. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDIP BANDOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Are you opposed to what we had done? ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Dada, our work has only just begun. ... *(Interruptions)* You keep watching what all we are accomplishing.

I would like to inform the House that in a total of three Budgets, Mamata ji announced 265 new trains, but more than half of them never ran. ... *(Interruptions)* This is the truth. ... *(Interruptions)* I would also say to the Hon. Railway Minister that whenever he speaks about these announcements, he may kindly provide a clarification, so that the record is set straight. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDIP BANDOPADHYAY: We had given 251 trains, that is why we also got 211 seats. ... *(Interruptions)* You should also keep this in mind. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Dada is saying the right thing. ... *(Interruptions)* Sudip da is a senior Member; we cannot argue with Sudip da. ... *(Interruptions)* Those 211 seats were obtained at a time when the spectacle of your falsehood was spread across the entire world. ... *(Interruptions)* Today, when the truth is piercing through the rays of the sun and reaching the soil of Bengal, what has happened in this Lok Sabha is being watched by the country and the entire world. ... *(Interruptions)* What happened even in the Assembly by-elections? ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH: Next time, it will be 'Jai Shri Ram'. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Dada, please do not worry. The people from whom you are seeking opinion and guidance are also our own people. ... *(Interruptions)* We have sent them accordingly. ... *(Interruptions)* In the year 2012-13, Dinesh Trivedi ji, who, however, on this occasion stood eclipsed before the valour of Arjun Singh ji, ... *(Interruptions)* announced 45 new railway lines, 111 surveys and the introduction of 113 new trains. ... *(Interruptions)* In the year 2013-14, Pawan Bansal ji announced 22 new railway lines, ten doubling works and five electrification works, announced surveys for 59 double lines and 25 single lines, and also announced

the introduction of 106 trains. ... *(Interruptions)* In the year 2014-15, Mallikarjun ji also announced the introduction of 56 new trains, announced more than about 24 surveys, seven new railway lines, eight doubling works and five gauge conversions. ... *(Interruptions)* The point I wish to make is that, instead of taking the country forward in this manner, you continuously worked to take it backwards. ... *(Interruptions)*

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, my time is still remaining. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Time is there but there are so many members from your party to speak.

… (Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Yes, Sir. I have very well noted it down. My Party has allowed me to speak. …*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Just now, Shri Adhir Ranjan ji was discussing the PPP model and opposing it, alleging that our Government is undertaking corporatisation and privatisation. ... *(Interruptions)* In the year 2006-07, Lalu ji, the Railway Minister in

their UPA Government, had recited a couplet in support of the PPP. I would like to mention that couplet.

He had said:

“One step is taken by me and one step by you, Come, let us together measure the distance up to the moon."

This implied that there was no satisfaction with what existed on the ground and there was even a plan to acquire the moon, because the entire Bengal B.N.R. Railway and the hotel at Ranchi had already been sold. He had stated this very clearly. I am reading its English version. I will explain how he had spoken about the PPP model: *[English]* “Today, when Indian railways are scaling historic heights in freight and passenger business, we will not allow resource constraints to hamper expansion of rail network. We will encourage public partnerships and public-private partnership schemes for effecting significant improvements in rail services and development and expansion of rail network. To this end, a level playing field under a transparent policy will be provided to investors by further simplifying the policy of public-private partnership. This is the need of the hour.”

For privatisation, there is a transparent policy, and for Government policy, there is an under-the-table policy. This is the dilemma. That is why I said it was the decade of a black dilemma.

At that time, he recited the couplet:

"One step is taken by me and one step by you,

Come, let us together measure the distance up to the moon."

He said that *[English]* we invite state governments, local bodies, ports and private sector to invest in rail projects.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Sunil Kumar Singh *ji*, how much more time will you take?

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I have no objection in allowing time but the question is, other Members have to be accommodated from BJP.

… *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, this has only just begun. Sir, my party has given me time of more than 30 minutes. Accordingly, I have been given time of 40 minutes.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please try to wind up.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Sir, I am winding up, but my party has given me the time.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: How much time do you require further?

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Sir, I need another twenty minutes. More time is being wasted in this debate. Please also listen to the couplet recited by Mallikarjun Kharge ji.

> "I am truthful to my word, God is my witness,
> I write the truth; lying is not my habit."

It is because of this contradiction that I described it as the decade of black dilemma. Not fulfilling the announcements made in the Budget and at the same time swearing by the truth, this has been the inherent contradiction. Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I will endeavour to conclude my speech at the earliest. During the tenure of the Modi Government, our Government has played a catalytic role in helping address the problems of the Railways through massive capital

investment. At the same time, it has also provided the Railways with the opportunity to complete projects in a timely manner. This has been possible because our Government, under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Modi ji, has provided decisive leadership, clear objectives and an atmosphere of good governance. The result is evident before everyone that capital expenditure under our Government has more than doubled. In the years 2009-14, when capital expenditure was only Rs. 2.3 lakh crore, it increased to Rs. 4.97 lakh crore during the years 2014-19.

In the current year, the target for capital expenditure is Rs. 1.6 lakh crore, which is higher than the Rs. 1.25 lakh crore spent during the entire five-year tenure of UPA-I from 2004 to 2009. Along with this, our Government has provided in this Budget that in the Budget for 2019-20, a budgetary allocation of Rs. 65,838 crore has been received and the highest-ever amount of Rs. 1.60 lakh crore has been provided for capital expenditure. In this, we have increased the allocation for passenger amenities by nearly 200 per cent. It is historic in itself that a 200 per cent increase has been made from the point of view of passenger amenities. Last year, the Railway outlay was Rs. 1.48 lakh crore, while the budgetary allocation was Rs.

55,088 crore. This clearly shows that we have continuously increased the capital expenditure of the Railways.

Sir, in the Budget for the financial year 2019-20, we have allocated Rs. 7,255 crore for the construction of new railway lines, Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs. 700 crore for doubling, Rs. 6,114.82 crore for rolling stock, and Rs. 1,750 crore for signalling and telecommunications. From the point of view of passenger convenience, the allocation has been increased from Rs. 1,657 crore to Rs. 3,422.57 crore this time. Therefore, in the financial year 2019-20, the target we have set for gross traffic receipts is approximately Rs. 2,16,675 crore, which is Rs. 19,961 crore higher than the revised estimate for 2018-19. Sir, for this reason, we can say that our Government has continuously worked towards expansion.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, since there is a repeated request to take less time, keeping that in mind, I would like to mention only the main points. If we speak about the objectives of our Railways, what the mission of the Railways is and what its goal is, then, in a nutshell, we can say that our priority is to improve safety and security. Completing projects within the stipulated time and making rail travel a pleasant experience are our objectives. From this perspective, cleanliness, bedding, helplines, tickets, catering,

entertainment, enhancement of train capacity, comfortable travel and redevelopment of railway stations are being focused upon. Along with this, we have made greater provisions for cleanliness than in the previous Budget. I would like to make a special mention with regard to catering. On the initiative of the Hon. Minister Shri Piyush Goyal ji, we have started a unique process. The food that is served in railway coaches carries a QR code. You can take a photograph of the QR code anywhere using your mobile phone and the Railway kitchen will open directly on your mobile network, enabling you to see how the Railway kitchens are functioning today. This is also noteworthy that ... *(Interruptions)* Madam, instead of banging your head, please try to see.

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAGH): What kind of food is the Railways serving? ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Nothing will go on record except the speech of Shri Sunil Kumar Singh.

... *(Interruptions)*[*]

[*] Not recorded.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: I am not speaking about serving food; rather, I am speaking about the Railway kitchen. The Railway Board had also given its consent for this. However, on the initiative of the Hon. Minister, through the QR system, our Government has directly connected the Railway kitchens with the passengers' network. Along with this, our objective, our mission, is to bring financial discipline in the Railways, mobilise resources, build partnerships for development, make human resources skilled, provide them with training, and promote information and technology. We aim to bring about improvement in the functioning of the Railways through transparency and to facilitate the transportation and storage of agricultural produce and consumer goods.

At the same time, I would like to say that we all know that the Railways functions under a social obligation. However, our Government has resolved that while fulfilling this social obligation, we will also demonstrate profitability in the times to come. Please do not be surprised by this, because it is also certain that after the year 2024, it will be us who will return again, and we will accomplish this as well.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Now, you may please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Sir, the Modi Government has undertaken certain initiatives in the history of the Railways which have happened for the first time. We can say that, in the history of the Railways, this is the Government's first. I would only like to mention that under the best-ever safety record in 2018-19, there has been a reduction of 76 per cent in railway accidents. In the year 2013-14, 152 deaths occurred due to railway accidents, whereas in the year 2018-19, only 37 lives were lost in railway accidents. The Vande Bharat Express is the first Indian train built with indigenous technology and is operating at semi high speed between Delhi and Varanasi. Comments were being made on the Vande Bharat, but the truth is that after the introduction of the Rajdhani train in 1968-69, this is the first train service which is completely indigenous and operates at semi high speed. We have dedicated it to the nation under the name of Vande Bharat Express.

The conversion of a diesel locomotive into an electric locomotive is the world's first example. This is the first locomotive of DLW, Varanasi, in which our Railway employees and our

Minister's team have, for the first time, converted a diesel locomotive into an electric locomotive. This conversion will provide environmental benefits in the times to come, and there will also be savings in the fuel surcharge that we pay, which we will utilise for other parts of the country that are still facing neglect.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Sir, I am concluding within five to seven minutes.

We are working at a very fast pace on the Broad Gauge railway lines. Some issues have just been raised in the discussion. The Modern Coach Factory at Rae Bareli was being discussed. It is a misfortune for the country and a matter of surprise that the foundation stone of the Rae Bareli Modern Coach Factory was laid in the year 2007. From 2010 to 2014, this factory used to procure coaches from the Kapurthala Coach Factory, paint them and tighten some fittings, and it was then claimed that they were from Rae Bareli. Since Rae Bareli was a prime constituency for the UPA Government, they worked in that manner and sacrificed national

interest, because delaying, hanging and misleading have been a part of their work culture. After our Government came to power, the same Modern Coach Factory at Rae Bareli started production, and after 2014, we commenced production within a period of just one month, starting from the month of August. The factory which used to manufacture four or five coaches produced 1,425 coaches in the year 2018-19, and this year we have set a target of 2,158 coaches for the same Modern Coach Factory, Rae Bareli. Therefore, a comparison must be made. If you did not spare even your leader's constituency, how will you spare India? I do not need to remind you of Barua ji's sentence.

Along with this, I would like to come to the State of Jharkhand, but before that, there has been much discussion about the Bogibeel Bridge.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude with Jharkhand.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Sir, during the Government of Atal ji, work on the Bogibeel Bridge in the North East was initiated. It is the longest rail bridge. ... *(Interruptions)* After our Government came to power, we worked with promptness and commenced the task of connecting that part of Arunachal which had remained

unconnected since Independence. Today, that part of the North East, Arunachal, has been connected with Dibrugarh and Guwahati, and an important task of connecting it with Delhi has also been accomplished. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI: You have only cut the ribbon. ... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Gaurav ji, you could not even do that. ... *(Interruptions)* Along with this, in the times to come, Hon. Prime Minister ji has given a list of 116 aspirational districts, which have aspiration, ambition and desire to move forward. Work has also been initiated to connect such backward districts with the railway network, and in the coming times, we will complete this as well.

Therefore, while discussing Jharkhand, I can state with certainty that Jharkhand, which had remained continuously neglected for the past 55 years, received only Rs. 2,286 crore from the Railways during the UPA regime between the years 2009 and 2014, prior to our Government coming to power. In contrast, after our Government assumed office, the increase for Jharkhand during the period 2014-19 has been 357 per cent. Our Government enhanced this to Rs. 10,443 crore for railway facilities in Jharkhand. We have completed several railway projects there. Since there is a

constraint of time, I would only like to point out the manner in which Jharkhand was subjected to step-motherly treatment. When Hon. Arjun Munda ji was the Chief Minister of the State ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, please conclude your speech. Otherwise, I have to call the next Member to speak. You have already taken 40 minutes time.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, an understanding had been reached between the Chief Minister of Jharkhand and the Railway Minister, Shri Dinesh Trivedi ji. Under this, the Government of Jharkhand was prepared to bear 50 per cent of the expenditure. An assurance was given that all projects, except Kodarma-Tilaiya, would be completed by the year 2013. However, the truth is that the incomplete works left by the then Government are today being completed by our Government. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Now please conclude.

... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please cooperate with the Chair.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, we are very liberal in allotting time. But the time is very limited. We have to accommodate other Members also. Please conclude.

... (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am concluding by placing the demands of Jharkhand before you. *... (Interruptions)* In the interest of the State, our Hon. Chief Minister ji, since today we contribute nearly 40 per cent of freight revenue, wrote a letter on 27.07.17. *... (Interruptions)* Sir, I am concluding in just two minutes. *... (Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude within one minute..

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, kindly give me two more minutes. *... (Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: All right, conclude within two minutes.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, from that perspective, the demand for granting a Railway Zone to Jharkhand and the completion of those schemes for which our Government has written to the Union Government for Jharkhand are important. I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister with regard to my area that the Barwadih-Chirmiri line, which is one of the biggest examples of the UPA Government's …*, has remained stalled since 1941, despite land having been acquired and construction work having been carried out.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, this is the only such case in the country. This project has remained incomplete for 85 years. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister Shri Piyush Goyal ji to complete the Barwadih-Chirmiri line. With its completion, the distance between Kolkata and Mumbai will be reduced by 300 kilometres. If this project is not in the national interest, we ourselves will accept that it should be dropped. However, at the same time, I would also request that the Chatra-KotorI railway line, which is an important area of my parliamentary constituency, may also be completed. ... *(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded.

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, this is an unparliamentary word. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: We will examine it. If there is anything unparliamentary, we will definitely look at it and get it expunged.

... *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI SUNIL KUMAR SINGH: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, in conclusion, while placing before you the issues of my area, I would like to express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways. While supporting them, I would like to submit before you that our Government has given wings to the aspirations of the nation.

It has expanded our wings and given us the courage to touch the sky.

Sir, I will conclude my speech by reciting just one couplet:

"Who says that the sky cannot be pierced,
Throw a stone with full conviction, O people, throw a
stone with full conviction."

Our Government has thrown the stones of aspiration. In the times to come, we will demonstrate by completing all these schemes. Thank you.

[English]

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI (THOOTHUKKUDI): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you. The Indian Railways is the fourth largest railway network in the world carrying nearly 23 million travellers every day. It is also the eighth largest employer and it has more than 13 lakh employees as of March 2017. While the revenue of the Railways for 2019-20 is estimated to increase by 10 per cent, the total expenditure for 2019-20 is also projected to increase by nine per cent. The major expenditure under the Railways are salaries, pensions, fuel, and leases. The Budget allocated for construction of new lines is only Rs. 7,255 crore.

It was proposed, as part of the Budget speech that the Railway infrastructure would need an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore between 2018 and 2030. Public Private Partnership has been proposed to unleash faster development and delivery of passenger and freight services.

To this Government, the solution for everything is privatisation. We have to remember that the Railways is also one of the largest networks and till today it has been managed by the Government single-handedly and successfully. Now, they have brought this proposal to allow PPP and private investment into the Railways.

I would like to bring to the notice of the Ministry, through you, that in 2015, the Committee on Restructuring Railways has observed that in the Railways, accounting is neither scientific nor accurate. So, when there is so much confusion when it comes to accounting, why would any private company want to invest when they want a clear road-map about where their investment is going, what would be their profit, etc. They want clarity over all these things. When there is no clarity and the accounting is not very clear, why would any private investor want to come and take up this partnership?

According to you, the Railways has to become a profit-making organisation, but now it is making losses. What is the incentive for any private player to come and become part of this loss-making enterprise? I would like to ask who is going to compensate them. I want to know whether the Central Government would be compensating the cost incurred by the private player or the passengers would bear this burden.

PPP model is seen as a vehicle for development. Even during the last Budget, a grand announcement was made that the PPP will generate Rs. 6 lakh crore investment. But ultimately there was no offer from any private player or multi-nationals. Our own Government PSU, the LIC was finally approached for Rs. 1.2 lakh

crore as loan. But unfortunately, the Railways has not been able to utilise even Rs. 30,000 crore loan which the LIC had given to them.

The allocation of funds towards Depreciation Reserve Fund, allows the Ministry to finance cost of new assets replacing old ones. But the appropriation for the same has decreased significantly over the years.

Further, the Railway's contribution towards the new safety fund known as the National Railway Safety Fund, Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh was entirely taken from the DRF fund; therefore, disallowing the replacement and repair of depreciating assets which would only lead to compromise in quality of performance of the assets. I do not know whether in this House we can quote from *The Economic Survey* anymore …*(Interruptions)* because the Government has distanced itself clearly from *The Economic Survey*. Still I would like to quote from it. The Economic Survey has observed that there has been an increase in fire accidents. That being the case, I think we will have to really look at replacing depreciating assets and we cannot take it very lightly.

One more point which I would like to strike in digress from what I was trying to say is regarding the name of the scheme Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh. I had to do a lot of homework to

understand the meaning of it. This Government has taken that every scheme and every programme will be named only in Hindi. I would like to ask you, how will a villager even in my district, Thoothukkudi understand what this is? I have seen the signboard in Thoothukkudi saying Pradhan Mantri Sadak Yojana. I do not understand the meaning of it. There is no translation in English or in the regional language. This is your attitude towards everything. It also includes the railway boards. You have to understand that you are here to serve the people. You have to make sure that the schemes or the nameboards are easy for the people to understand and decipher them. So, it is very important that the names, signboards and station details are in regional languages and understandable to the people of the particular State.

This Government has decided to combine the Budgets to do away with the Railway Budget. People always eagerly wait for the Railway Budget as much as the General Budget to understand what their State is getting, what is coming to their district, what trains are available for them, regarding the extension work, about the new projects, etc. All these have been done away with. Now, the common man and woman are struggling to understand and find out the details of announcements of new projects.

In Tamil Nadu, we have a proverb, "*Pon vaikkira idathile poo vaikkanum*", which means, when you cannot afford to keep gold then you can keep a flower in its place. I think this Government has taken this literally and especially when it comes to the Southern Railways. The Southern Railway projected its demand under various plan heads, seeking an allocation of Rs.5,312 crore. Unfortunately, only Rs.4020 crore have been granted which shows that there is a wide gap of over Rs.1291 crore, which will totally disrupt the execution of the projects.

A very important new line between Sirerumbudur and Guduvancheri which was sanctioned in the last Budget at a cost of Rs.839 crore has been given only a token amount of Rs.10 crore. Sir, this is not even a flower. There is a huge difference between Rs. 839 crore and Rs.10 crore. How can you even start a project with this amount?

Southern Railway's proposal for gauge conversion has also been ignored as only Rs.245 crore has been sanctioned against the demand for Rs.424 crore.

Railway, the most affordable means of transport for the economically underprivileged section even today, is losing its patronage. In the non-suburban section, the second-class passengers'

number has fallen by about 61 million in 2018-19 when compared with 2017-18.

The railways are getting stiff competition from the buses, road transport, and airways. But the railways are not acting to do anything in this regard. Most of its freight depends on coal. More than 40 per cent of its freight comes from coal. They have not looked into other kind of things for the railways.

Transporting smaller packages and containers, etc. has not been explored, and they think that private investment is the only answer for everything.

The experience of the PSU banks, BSNL and other PSUs should be a case study for the Government of India, but unfortunately it is giving a 100-days plan to corporatize Modern Coach Factory in Raebareli and production units like ICF, Chennai and RCF, Kapurthala.

The Integral Coach Factory founded in Chennai has generated direct employment for 10,000-12,000 people in and around Chennai city and indirect employment for 30,000 people who are engaged in small-scale industries since its inception. In 2019, the production of ICF exceeded double its capacity.

I think that the hon. Member of BJP also mentioned that the Train18 was claimed by the same Railway Minister as a success story of Make in India. It was produced by ICF at a cost of Rs. 100 crore whereas multinationals globally produce it at a cost of Rs. 250 crore. So, this is a real success story by the ICF. But does the Government really want to pay Rs. 250 crore to a foreign company or foreign national whereas we can do it for Rs. 100 crore within India? Is this what you mean by Make in India?

I would like to tell the Government that any attempt to corporatize or privatize ICF, Indian Railways or the Salem Steel Plant will be resisted by the people of Tamil Nadu, the DMK and my Leader, Thiru M. K. Stalin.

There is a long-standing demand for the creation of a new Division in the Southern Railways, which at present consists of six Divisions, namely, Chennai, Trichy, Salem, Madurai, Palakkad and Thiruvanthapuram. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please do not cross the Member whenever a Member speaks.

… *(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: There is no development after the Division in Salem has been created, and the MP from there has categorically asked me to mention it to you here.

A new Division comprising of Thoothukkudi, Tirunelveli, Kanniyakumari and some parts of Thiruvananthapuram Division, which falls in Tamil Nadu, must be created in Tirunelveli. During the Budget of 2008-09, the Railway Ministry had sanctioned survey for construction of a new Broad-Gauge line between Karaikudi and Kanniyakumari *via* Ramanathapuram, Tuticorin and Tiruchendur along the Eastern coast. Subsequently, a survey was conducted for the length of 462.47 kms. and the Report has been submitted to the Railway Board in the year 2011, but the issue is still under examination. I would urge the Ministry to revive this project. Similarly, there are 12 more projects, which are stalled and which have to be revived in Tamil Nadu. I would also request the Ministry to rename the Erode Railway Station as *Thanthai Periyar* Railway Station.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: I would like to talk about my Constituency, namely, Thoothukkudi.

At present, there is only one Express running between the State Capital Chennai and Thoothukkudi. Introducing a new daily express train between Chennai and Thoothukkudi *via* Thanjavur, Kumbakonam, Mayiladuthurai will ease passenger traffic on this route. Extension of the Intercity weekly Madurai-Mumbai Lokmanya Tilak Terminus Express till Thoothukkudi, and also Intercity Palaruvi Express, which currently runs between Palakkad and Tirunelveli to Thoothukkudi will help the people.

As regards the issue of apprenticeship, the Union Minister for Finance while delivering the Budget speech on 5 July, 2019, mentioned about giving importance to schemes like the National Apprentice Promotion Scheme. Currently, around 25,000 young people who have completed this apprenticeship course have not been provided employment. Sadly, they have joined the crores of young people who are unemployed in this country waiting for the '*Achhe Din*' to come.

About accessible railway stations, in 2016, this Government had announced that stations would be made accessible to all. Half way into 2019, there are neither ramps in all junctions nor battery cars to approach coaches that are reserved for the differently-abled. Reserved coaches are often used by others to obstruct the entry and

exit of the specially-abled. We have to understand that it is their right. We are not doing charity to the differently-abled people.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please wind up your speech by making last point.

SHRI T.R. BAALU (SRIPERUMBUDUR): Ruling party has taken ample time.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No. They have ample time.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: They always have ample time. It is we who have been suppressed. At least you should understand that.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You please conclude.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: It is not important whether the Railways are modernised, whether we have wi-fi in the trains or railway stations or we have bullet trains. I think, that is immaterial. What every Member here - I am not blaming anybody - has to be ashamed of is that the Railways still employs manual scavengers. We have to be ashamed of it. They might deny it. They have denied it before; they have said that the Railways do not directly employ manual scavengers but it is done through contractual labour. Just though you want them to be invisible, they are not invisible. More than 95,000 people are employed as cleaners and they work as

manual scavengers. It is a shame to this nation to continue this. There are no rights to protect them; they are not given gears which protect them.

My last point is this. We are talking about railway safety, which is a concern to all of us here. The safety of the passengers inside the trains are also becoming a concern. Sir, on 28th June, 2019, 17 year old Hafeez Mohamed Niyazi, a student, was abused, assaulted and stripped inside a passenger train in Sambhal district by some youngsters. He was thrown out of the train.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please don't go to the examples.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: On 24th June 2019, Hafeez Haldar, a 26 year old was going to Hubli. A group of people were chanting *Jai Shri Ram.* He was forced to chant the same. When he refused, he was beaten up, and they threw him out of the train.

On 22nd June, 2017, Junaid Khan, a 15 year old was harassed, lynched and fatally stabbed when he was returning from Delhi. One more thing is that this Government is very keen on protecting Muslim women, Muslim sisters. So, I would like to mention that on 26 June, 2016, two Muslim women were thrashed and abused by Hindu activists in Madhya Pradesh because it was rumoured that

they were carrying beef. Women were slapped and kicked by a group of men and women at a crowded railway station.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude. Don't go into all those examples. You are stressing that safety has to be maintained.

SHRIMATI KANIMOZHI: Yes, Sir. It is important not just for the train but also for the people inside the train.

I would really like to reiterate that the railway safety is not the only concern, I think, everybody in this country should also feel - the disabled, the unemployed and the minority people should feel safe, and that they belong to this country.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (KOLKATA UTTAR): Sir, I request you not to use bell to stop my speech. I will take short time to complete my speech.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Sir, this year's Budget allocation of Indian Railways is Rs.65,837 crore and the capital expenditure is Rs.1.60 lakh crore.

Sir, Shrimati Sitharaman ji, in her Budget Speech, has given a dream of investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore between 2018 and 2030, and proposed that PPP model be used to unleash faster development and delivery of passenger freight services for railway projects to boost connectivity. Railways are moving towards privatisation. This is the indication of this Budget.

As now I am the Chairman of the Railway Standing Committee, I feel that it is not a proper etiquette that I speak on the Budget because I know many inside information. The Railway Board members come and meet me. Many members are there to speak but a few issues are certainly to be raised and to be answered by the hon. Minister which we placed in the Standing Committee Reports. The Reports are never responded to and never replied.

Sir, among the budgetary plan outlay and the non-plan outlay, estimated salary expenditure of the Railways' employees goes up to Rs. 86,554.31 core. So, non-plan takes the major portion out of the plan outlay of the Railway Budget. We have proposed world-class railway stations. How many railway stations are being constructed under world-class railway stations project? It is maximum four to five throughout the country. Of course, in Surat of Gujarat, it is moving ahead. World-class railway stations have gained enough publicity, enough is being told about it but in reality, in actual sense, world-class railway stations are not progressing in a very fast mode.

In a report that I submitted, there is a mention of tourism promotion and pilgrim circuit. The Railways can make one circuit with places of interest of tourism. But no response is yet appearing from the Railways except one or two circuits which have been accepted. A detailed report has been placed.

Similarly, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC), has also been advised to take care of the food in the railway. Many people like to go on train journey. They say that they will travel by train, they will get good quality of food, they will enjoy the trip. But, sometimes, such type of food which is delivered and supplied to the passengers is not acceptable at all.

One of my colleagues, Shrimati Aparupa Poddar, told us that the food is prepared on the previous night and is delivered the next day. That becomes a stale food. So, the IRCTC has announced that their base kitchens are to be kept very neat and clean, and food will be properly cooked but actually it is not being maintained.

Sir, you know a few royal trains are operated in our country. These are for the foreigners. The names of the trains are: Palace on Wheels, Maharaja Express, Golden Chariot, Royal Rajasthan on Wheels, Deccan Odyssey. These are the trains with above 5-star hotel arrangements. The payment for the tickets is to be made in dollars. But the occupancy rate has come down to less than 30 per cent.

14.00 hrs

All these trains are moving with vacant seats. It was submitted in the report of the Committee as to how many railway officials had complimentarily availed of travel and other facilities in these super quality trains. Their names have been categorically mentioned in the report. If the Railway Minister asks for the report, I will submit it before the House.

sir, these super quality trains in the country offer travel packages of seven to eight days. i would submit for the consideration of the

railway minister that the package duration should be reduced to three to four days. If the train runs for seven-eight days, people get bored and hence do not want to go. Do Make it for three-four days, this will make its occupancy rate very good and high.

There are 8,495 A1 category railway stations in the country. How many of them have retiring rooms? Only 559. There are 1,47,523 railway bridges in the country.

14.01 hrs (Shri A. Raja *in the Chair*)

Among them are the bridges which have crossed the age of 100 years. How many such bridges are still safe and secure for train travel? There are three types of bridges - important, major and minor. There are 700 important bridges, 12,085 major bridges and 1,32,738 minor bridges which are small road bridges. The number of railway bridges which have crossed 100 years of age being so high, the question of safety and security of passengers assumes importance.

There was a Safety Review Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Anil Kakodkar set up in 2012. I mentioned it in our Committee report also. Shri Kakodkar made many recommendations but they have not been accepted to the desired level. I want to know

how many recommendations of the Kakodkar Committee of 2012 have been accepted by the Government.

Sir, we hope that the Indian Railways will achieve zero accidents rate. That should be the motto of Indian Railways.

Sir, there is the issue of vacancies in Indian Railways. The number of vacancies in the Railways is huge. There is a group called Gangmen among railway employees. These people look after the railway lines day and night. They are the most important people for regular running of the trains. Their name may be Gangmen and they may be Grade-IV employees, but it is they who actually maintain the railway line. The number of vacancies in this grade has reached more than two lakhs.

There is a shortage of Drivers in Indian Railways. Drivers are overburdened with work. They do get tired. You will find that most railway accidents occur in the early hours between 3 AM and 5 AM. That is because the train drivers feel sleepy at that time. They fall asleep at the wheel as a result of which the railway accidents take place.

I want to know from the Government whether you are now well-capable with the strength of railway drivers which is directly connected and associated with the safety and security of the common

passengers. When are you going to fill the vacancies which are persisting now in Indian Railways including the Gangmen, which is very directly associated with people's life?

The progress relating to railway facilities in North-East is equally slow. A few minutes back, Gaurav Gogoi, who was a Member of the Railway Standing Committee also, was mentioning that they have discussed about North-Eastern railway projects but no such progress is being seen. I want to know the operating ratio of Indian Railways. It is very important. I think, the Minister in his statement has said that his motto is that the passengers should get world-class experience with speed, safety and service, which are not at all being visible in the present railway system.

Sir, more attention and priority are to be given to complete Dedicated Freight Corridors. I would also like to tell you that the proposal of bullet train is not possible in India. It is bogus. In the Indian soil, bullet trains cannot move, cannot run. These can be called as high-speed trains only. Bullet trains totally have a separate structure. We are aware of bullet trains of Japan. Here, it is being told that bullet train is going to be inaugurated on Ahmedabad to Mumbai route. This is not correct. High-speed trains are possible to

operate, to run in the country, but never bullet trains. It is a hoax; it is a false assurance being given to the common people.

Sir, regarding passengers' amenities, huge allegations have come up. There are no pantry cars in the railway compartments of trains which have a journey time of 12 to 16 hours. These are available only in those trains which have more than 24-hour journey time or in big trains like, Rajdhani Express and Shatabdi Express, which are running on long routes. But trains completing its journey within 12 to 16 hours are not having pantry cars. The Government should take care of this.

Sir, I propose that base kitchens should remain clean. Safety, security, passengers' amenities, well-organised railway stations, cleanliness, food quality, condition of the railway compartments, and quality of coaches in trains are to be maintained and provided for, including, Wi-Fi facilities and CCTV facilities.

The success of railway service depends upon the work culture of the employees. So, this side is also to be looked after because it has a huge number of employees - one of the largest in the world. Their work culture is more important so that, Indian Railways can run and operate smoothly.

Sir, 23 million passengers travel every day, which Kanimozhi was also mentioning in the House. Railways operates 13,330 passenger trains and handles 1,000 million tonnes of freight traffic by 9,212 freight trains over 67,368 route kilometres. It is a very serious subject and it should be taken care of.

Railways has 8,500 railway stations with category A, B, C, D, E, and F, considering its passengers traffic at the stations. Without proper and effective work culture, it cannot run smoothly and to the satisfaction of the people.

Let train journey be a journey of joy, not a journey of fear. We should not forget to declare Railways as the lifeline of our country and it is economical as well.

This is the reason why we wanted the Railway Budget to be discussed separately. But it is now joined with the General Budget and it did not help the Railways.

ms. mamata banerjee’s name was raised here. so long as ms. mamata banerjee was the railway minister, not a single rupee was increased in railway fares at any stage. a monthly railway ticket called ‘izzat’ at the price of rs. 15 was given to the bpl sections and they used to travel in railway trains keeping their heads high. they were not afraid of ticket examiner entering their compartments.

members of parliament were authorised to certify a bpl person for issuance of this ticket, whoever he or she may be. in kolkata, there is east-west metro train. it is not being completed. in the budget, an amount of only rs. 30 lakh has been allocated for kanchrapara rail coach factory which is a joke. it is a proposed project of rs. 760 crore. shrimati kanimozhi was telling, Only Rs 10 lakh was given on projects worth Rs 800 crore. The same thing is here. They have allotted only Rs. 30 lakh for a project of Rs. 760 crore. Similarly, expertise training centres were proposed at Dankuni, Malda and Beliaghata. All of them have been allotted Rs. 5 lakh only. So, I feel that a very step-motherly attitude has been reflected in the Budget. The Eastern region, especially West Bengal, has always been the sufferer of the regional imbalances. Here, it is reflected in the same way. Now, South India is going to be added to this list. I hope that the Ministry of Railways will take all positive steps to see that funds are allocated to the whole country treating everyone as equal and the proposals which we table from the Standing Committee for the consideration of the Railway Ministry will be implemented. Thank you.

SHRI BALLI DURGA PRASAD RAO (TIRUPATI): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the Hon. Minister in her maiden Budget said that Indian Railways' infrastructure will need an investment of Rs. 56 lakh crore till 2030. As per the details shared by the Railway Ministry, in the Financial Year 2018-19 the Gross Traffic Receipts stood at Rs. 1,96,714 crore and the total working expenses were Rs. 1,88,800 crore. In the financial year 2018-19, the earnings from passenger trains were Rs. 52,000 crore and the earnings from freight trains were Rs. 1,29,750 crore. In 2019-20, the earnings from passenger trains are expected to be Rs. 56,000 crore and the earnings from freight trains are likely to be Rs 1,43,000 crore.

Meanwhile, the Railway Budget 2019 also claimed to complete the electrification of Railways' broad-gauge network by 2021-22. For 2019-20, electrification of 7,000 route kilometre has been targeted. Moreover, the target of new railway lines, gauge conversion, doubling and tripling for this year is 3,750 kilometres against 3,596 kilometres previously. Allocations of Rs. 20,000 crore has been made for the Railway Safety Fund for 2019-20. Elimination of all unmanned level crossings is an appreciable action of the Railway Ministry.

In the Budget, funds of Rs.7,255 crore have been allotted for construction of new railway lines, Rs.2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs.700 crore for doubling, Rs.6114.82 crore for rolling stock, and Rs.1,750 crore for signalling and telecom.

With regard to my new State, Andhra Pradesh, the total cost of Obulavaripalle-Krishnapatman project is Rs.733 crore. So far, 20 km. has been completed and the target is to complete the remaining 93 km. in the current financial year. No timeframe has been mentioned for the completion of this project.

Sir, Rs. 5 crore has been allotted for Guntur-Tenali doubling and electrification project. Is this money sufficient? The Minister may explain the distance that has to be covered and the timeframe for completion of this project.

For Nadikudi-Srikalahasti new line project, Rs.700 crore has been allotted. The original cost of this project, which was sanctioned in 2011-12, was Rs.2,450 crore. So far, we have spent Rs.309 crore only. When will the remaining amount be spent? This project will connect four districts of Chittoor, Nellore, Ongole and Guntur. What is the timeframe for completion of this project?

Cuddapah-Bengaluru new line project, with a distance of 255 km., costs about Rs.2,030 crore. Under the South Central Railway,

this project was planned in four phases; three phases in Andhra Pradesh and one phase in Karnataka. Only 21 km. route has been commissioned. For the last four years, Rs.165 crore has been spent on this project. I would like to know when will this project be completed. This year, the allocation made for this project is only Rs.210 crore. How is it possible to complete the work? People of that area have been asking me about this from time to time.

Kotipalli-Narsapur new line project, with a distance of 57 km., costs Rs.2120 crore. The expenditure incurred on this project so far is only Rs.323 crore. This is a PPP project in which the contribution of the Central Government is 75 per cent and the State Government's contribution is 25 per cent. So far, this project is going at slow pace. I would request the Government to speed up the project. I would like to know the details regarding time schedule between the State and the Centre. This has to be informed properly.

Gooty-Dharamavaram double line project in Anantapur district, with a distance of 90 km., is estimated to cost Rs.636 crore. So far, 33 km has been completed. There is a need to complete the remaining 57 km. within two years. The Government should fix the time schedule for completing this project which covers the interior and backward areas of Anantapur. The Government has released

only Rs.126 crore for this project in this financial year. How is it possible to complete it?

Vijayawada-Kazipet junction is known to everybody. This will connect two States. The purpose of this line is to run majority of the trains without disturbing cargo transport. This has been given top priority. It will provide good connectivity between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The amount allotted for this project is Rs.110 crore. The original cost of this project was Rs.1,857 crore. We would like to know the fate of this programme.

Another point is regarding Vijayawada Junction to Guntur Junction connectivity. This is a very important and good traffic line for going towards Chennai, Bengaluru and Kerala. I think some formation of earth road is going on for rail connectivity. This work has to be completed on a stretch of 287 kilometres at an estimated cost of Rs.1857 crore. So far, an expenditure of only Rs.284 crore has been incurred on this project. No time-line has been informed for this project. This has to be informed in an appropriate manner.

Our State is a new State. The development of railway work is going on at a very slow pace. A line between Obulavaripalli and Krishnapatnam was recently inaugurated by His Excellency, the President of India and His Excellency, Vice President of India

together. Only 20 per cent work has so far been completed. Therefore, the balance work has to be completed as early as possible.

When they are constructing railway station in a particular area, they do not give it the name of proper village. They give the name of some other village. With the result, a lot of complaints have come. Recently, I had informed the Minister about this.

As regards our State, our hon. Chief Minister, Shri Jagan Mohan Reddy, has come to power only 42 days ago. It is a new State. Our State is having a deficit of Rs.2000 crore. Is the hon. Minister doing justice to us? I would request the Minister to sanction another Rs.1000 crore for completing all these projects.

Regarding my Constituency, Tirupati, as you know, Lord Balaji Venkateswara Swami temple is situated there. For the beautification of railway station there, they have spent some amount. For the development of second entry at Tirupati railway station, they are giving Rs.12 crore only.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please wind up. One more Member from your Party is going to speak.

SHRI BALLI DURGA PRASAD: Sir, I will conclude in another three minutes.

Sir, a wagon workshop was to be set up in Tiruchanur but so far no action has been taken. Besides, in Nellore district, more than 1800 acres of Railway property is there. There is a very big junction. Mr. Lalu Prasad Yadav laid foundation for a sleeper factory there. Now 1800 acres of Railway land is lying vacant. People are expecting that a factory will certainly come up in Nellore district.

Another point is regarding Kovvur to Bhadrachalam line. It will connect Telangana, Andhra Pradesh and other places. It is also pending. You have to give special priority to Bitragunta. It is because so far people are protecting 1800 acres of land. The hon. Minister was saying that they are purchasing private land for the construction of some factory.

Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJAN BABURAO VICHARE (THANE): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi ji, for presenting such a good Budget, which has been welcomed by every section of society. This Budget is truly one with far-reaching consequences, and its better outcomes will be visible in the coming years. In any case, due care has been taken in the Railway Budget to address the needs of people from all sections of society. In this year's Budget also, by not increasing passenger fares, relief has been provided to railway passengers, for which I would like to thank the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways. In this Railway Budget as well, special emphasis has been laid on passenger amenities and modernisation, along with infrastructural development of the Railways. I am a Member elected for the second time from Thane in Maharashtra. From time to time, I have placed before the Hon. Minister for Railways the rail-related problems of my area.

In this Railway Budget, a plan for beautification of stations has also been included, and a target has been set for world-class redevelopment of 22 major railway stations in the country through the Indian Railway Station Development Corporation. Thereafter, in the coming times, these stations will be upgraded to international standards and facilities akin to those at airports will be provided there. This is going to happen for the first time. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways that Thane Railway Station, which falls within my parliamentary constituency, may also be included in this scheme.

The Hon. Finance Minister has stated in her Budget speech that private participation will also be promoted through the PPP model in Indian Railways and Metro projects, which will certainly accelerate the development of the Railways. It has been stated in the Budget that a Railway Station Modernisation Programme under the PPP model will be launched. Thane Railway Station, which falls within my parliamentary constituency, is a historic railway station. The first train ran from Bori Bunder to Thane on 16 April, 1853. It has been nearly 164 years since then. Approximately seven to eight lakh passengers commute daily from this station, and under the Central Railway, after Mumbai, Thane Station generates revenue of Rs. 50

lakh per day for the Government. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways that Thane Railway Station may be accorded the status of a world-class station and that additional facilities for passengers may also be provided there.

At the same time, the old building constructed at Thane Railway Station has reached a highly dilapidated condition and may collapse at any time. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly arrange for the construction of a new building in place of the dilapidated one. I would also request that provision for this may kindly be made in this Budget.

The Hon. Finance Minister has stated in the Budget that a target has been set up to the year 2030 for the modernisation of railway infrastructure and for completing approved projects. Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister for Railways to the two-kilometre-long Airoli-Kalwa link work of the Central Railway falling within my parliamentary constituency of Thane, the foundation stone of which has already been laid by the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji. However, even after more than three years have elapsed, the second phase of the work has not yet commenced. Through you, I

would like to urge the Hon. Minister for Railways to ensure that this work is started at the earliest.

At the same time, approval has already been accorded for the construction of a new Thane station at the site of the Mental Hospital between Thane and Mulund, and the project cost has also been deposited. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways that this work may also be completed at the earliest.

Sir, with regard to railway projects connecting my parliamentary constituency of Thane with Navi Mumbai (Central and Harbour lines) and Mira Road and Bhayander (Western Railway), I would like to request, through you, the Hon. Minister for Railways to introduce more 15-coach local train services, start AC local services, and provide halts for long-distance trains at Bhayander station. Along with this, I would also like to request, through you, that facilities such as escalators, lifts, foot overbridges and women's toilets may be provided at all railway stations in Navi Mumbai.

Sir, finally, while concluding my remarks, I would like to state that whenever any announcements are made or funds are allocated by the Government in the Budget for the development of Railways in the State of Maharashtra, the work should commence within at

least one year, so that every project can be completed in a timely manner.

I support this Budget and, while expressing my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, the Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, the Hon. Minister for Railways Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways Shri Suresh Angadi ji, I convey my best wishes to them for the future.

SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV (MADHEPURA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways for the year 2019-20.

Sir, at the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister for Railways for approving the Supaul-Araria and Araria-Galgalia railway projects in Bihar after Independence, thereby linking the extremely backward Kosi region with development on par with other areas. This is a border region and, from the point of view of security, this project is of great importance.

Sir, due to non-availability of funds as required, the work on these projects is pending. The process of land acquisition is underway, but owing to lack of funds, the acquisition work is also being hindered. Therefore, I request the Government to take necessary steps and provide adequate funds to ensure that this important project is completed at the earliest.

Sir, in the year 2008, due to the devastating floods in the Kosi region, the railway line from Saraigarh and Bhaptiahi to Forbesganj was destroyed. Even till now, rail traffic on this line has not been restored. Since the year 2016, operations on the metre gauge line

from Saharsa to Forbesganj have been suspended for gauge conversion. As the gauge conversion work has not been completed, rail traffic has come to a standstill and the pace of gauge conversion work is very slow. As a result, the development of the Kosi region has been obstructed. Through the House, I would like to urge that the work on these projects be expedited and completed at the earliest so that rail operations can be started on these routes.

Sir, similarly, the Saraigarh-Bhaptiahi railway project via Sakri and Nirmali is pending due to lack of funds, even though the bridge over the Kosi river has been ready for several years. Therefore, through the House, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister for Railways and request that adequate funds be provided at the earliest under these pending railway projects, so that this region may be connected with other cities of India. With these words, I conclude my remarks.

[English]

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU (BERHAMPUR): Hon. Chairman Sir, on behalf of Biju Janata Dal, I thank you for giving me this chance to participate in this discussion on the Demands for Grants of Indian Railways. I also thank my leader, Shri Naveen Patnaik, for giving me this opportunity to be here as a Member of Parliament from Biju Janata Dal.

I also congratulate the first woman Finance Minister for presenting the Union Budget. The young, energetic Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, for the wonderful performance of the Ministry of Railways.

You know that railways is the heartline of our country which has a great role in the socio-economic development of our country. It has been connecting all parts of our country and is helping in the national integration. It has united us cutting across regional, linguistic, caste, creed and religious identities, carrying them together and penetrating to different parts of the country.

Traditionally, the Railway Budget was presented separately and thus, there was a focus on railway development. It was so important for the Members to raise issues relating to their constituencies while participating in the debate on the Railway Budget in this august

House but after merging the Railway Budget with the General Budget, it has not been given any focus.

Since we are a developing country, the infrastructure development through railways has a great importance.

In this Budget of 2019-20, the hon. Finance Minister has given Rs. 68,000 crore for the railways. Our Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik*ji* and the people of Odisha were surprised when they got to know that the Central Government Budget allotment for Odisha in respect of Railways is not up to their expectations. Considering the bucket of on-going projects like Khurda-Bolangir, Jeypore-Nabarangpur, Jeypore-Malkangiri, Talcher-Bimlagarh etc., my State, Odisha requires increase of capital allotment to complete the on-going projects early.

Sir, no new line project has been sanctioned in this year's Budget for Odisha. This is disappointing for our Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik*ji* and also for the people of Odisha as the rail density in Odisha is hardly hovering around 15 per 1000 square kilometres which is much less than the national average of about 20, and even much lesser compared to adjoining States like West Bengal and Bihar. Odisha needs new projects, and all railway projects are economically beneficial to Railways as well. The Gopalpur-

Rayagada project alone has 17.5 per cent rate of return, and combining it with Gunupur-Therubali, the rate of return would be 24 per cent. After all, Railways earn about Rs. 20,000 crore a year from Odisha alone.

Sir, new projects such as Puri-Konark, Brahmapur-Sambalpur via Kandhamal, Bargarh-Nuapada, Jajpur-Dhamra, Bangiriposi-Gorumahisani and Buramara-Chakulia have been proposed by our dynamic Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik*ji* to the Ministry of Railways. Our State Government has also offered financial participation for many of these projects. These projects need early sanctioning by the Ministry of Railways as these will connect the mineral-rich areas with existing and upcoming ports as well as tribal areas of the State.

Sir, some of the earlier sanctioned important projects have been given very meagre allotments which points to no real progress. The Gunupur-Therubali new line sanctioned in 2017-18 Budget is yet to even receive CCEA approval. Similarly, for the Jaleswar-Digha project, even land acquisition has not been done since last five years. Our Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik*ji* has already requested for a change of alignment to make the project take-off in Odisha to the Ministry of Railways.

To ensure seamless flow of traffic and easier access between industrial and mining areas and ports, the following short links need to be sanctioned at the earliest:

1. Puri-Konark
2. Paradip-Dhamra
3. Champua-Anandpur-Jajpur
4. Baripada-Jajpur Keonjhar Road
5. Talcher-Angul
6. Talcher-Gopalpur

Additionally, Jajpur Keonjhar Road-Jajpur via Aradi link is equally important for pilgrims visiting the religious destination at Biraja Kshetra which can be comparable to Dwarka and Kashi.

Now, I come to the point of introduction of new trains. The following new trains may be introduced:

1. One train from Berhampur to Ahmedabad and Surat. As 30 lakh people from Odisha are working in Surat, a daily train from Berhampur to Surat may be started.
2. One more daily train from Bhubaneswar to Mumbai via Vishakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Secunderabad (apart from

Konark). This is the only train in which lakhs and lakhs of people travel every week.

3. Daily train from Rourkela to Bangalore via Bhubaneswar and Berhampur.
4. Jamshedpur to Hyderabad via Rourkela, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur.
5. Bhubaneswar to Sambalpur via Berhampur and Bolangir.
6. Gunupur to Howrah via Berhampur.
7. Jamshedpur to Vishakhapatnam via Dhanbad, Bhubaneswar and Berhampur
8. One passenger train from Bhadrak to Dhamra port and Akhandalamani, a famous *Shiva Peeth*.

The next point is regarding increase in frequency of trains. The frequency of Vishakhapatnam-Amritsar (Hirakund Express) may be increased from three days in a week to daily. Since more than 10 years, this train is running three days a week. So, I request that it should run daily.

I also request that Samata Express which runs from Vishakhapatnam to H. Nizamuddin should run daily.

The next point is regarding extension of trains.

1. Odisha-Sampark Kranti Express and Delhi-Bhubaneswar Duronto may be extended up to Berhampur.
2. Dhanbad-Bhubaneswar Tapaswini Express may be extended to Berhampur.
3. The train from Mumbai to Vishakhapatnam may be extended up to Bhubaneswar.

To meet the travelling needs of daily commuters, there is a need to introduce DEMU/MEMU services in Sambalpur-Jharsuguda-Rourkela, Cuttack-Paradip, Brahmapur-Balasore and Rourkela-Keonjhar corridors.

Cuttack and Bhubaneshwar together are developing as a twin city and as per the Comprehensive Development Plan prepared by IIT, Kharagpur, the combined population shall be 2.7 million by the year 2021 which shall necessitate a Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS). Considering the growth of this area, this would be an appropriate time to commence detailed planning for rail-based city transport system in greater Bhubaneswar region.

It may be mentioned here that Bhubaneswar has not only been ranked `No. 1 Smart City' in India, but also has bagged honours as

the only city from India in the Smart City Expo World Congress, held recently in Barcelona with rank three across the globe. Therefore, urgent planning for land and other technical requirements for a MRTS system is imperative to keep pace with the development and aspirations of the capital city. …*(Interruptions)*. Sir, I am the only speaker. Please give me two minutes.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: Bhubaneswar to Puri may also be considered under Mass Rapid Transit System (MRTS).

Development of Railway Stations: Sir, as far as development of railway stations is concerned, the Railways has earlier shortlisted 12 stations in 2016-17, but no work has started so far. However, our Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik Ji has committed to re-develop Bhubaneswar station into a world class one with State Government funds. Railways need to expedite railway station re-development in Odisha. The work for re-development of stations at Cuttack, Berhampur, Baleswar, Sambalpur, Rayagada, Jeypore need to be taken up expeditiously.

The cyclone `Fani' has totally devastated the holy city of Puri and the railway station has also been devastated. It has a pilgrimage importance. There is an urgent need to re-develop the Puri railway

station. It has completely gone. Nothing has been done till now. As you know, cyclone `Fani' has occurred mainly in Puri. I request the Government to look into the matter.

As you are aware that cyclone `Fani' has damaged infrastructure set up by State and various Central Government agencies. Indian Railways is one of them. It has suffered a loss of Rs. 400 crore in the form of damages and Rs. 200 crore in the form of loss in earning capacity due to damage caused by cycle `Fani'. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: Yes Sir, I am just concluding. The East Coast Railway Zone, where railway infrastructure is damaged, is one of the highest loading Railway zones of Indian Railways. There is a need for separate allocation for restoring the damaged Railway infrastructure in my State.

It is a very important issue. Our Chief Minister has also raised this issue many times. In Sitallapalli, a wagon factory was sanctioned in 2011 and 100 acres of land has been given by our dynamic Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik Ji to the Ministry of Railways, but the people of Odisha were surprised when they came to know that this factory does not figure in the Budget for 2019-20.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI CHANDRA SEKHAR SAHU: Similarly, the Kalahandi Locomotive workshop also sees a reduced token allotment of Rs. 1 crore in the Budget. Considering the employment opportunities and migration of labour, there will be a great impact on the people of Odisha if operationalization of these projects will be delayed.

I have one more small suggestion to make. Earlier, in DRUCC's meetings, Chamber of Commerce of the concerned area was given representation. This has been stopped now. I request again that the Chamber of Commerce representation may be given in DRUCC.

Lastly, for development of India, it is imperative for Government of India to give focus to our State of Odisha which has historically faced discrimination in allotment of funds for Railways. Our Chief Minister, Shri Naveen Patnaik Ji has a very positive approach.

He has provided free land for railway projects and contributed up to 50 per cent of construction cost. He has also exempted stamp duty as registration fees on land procurement for all railway projects in our State.

Therefore, this is the time for the Union Government to help our State as a big brother with great heart and review the railways proposals including some of the long standing new line projects concerning our State, and also enhance real capital allotment in this sector to expedite the ongoing projects.

With these words, I once again thank you, and hope that the hon. Minister of Railways will look into the concerns of our State Odisha.

Thank you very much.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, those of you who want to lay their written speeches on the Table of the House, y may do so. It will be treated as part of the proceedings of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI HAJI FAZLUR REHMAN (SAHARANPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am very thankful to you for inviting me to participate in the discussion on the Railways. Along with this, I would also like to thank the people of the Saharanpur Lok Sabha constituency who gave me the opportunity to represent them in Parliament. Through you, I would like to bring to the notice of the Government that Saharanpur district, from where I have been elected, is known not only within the country but also abroad for wood carving. The wood carving products from this area are supplied across the country. Besides this, tourists travel by rail from Saharanpur to enter Uttarakhand. In other words, Saharanpur Railway Station is an important station both from the industrial perspective as well as for tourists. I would like the Ministry of Railways to pay attention to certain important points which will not only increase railway revenue but also provide greater convenience to passengers.

The first point is that the work of doubling of the railway line from Saharanpur Tapri Station to Muzaffarnagar has been going on for a long time, but its pace is so slow that it is difficult to say when the work will be completed. I would request that the concerned

officials be directed so that the work of doubling of the railway line may be completed at the earliest.

The second important point is that there is no express train from Saharanpur to Delhi between 9.15 a.m. in the morning and 4.30 p.m. in the evening. There is only one passenger train. I request the Hon. Minister to ensure that an express train is provided during the above-mentioned time period, so that not only business persons but also the general public may avail themselves of railway facilities. Near Saharanpur Railway Station lies Deoband, where the world-famous Darul Uloom Madrasa and the Siddh Peeth Sanskrit University are located. People come here for education not only from within the country but also from abroad. At present, there are mainly two trains serving this area. I request that halts of these two trains, Golden Temple Mail 12904 and Udhampur Express 22432, be ensured. I have earlier written a letter to the Hon. Minister in this regard. Saharanpur Railway Station is a very big junction. The cleanliness arrangements there are not satisfactory and attention needs to be paid to this. Along with this, the industrial products for which the region is famous, such as wood carving and hosiery, should also be displayed at the railway station, so that every business person

passing through this platform may understand the industrial importance of this area.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the most important issue is that there are only two common platforms here, namely Platforms Four and Five. Platform Four has somehow been extended and divided into Platforms Three and Four. I would request that, while undertaking beautification of Saharanpur Junction, the number of common platforms may be increased, so that even when trains arrive on time, they are not made to wait outside signals and passengers do not face inconvenience. Further, I would request the Hon. Minister that the bullet train project, for which enormous expenditure is being incurred and whose benefits will accrue only to people of a particular region, may kindly have at least 50 per cent of that expenditure diverted towards smaller cities as well. This would significantly improve the railway system of small towns across the country. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB (CUTTACK):** Indian Railways has the fourth largest rail network in the world after United States, China and Russia. It has monopoly in providing rail services in India.

The Railway's Revenue for 2019-20 is estimated at Rs.2,16,935 crore which is a 10% increase from the revised estimates of 2018-19. Total revenue from traffic for 2019-20 is estimated at Rs.2,16,675 crore, which is 10% increase from RE of 2018-19. In 2019-20 revenue from freight and passenger traffic is expected to grow by 10% and 8% respectively. In 2018-19 (RE) the revenue from freight traffic increased by 6% while revenue from passenger traffic did not see any change. The total expenditure by Railways for 2019-20 is projected at Rs.2,07,900 crore which is a 9% increase from the RE of 2018-19. In 2018-19 (RE) total expenditure increased by 2%.

In the last few years, Railways has been struggling to generate its own revenue. Railway's operating ratio has consistently been higher that is 90% in the past several years, which indicates that its capability to generate operational surplus is low. The growth rate of Railways earnings from its core business of running freight and

* Speech was laid on the Table.

passenger trains has been declining. This is due to a decline in the growth of both freight and passenger traffic. Railways is slowly losing traffic share to other modes of transport. The share of Railways in total freight traffic has declines from 89% in 1950-51 to 30% in 2011-12. On the other hand, Railways' expenditure on salaries has been gradually increasing with a significant jump every few years due to pay commission revisions. There is an increasing expenditure on pension too, which is unproductive, as this does not generate any revenue for the Railways. The pension bill may increase further in the next few years, as about 40% of the Railways staff was above the age of 50 years in 2016-17.

The Union Government supports Railways in order to expand its network and invest in capital expenditure. A decline in the growth of internal revenue generation has meant that Railways has been funding its capital expenditure through budgetary support from the Central Government and borrowings. While the support from Central Government has mostly remained consistent. Railways' borrowings have been increasing. In 2019-20 the gross budgetary support from Central Government is proposed at Rs.66,105 crore. This is a 25% increase from the revised estimates of 2018-19 which was Rs.53,060 crore.

Railways earns its internal revenue primarily from passenger and freight traffic. In 2017-18 freight traffic was 65% and passenger traffic was 27% of the internal revenue. In 2019-20 Railways expects to earn 66% of its internal revenue from freight and 26% from passenger traffic. The remaining 8% will be earned from other miscellaneous sources such as parcel service, coaching receipts, sale of platform tickets and advertisements.

In 2019-20 Railways expects to earn Rs.1,43,000 crore from goods traffic which is in an increase of 10% over the revised estimates of 2018-19. In 2019-20 Railways expects to earn Rs.56,000 crore from passenger traffic, an increase of 8% over the revised estimates of 2018-19. However, the Government expects a growth in passenger traffic from 2019-20 to be 2.7%. In 2018-19 (RE) there was a 2% increase in passenger traffic.

One major issue regarding Railways is Extra Budgetary Resources which include market borrowings such as financing from banks, institutional financing and external investments. External investments in Indian Railways seen in the form of public private partnerships, joint ventures and market financing by attracting private investors to potentially buy bonds or equity shares in Railways. Indian Railways Finance Corporation (IRFC) borrows

funds from the market and then follows a leading model to finance the rolling stock assets and project assets of Indian Railways. In the past few years, borrowings have increased sharply to bridge the gap between the available resources and expenditure. In 2019-20 Rs.83,571 crore is estimated to be raised through EBR which is an increase of 5 % over revised estimates of 2018-19 (Rs..79,298 crore)

Indian Railways does not have an institutional arrangement to attract and aggregate traffic of smaller parcel size. Therefore, it has been losing out on high potential markets such as FMCGs, hazardous materials or automobiles and containerized cargo. Most of this traffic is transported by roads. It is an accepted fact that freight cross-subsidies passenger traffic. In 2014-15, while Railway freight business made a profit of about Rs.44,000 crore, its passenger business incurred a net loss of about Rs.33,000 crore. The total passenger revenue during this period was Rs.49,000 crore. Therefore, in 2014-15 for every one rupee earned in its passenger business, Indian Railways ended up spending Rs.1.67. Various experts have recommended rationalizing both freight and passenger fares. Passenger business losses is being classified as the social service obligations. But three issues arises from such classification. First, it is not clear whether this figure hides any operational

ineffectiveness. The Committee on Restructuring Railways had noted that the methods of calculating the cost of running passenger business are not scientific and accurate.

Second, inefficiency in Railways' fare structure also is a factor contributing to the losses in the passenger service business. Niti Aayog has suggested that Railways can price passenger fares as per the prevalent market rates in corresponding transport modes. The CAG has noted in 2018 that there is no justification for the Railways for not fully recovering the loss of passenger services in case of AC and First Class Travel. Third, this raises the question whether Railways should bear these social obligations, when it works as a commercial department under the Government.

The Standing Committee on Railways in 2017 had recommended that the Ministry of Finance should reimburse the Ministry of Railways on losses made on all strategically important lines. Till 2016-17 the Ministry of Finance was reimbursing Railways for operational losses on fixed strategic lines. Now talking about expenditure one can say staff wages and pension together comprise more than half of the Railways' expenditure. In 2019-20, the total expenditure by Railways is estimated at Rs.207,900 crore which is 9% increase over the revised estimates of 2018-19. For

2019-20 the expenditure on staff is estimated at Rs.86,554 crore, which is 11% higher than the revised estimates of 2018-19. Allocation to the Pension Fund is estimated at Rs.50100 crore which is 6% higher than the Revised Estimates of 2018-19. Together these constitute about 66% of the Railways' estimated expenditure in 2019-20. Such expenditure on staff is extremely high and unmanageable. This expense is not under the control of Railways and keeps increasing with each Pay Commission revision. Therefore it is urgent that Railways streamline the recruitment process, rationalize manpower and make the organization more business oriented.

Coming to the Railway network in Odisha, it has been told repeatedly that more funds be provided for speedy implementation of the ongoing projects be it Haridaspur-Paradeep line or Khurdha Road-Bolangir Line, its work is getting delayed year after year. This year of course a new survey is mentioned in the Demands for Grants for Railways which is from Raja Athagarh to Kaipadar Road avoiding Bhubaneswar and Khurda Road. I welcome it. Earlier another survey was done from Talcher to Gopalpur via Narasingpur, Khandapada to Rambha and Gopalpur which would not only connect

the coalfields to the Port but will serve the hinterland and bring in more revenue to the Railways.

Lastly I would say, Odisha would oppose any division of East Coast Railway. It would be a mistake if Waltair Division is taken away from East Coast Railway Zone. Rather those rail lines of Odisha which are now under different zones, such as South East and Sought East Central Zones be amalgamated in East Coast for smooth running of freight and passenger trains in the region. No attempt should be made to bifurcate East Coast Zone at all.

SHRI MANNE SRINIVAS REDDY (MAHBUBNAGAR): Hon. Chairperson, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak in the House today on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways.

I want to take up the railway projects pertaining to my Mahbubnagar Parliamentary Constituency and Telangana State. Our Chief Minister, K. Chandrashekar Rao, Sir, is also grateful to the Government.

There is a need to complete Mahabubnagar-Munirabad new railway line project in Telangana which was sanctioned in the year 1997-98 having distance of 246 kilometres with an estimated cost of Rs. 645 crores. It is a long-pending demand. The project needs to be expedited. There is need to speed up doubling of Secunderabad-Mahabubnagar railway line and electrification works which were sanctioned in the year 2015-16, having 85 kilometres of length, with an estimated cost of Rs. 728 crores. We would also like to request the Government to speed up the works on a priority basis as about 3,000 people are travelling between Mahabubnagar and Secunderabad on a daily basis.

We would also like to bring to your kind notice that modernization and expansion of existing Mahabubnagar Raillway

Station as well as Divitipalli Railway Station, which is adjacent to Government Medical College and proposed IT corridors and a large 2 BHK residential complex, is very much essential. Electrification work on many railway lines with an estimated budget was also sanctioned in the year 2018-19 but there is no progress. The railway line work from Gadwal to Raichur, having a distance of 57 kilometres, covering Telangana and Karnataka States with an estimated cost of about Rs. 46.10 crore, has not made much progress. We request the Government to complete it on a priority basis.

There is a need to expedite the work on Lingampet-Jagityal and Nizamabad railway lines in Telangana State, which is covering a distance of 95 kilometres with a cost of Rs. 80.29 crores. The work on the new railway lines, which were sanctioned in the year 2018-19, is yet to be started or initiated.

The railway line from Patancheru-Sangareddy-Jogipet-Medak in Telangana State, having a distance of 95 kilometres, should be given priority as it covers the prominent industrial area and SEZ. This project is pending for the last two years. I would also like to state that the work of a new railway line between Gadwal to Macherla, having a distance of 151 kilometres, should be fast-

tracked. It is falling under the Kannur Lok Sabha constituency. The work on Vikarabad Wadi-Krishna railway line, which is covering 87 kilometres of distance - a more economically and socially backward area of Makthal and Narayanpet Assembly constituencies - need to be expedited.

The work on the lines from Peddapalli to Kazipet, Pagidipalli to Bhongir, Bhongir to Shankarpally, Vishnupuram to Janpahad, Manakondur-Huzurabad- Elkaturthi, Nizamabad-Mudkhed-Parbhani, Nizamabad-Nirmal-Adilabad, having a distance of 125 kilometres, are yet to be started. We request the Government to initiate the work on above-mentioned lines on a priority basis.

The important railway line to Singareni Colleries from Bhadrachalam - Sattupalli - Kovur covers a distance of 133 kms., and the acquisition of land for the Bhadrachalam road to Sattupalli railway line has been cleared by the Railway Board. For its commencement, 500 acres are required for the 36 km. railway line in Bhadradri-Kothagudem district and 17.3 km. railway line in Khammam district. This 53.2 km. section will cost about Rs. 704 crore.

Please note that this prime project would be funded by Singareni Collieries and the land acquisition cost is to be borne by

Indian Railways. This project is to be taken up on top priority as this line will cater to the needs of the local people in and around Singareni Collieries in Khammam district in Telangana.

Kazipet Junction is located in Secunderabad Division of South Central Railway having its headquarters at Secunderabad. Kazipet junction is the gateway to north and south India and is an epicenter of north Telangana Districts. It is 225 kms. away from Balharshah and Vijayawada and 135 kms from Secunderabad. As such, Kazipet is administratively and economically viable and it is the best option to carve it out as a separate Division. Kazipet has an electrical loco shed and a diesel loco shed to supply locomotives and a crew control cell to book guard and drivers for the trains. Further, it has maintenance facilities for maintenance of goods and passenger trains and to cater to the needs of the local people.

Establishing a coach factory in Kazipet, for which an assurance was given in the Andhra Pradesh State Reorganisation Act, 2014, is the need of the hour. Our Telangana State Government has already allotted land and other related infrastructural facilities to set up the coach factory which is long pending demand of the State Government.

It is to bring to your kind notice that 60 per cent of the revenue of South Central Railway is coming from South Central Division out of which 80 per cent of the revenue is coming from four north Telangana districts. It is evident that approximately 48 per cent of the revenue is coming from this region.

It is to bring to the kind notice of the House, through the Chair, that all these railway projects pertaining to Telangana State have earlier been submitted to the hon. Prime Minister and also to the hon. Railway Minister with a request to complete all the above said projects on top priority with the allocation of sufficient funds to realise the dream of the Telangana people whose hopes and aspirations need to be fulfilled.

With these few words, I conclude my speech. Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

***SHRI RAKESH SINGH (JABALPUR):** Prior to the year 2014, the Governments in power used to build a huge mountain of false announcements for their political gains, and thereafter the files relating to those announcements and projects would get stuck, then remain hanging, and eventually wander off and gather dust in some scrap heap. However, as soon as the Government was formed in the country in 2014 under the leadership of Hon. Modi ji with the blessings of the people, those important projects which had been gathering dust were restarted, and they have also been taken to their final destination.

All the projects announced by the Congress Governments have been completed by our Government without any bias or prejudice.

My parliamentary constituency, Jabalpur, is also the headquarters of the West Central Railway. Jabalpur houses several major units of the Ministry of Defence, and the High Court of Madhya Pradesh is also located in Jabalpur. As a result of my party's trust in me and the blessings of the people of Jabalpur, I have been continuously representing Jabalpur in the Lok Sabha since the year 2004. Despite being the headquarters of the West Central Railway,

* Speech was laid on the Table.

Jabalpur was waiting for the development of infrastructure, improved connectivity and fulfilment of its basic needs. In order to get the demands of the people fulfilled, I have on several occasions led agitations against the Railways and undertaken foot marches to protest and to secure Jabalpur its rightful due.

There are many such examples, but I would like to mention one example to illustrate the indifferent attitude that was adopted during the Congress regime even towards important projects. The foundation stone of the Jabalpur-Gondia Broad Gauge project was laid in the year 2001 by the then Prime Minister and a revered figure for all of us, the late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji. At that time, recognising the importance of this project, the Government led by Atal ji also approved an initial budget of Rs. 100 crore. Subsequently, in the year 2004, the Congress came to power and I was elected for the first time from Jabalpur. After becoming a Member of Parliament, the Jabalpur-Gondia gauge conversion remained at the top of my priorities. I made several efforts to ensure that adequate budgetary support was provided to this project. I organised agitations, staged dharnas and undertook padayatras. However, the result of the indifference of the Congress Government

can be seen in the fact that a project originally estimated at Rs. 511 crore escalated to nearly Rs. 1,700 crore.

As soon as our Government was formed at the Centre in 2014 under the leadership of Hon. Modi ji, it was as if this project had been given wings. I state with happiness and pride that within just five years, the entire project has moved close to completion and work on the final phase is progressing at a fast pace. The project will be completed even before the end of the current year. Hon. Chairperson**,** Sir**,** this is what is meant by the will and determination to work and to deliver while being in Government.

Many of my long-standing colleagues are still Members of the Lok Sabha and they would certainly have experience of working with the previous Governments. Earlier, under the Congress Governments, there was neither concern for projects, nor for the development of railway infrastructure, nor for passenger amenities. Today, we will all wholeheartedly acknowledge that, for the first time, if any steps have been taken to address problems faced by a passenger while travelling in a running train, such concern has been shown under our Government. Today, a passenger, while sitting in a train anywhere in the country, can get his difficulties and problems

resolved through a single tweet. This is also a small example of the Government's sensitivity towards the people.

Since the year 2014, numerous works have been undertaken in my parliamentary constituency of Jabalpur from the point of view of the Railways, for which I express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways. On the basis of regional demands, several requests made by me have been acceded to by the Hon. Minister for Railways. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister for Railways to a few important issues which are extremely necessary.

• Work on the final phase of the Jabalpur-Gondia Broad Gauge project is underway. I request the Government that although the target was to complete it by March this year, some delay has occurred due to technical issues. I would request the Government to kindly take the necessary steps to ensure that the project is completed at the earliest.

• Under the Itarsi-Allahabad electrification project, the work from Itarsi to Katni has been completed and has also been operationalised. As per information available, the Katni-Satna section has also been completed and is about to be commissioned. I would request the Government that this project has already taken more time than the

stipulated timeframe for completion, and therefore necessary action may kindly be taken to ensure that it is completed at the earliest.

• On my request, the Hon. Minister for Railways had sanctioned a lump sum amount of Rs. 125 crore for developing Madan Mahal Station as a terminal station. I would request the Government to kindly issue appropriate directions so that the work may commence at the earliest.

• Over the past five years, many important demands relating to Jabalpur and the railway stations within my parliamentary constituency have been fulfilled by the Government. However, some development works are still pending. At Jabalpur Main Railway Station also, several major works have been undertaken during the last five years, keeping in view infrastructure development and passenger amenities. I would suggest that escalator facilities may be provided on the remaining platforms as well. At railway stations under Jabalpur, namely Sihora, Gosalpur, Deori, Adhartal, Madan Mahal, Kachhpura and Bhitauni, there is a need for construction of standard-level platforms. Along with this, some other infrastructure works are also pending. I would request the Government to kindly take necessary action on the above demands.

• I had also written a letter to the Hon. Minister for Railways and held discussions regarding the proposed new Jabalpur-Indore via Misrod railway line. I would, therefore, request the Hon. Minister for Railways that the said demand may kindly be considered.

For several years, there has been a continuous demand from the people of the region for a train from Jabalpur to Haridwar. I had also met the Hon. Minister and discussed this matter. I would request that necessary action may kindly be taken for introducing a new train from Jabalpur to Haridwar..

A large number of people from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh reside in Jabalpur. They have been demanding a new train from Jabalpur to Patna or Patliputra via Hajipur and Muzaffarpur. Therefore, I would request that necessary action may kindly be taken for introducing a new train on this route as well.

At present, more than half a dozen special trains are operating from Jabalpur, directly connecting it with important cities across the country. I am happy to state that the occupancy of all these trains is also very good. However, it is necessary that some of these trains be converted from special to regular services. On the basis of regional demands, I would request that certain trains may be regularised.

For professional education, business and employment, a large number of people from Jabalpur and the surrounding areas frequently travel between Jabalpur and Pune. Despite being a special train, passengers have shown considerable interest in this service. Therefore, I would request the Government that this train may be regularised at the earliest.

On the demand of the Sikh community, a Jabalpur-Attari-Jabalpur special train was started at my instance. People have also shown keen interest in this train and its occupancy is good. Hence, it is also necessary that this train be regularised.

At present, there is only one direct weekly train from Jabalpur to Jammu Tawi. However, passengers travelling from Jabalpur to Jammu have to return to Jabalpur via Delhi. When travelling with families, they often face difficulties due to changing trains. Therefore, I would request that necessary action may kindly be taken to operate this train at least twice a week.

The Jabalpur-Hazrat Nizamuddin-Jabalpur Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express is currently running only three days a week. There is a demand from the people of the region that this train should be operated on all seven days of the week. I would request that necessary action may kindly be taken in this regard.

The Garib Rath is the only direct train from Jabalpur to Mumbai. Since there is only one such train, passenger demand is very high and, as a result, there is always a long waiting list. However, as per the information received, the production of Garib Rath coaches has been discontinued. Therefore, I would request the Government to convert this train into a Duronto Express and to operate it on all seven days of the week.

Jabalpur is the headquarters of the West Central Railway, and being a headquarters, the demands are naturally higher. On the basis of the requirements of my region, I regularly submit memoranda to the Hon. Minister for Railways from time to time. I have also mentioned some important demands in my Budget speech today. I would request the Government to kindly take necessary action to fulfil these demands.

[English]

***SHRI ANNASAHEB SHANKAR JOLLE (CHIKKODI):**This year's budget has few of the well thought and well planned allocations for the Railways.

In the interest of the development of the nation infrastructure development of the railway system needs to be still focused upon. All the pending projects and surveys to be carried out has to be done and preferably using the expertise of professionals or experts from the private companies also.

The time period of sanction of a project in the Indian Railways till the successful completion needs to be reduced and this is possible by focusing on increased funds for speedy implementation.

There should be focus on Private Public Partnership in the future for the overall improvement of the system and future budgets to focus upon the same.

* Speech was laid on the Table.

[*]**SHRI P.R. NATARAJAN (COIMBATORE):** Coimbatore to Pollachi rail track gauge conversion work was conducted by the railway more than eight years before. Even after completion of the work the southern railway is not operating the trains. The below mentioned trains were operated by the Railway department before gauge conversion:-

1. Coimbatore to Rameswaram Express
2. Coimbatore to Kollam Express
3. Coimbatore to Madurai Passenger

I request the Hon. Minister of Railways to take action for an immediate restoration of the trains as this is the long pending demand of the Coimbatore and Pollachi people.

Kindly note that Coimbatore to Bangalore night express was announced during the budget in the year 2007 but still no steps have been taken to start the trains.

Tragically unresolved and burning issue of deaths of wild elephants due to train hits is nowadays increasing especially in the States of Tamilnadu, Assam and Uttaranchal.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

In Pollachi Constituency, Tamilnadu, the area surrounding Coimbatore, with its mountains and forests has become death trap for wild elephants with around 25 elephants killed by speeding trains in the past 10 years.

This is because of the rail stretch between Madukarai and Walayar of Coimbatore - Palghat trunk route passes through this traditional elephant corridor. The Sollakarai beat in the Navakarai section is part of Madukarai forest where Twin Single Railway Lines A and B cut through this Reserve forest.

Many measures to keep Jumbo's off the tracks have failed. Electric fences erected on sides of tracks have been ineffective as elephants pulled them down.

Wildlife activists meanwhile pointed out that the accidents happened despite Tamil Nadu forest department deploying anti-poaching watcher to monitor elephant movements along tracks. The Railways should issue strict warnings to loco-pilots to adhere to the speed limit especially during night hours, but the trains often ply at 80-100 kmph in this elephant corridors.

The Ministry of Railways should initiate action to bring the two lines together and built fences along tracks using old discarded rails.

There has to be better co-ordination between The Ministry of Railways, the Ministry of Environment and Forests, respective State Governments and wildlife NGOs to tackle the problems. If the activities initiated to prevent elephant deaths succeed, this could be the hope for the coming years.

***SHRI K. SHANMUGA SUNDARAM (POLLACHI):** Coimbatore to Pollachi rail track gauge conversion work was conducted by the railway more than eight years before. Even after completion of the work the southern railway is not operating the trains. The below mentioned trains were operated by the Railway department before gauge conversion:-

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[Translation]

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY (MUMBAI NORTH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, before expressing my views on the Railway Budget, I would first like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji, congratulate the Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, and also extend my congratulations and thanks to our own Mumbai's Railway Minister, the Hon. Shri Piyush Goyal ji, who has succeeded in giving a new direction to the Railways.

Sir, in this Budget, taxation is very low and there is no sign whatsoever of any increase in fares. While there is talk of providing facilities to people across the country, from the year 2014, when we began this journey, up to the year 2019, a very major change has taken place in the country.

14.59 hrs (Shrimati Rama Devi *in the Chair*)

A change has come in the minds of the people, in the political system, in the bureaucracy, and at the same time, an atmosphere of trust is also being built among passengers travelling by rail. If we look for the reason behind all this, it is the sincerity and hard work with which the Hon. Prime Minister has worked over the past five years that has instilled confidence in the minds of the people. This

confidence itself is reflected in the fact that 303 seats have come in favour of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the people have sent more than 350 Members of Parliament of the NDA to Parliament.

15.00 hrs

I would certainly like to mention the good work done by the Government here, but at the same time, there are some problems being faced by railway passengers. If I highlight those problems here, our bureaucracy will take cognisance of them, and I believe that this will greatly help in finding solutions to them in the coming days.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, this Lok Sabha, which is like a temple, is a temple of justice. It is here that the hopes and expectations of the people are fulfilled, and the manner in which they are fulfilled is also decided here. When I was given only a few minutes to speak on the Railway Budget in the year 2014, and when it was decided that I would contest the Lok Sabha election, my biggest agenda was that every year in the city of Mumbai, nearly three thousand people lose their lives due to falling from trains or being run over. An almost equal number of people are injured. If we were to compile the figures of deaths across the entire country, but even if I confine myself only to Mumbai, the city figures very high

in this regard. This is not a matter of pride for us; rather, it is a matter of sorrow and shame. However, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister of the country and all the Railway Ministers. Shri Sadananda Gowda ji took charge after the year 2014. Thereafter, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji came and brought about a major transformation. In those days, even files relating to small matters used to come to Delhi. By delegating all those powers to the railway officers, he brought about a very significant change in the system. This also enhanced the confidence of the officers, because they were given the opportunity to work and to demonstrate their skill and capability. I believe that the railway officers have done very good work over the last five years. Our expectations are very high. In comparison, the available facilities are limited, which is why everything may not be possible. But the source for creating those facilities has also been identified by the Hon. Prime Minister of our country. I also believe that in the coming five years, the country will progress very rapidly, and along with that, we will also have to take the Railways forward at the same pace.

I had made this demand in the year 2014 that door-closure trains would have to be introduced in Mumbai. When I had raised this issue at that time, even the people of Mumbai had laughed. In trains

where there are already passengers inside, almost an equal number travel hanging outside. How the doors would open and close was the biggest concern. However, our Hon. Minister for Railways has implemented this successfully. At present, some door-closure trains are operating in the city of Mumbai, and in the coming days, a large number of door-closure trains will be introduced.

Before I proceed further, I would like to make one more mention. Hon. Chairperson, Madam, at present, you are presiding over the Chair as a woman. Madam, your very name includes ‘Devi’, and all women are indeed a form of Devi. The manner in which women board trains in the city of Mumbai, if we were to show its visuals to the people of the country and to the Hon. Members present here, I can say with full confidence that if anyone deserves a gold medal, it would be the sisters of Mumbai. The way they board moving trains and alight from moving trains, risking their lives, is something that the women of Mumbai do every day while travelling by train.

Along with several demands, I would like to place one small request. In the coming days, when the new door-closure trains are introduced, I recall that Ram Naik ji, the Member of Parliament from North Mumbai, used to sit in this very House. He had placed many

innovative ideas before the country. One of those ideas was the introduction of Ladies Special trains, which are running very successfully in the city of Mumbai. To take his vision forward, I believe that if, out of the new AC and door-closure coaches that are to be introduced in the coming days, one train is earmarked as a Ladies Special, and if this is done by our Hon. Minister Shri Piyush Goyal ji, then through this year's Budget we can give a very big gift to our sisters. This remains one of my most important demands.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, this Budget has given a great deal to Mumbai and Maharashtra. If I were to enumerate it, I would confine myself to a few brief points. There are many achievements, and I believe that among all these achievements, what has been given this year to the city of Mumbai and its surrounding areas is significant. If you look at it, through MUTP, works amounting to Rs. 33,690 crore are to be undertaken for the city of Mumbai. Under this, *[English]* 191 air conditioned rakes are going to come with state of the art with door closing, vestibule coaches with CCTVs; and 19 suburban stations will be modernised.

Extension of Harbour line between Goregaon and Borivali is proposed. Direct connectivity between Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and Panvel and Borivali provides direction connection.

This will be a very major initiative for the people of the city of Mumbai. Fifth and sixth lines between Borivali to Virar will increase services. Fourth line between Kalyan and Asangaon, and third and fourth lines between Kalyan and Badlapur will benefit the upcoming residential area

[Translation]

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, Badlapur is developing very rapidly, much like Mumbai. A large number of municipal officers, officials working in the State Government and people from the business community have shifted to Badlapur because housing there is available at very reasonable rates. However, commuting by train from there, which was quite convenient at the time when they shifted, has today become similar to the situation in Mumbai. I believe that all these measures will bring very substantial benefits to the people living there. The dream of our Hon. Prime Minister to further develop Mumbai can be realised only if people are moved out of congested areas. For this, the surrounding regions will have to be developed and adequate facilities will have to be provided there. All this work has to be undertaken in the coming days. An additional 126 kilometres of track is to be constructed under these works. Employment generation during implementation is estimated at 60

lakh man-days, which means that employment opportunities on a very large scale will also be created in the coming period. In this Budget, a provision of Rs. 160 crore has been made for the railway line between Kalyan and Kasara. Therefore, once again, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Hon. Minister for Railways and the Hon. Finance Minister. For the proposed extension at Dahanu, a provision of Rs. 284 crore has also been made for laying two additional lines. Altogether, works amounting to more than Rs. 14,301 crore are to be undertaken in these areas. Hence, once again, I would like to congratulate Shri Piyush Goyal ji here.

Madam, all this work that is being undertaken these days is not like earlier times, when announcements were made in the Budget and then merely repeated again in the next Budget. As soon as the Budget is passed, work commences. Tenders and processes are initiated, and the people of the country begin to see that work has actually started. A very strong sense of trust among the people towards the Railways and the Government is steadily increasing these days, and this is indeed a matter of great satisfaction. I would like to say that whether it is the Western Railway of Mumbai, the Central Railway or the Harbour Line, there is a kind of web of deaths spread across all these sections, and we need to work on this

very rapidly. I am also aware that the fault of our Government in this matter is limited, because the crowding is extremely heavy. People travel in large numbers, people travel disregarding rules, people cross railway tracks, and despite repeated awareness efforts, the situation does not improve adequately. People also have their own compulsions, as they have to reach their workplaces on time. Therefore, even at the risk of their lives, they undertake such travel. At the same time, metro works in Mumbai are also progressing very rapidly. I would like to thank the Chief Minister of Maharashtra for the fact that the work on the metro is moving at a fast pace, and the work on the monorail is also progressing swiftly. When this project is completed by the year 2020, and about 50 per cent of the load shifts to the metro, there will be very substantial relief. With regard to door-closure trains, I once again believe that after the congestion reduces, implementing door-closure systems on a large scale will also bring significant relief. I myself am a person who has travelled extensively by train. When I was working as a Municipal Councillor and used to alight at Churchgate from Borivali, two or three buttons of my shirt would often come off, such was the crowd through which we had to get down. Therefore, while sharing what is close to my heart, I would like to say that if our railway officials and police

personnel make even a small additional effort, a large number of deaths can be reduced even without the Government having to do anything extra. For this, very swift action is required. That is why I wished to express my sentiments here. When I received the chart, I also tried to go through it and explain it. Across the country, the number of deaths up to the year 2014 and the substantial reduction witnessed by the year 2019 clearly show that the Government's attention in this area has been very significant. That is why these results are visible. I would like to say that we need to work on this issue with utmost seriousness.

Madam, with regard to all the works that are going to be undertaken in the city of Mumbai, I would like to once again mention, from the time when I was a Municipal Councillor, that when the first MUTP-I project was taken up, loans were provided to us by the World Bank. At that time, when I was in the Corporation, the proposal could not be passed for three years. One of the conditions laid down by the World Bank was that while laying the railway lines with the funds taken from them, the slum dwellers settled alongside those railway lines should not be rendered homeless. The work was to be commenced only after providing them with housing.

There was no proper coordination between the Government and the Corporation. Three years passed and even the loan was not forthcoming. Subsequently, after accepting this condition, the World Bank loan was received on a large scale and the work on the railway line was carried out after providing adequate space to all the affected people. However, going forward, considering the mindset of Government officials, there was a need to frame guidelines and to lay down a proper framework, but the officials did not take the initiative in this regard. Even today, this issue remains unresolved. The Hon. Prime Minister of the country speaks of providing housing to all by the year 2022. ... *(Interruptions)*

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I have been allotted half an hour. I have been asked to speak for half an hour. Two minutes after the bell is rung, I will take my seat. There will be no need to ring the bell a second time.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, the Hon. Prime Minister speaks of providing houses to all. The Hon. Chief Minister of Maharashtra has decided to provide houses to those eligible up to the year 2011. In this very House, I believe that Arvind Sawant ji or someone else had raised the issue that people residing on B.P.T. land should be provided housing. On the floor of this House, Shri Nitin Gadkari ji

had announced that people residing on Government land would be provided with adequate space. *[English]* Whatever the Hon. Prime Minister or the Hon. Ministers speak in this house is the voice of the government and is the voice of the people. *[Translation]* Our Government officials should take up this matter, frame proper guidelines and forward them to the Government, but this does not happen. I say this with great pain that three months ago, or about six months ago, the houses of around 250 people residing at Dahisar were demolished during the rainy season. I brought this matter to notice. I spoke to the Hon. Minister. The Hon. Minister immediately telephoned a …* railway officer. He made two or three calls and instructed the railway officials. Our Railway General Manager ...* stated that a proposal has been sent to the Railway Board, but no response has been received from there so far.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, in matters of this nature, proposals require hand-to-hand coordination. Those earlier days are gone. Today, an online system is in place in the country, and the speed of work needs to be enhanced accordingly. If the Chairman of the Railway Board is listening to me, I would like to make a humble submission. I would like to point out a very serious matter. After the

* Not recorded.

demolition of those 250 houses, the Hon. Chief Minister of Maharashtra immediately telephoned the Municipal Commissioner and instructed that these people should be provided housing without delay. The Municipal Commissioner, in turn, told the Railway Manager to provide housing to them. However, as per the prevailing procedure for allotment of houses, a letter was issued stating that rent would have to be paid, and so on. Now the Railway Manager says that there is no such rule or system available with them. After fifteen days, I again met the Hon. Chief Minister and the Municipal Commissioner. Both of them said that the people should first be given houses, and that the transfer of funds from Government to Government could be sorted out later. But it is a matter of great pain that even today, those 250 people remain homeless and are getting drenched in the rains. The officials of the Railway Board are not taking decisions. Through this Budget discussion, I want to place before this House the concerns of my constituency and of the common people. This is an issue concerning the entire country. I strongly feel that this should be resolved in one go. Government officials must understand that when the Hon. Prime Minister, the Chief Ministers and all Ministers are saying that houses must be provided to people by the year 2022, then solutions for providing

housing should be worked out without wasting any time. Officials keep saying that there is no rule. If there is no rule, then make a rule. The Government has already given directions. You should send proposals. If something does not move at the higher level, we are here to follow it up. We will get it done. But if proposals are not sent at all, I fail to understand how this issue will be resolved. Look at this mindset. After the Budget has been passed, MUTP-3 is going to be implemented there. Once MUTP-3 is implemented, it is clearly laid down in the rules that all affected people have to be provided housing. That is why some people appear to be running a kind of conspiracy to evict these people before MUTP is implemented, so that their burden does not fall on the project. How can such a mentality be allowed? Is this country meant only for contractors and big capitalists to earn and make money, or is this democracy meant to protect the life and property of people and to deliver justice within the rules and guidelines?

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I have myself risen from a slum to reach this House. Therefore, I understand how slums came up alongside railway lines. At times, our officials feel that politicians speak and raise demands only because they want votes. But when railway line works were originally undertaken, contractors brought

labourers from different States and settled them there. In those days, the land was vacant. First, two lines were laid, then four, and now six are being laid, and people have been residing there for a very long time. As the railway lines expanded, the slums gradually came closer to them. Just think, did the officers of those times have any desire to allow slums to come up near railway lines?

When railway works were underway, it was natural that the workers were accommodated nearby. This is how things happened across the city of Mumbai. Sewerage line projects were undertaken, and the largest sewerage system in Asia is being developed by the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation. People were brought in and settled there, and slums kept expanding. The railway network in the country expanded enormously. To work on railway lines, people came from Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and the population of Mumbai kept increasing. Now that the Government has framed rules for this, the administrative machinery should resolve these issues very quickly. I firmly believe this. I will not prolong my speech further. *... (Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member of Parliament Shri Sunil Tatkare ji.

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: Hon. Chairperson, Madam, my time to speak has not yet concluded. My party has allotted me half an hour to speak. I have spoken for only ten minutes so far.

HON. SPEAKER: You have already spoken for fifteen minutes.

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: Madam, if fifteen minutes have elapsed, then I still have fifteen minutes remaining. You may kindly ask my party leader. I will take my seat thereafter. ... *(Interruptions)*

Madam, with regard to the PPP model that is being introduced in the country, I am sometimes surprised. In a democracy, Governments are formed through elections, and when people elect a Government, it becomes the responsibility of that Government to fulfil all the hopes and expectations of the people. The PPP model is the only solution which can lead the country forward. Through this, we can move towards progress and provide facilities to the people. ... *(Interruptions)* Jaiswal ji, please tell me, what should I do? ... *(Interruptions)* I am saying that I have been given half an hour's time. ... *(Interruptions)*

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (WEST CHAMPARAN): Madam, please allow him to speak for at least five more minutes. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: He has already spoken for eighteen minutes, which is three minutes more than fifteen. Will he speak for half an hour? What about the other Members? In that case, it will be four o'clock by the time he finishes. ... *(Interruptions)*

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: Madam, I will speak for the duration allotted to me by my party, because I also have to abide by my party's instructions. ... *(Interruptions)* At the same time, I will continue to show due respect to you.

Madam, I would like the PPP model to be implemented across the entire country. I would like leaders of all political parties to sit together and find a way forward. This will provide facilities to the people of the country. ... *(Interruptions)* We may keep winning elections and Governments may keep getting formed, but if we do not provide facilities to the people, then what is the meaning of this democracy? ... *(Interruptions)* The PPP model is the only solution to this. ... *(Interruptions)* If our friends in the Congress feel that our Government is bringing the PPP model only to benefit certain capitalists, then I would like to say that all the works that come through the PPP model may be taken up by the Congress people themselves. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Suresh ji, please take your seat.

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: These days, you do not have any work anyway. ... *(Interruptions)* Take all these contracts through the PPP model and do something good for the country. ... *(Interruptions)* You may undertake all the works. ... *(Interruptions)* What is the difficulty in that? ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Suresh ji, please listen to him. You may make your point when your turn comes.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI GOPAL SHETTY: Madam, I firmly believe that the PPP model is the only solution to this. ... *(Interruptions)* I would like to say that through the PPP model, Government officials have prepared a plan to develop railway stations across the country. ... *(Interruptions)* Particularly in the city of Mumbai, the Government of Maharashtra has decided to place greater emphasis on this. ... *(Interruptions)* There is no cost involved in this. Without the Government spending even a single rupee, all railway stations will be developed as multi-storey facilities. This will provide space for a large number of people to open commercial offices. As a result, the Railways will receive substantial revenue. With that revenue, we

will be able to provide even more facilities to the people in the coming days. We need to move forward decisively in this direction.

Madam, Shri Modi ji has given a new direction to the Railways within five years. Shri Piyush Goyal ji works with integrity and diligence, listens to the problems of every Member of Parliament and finds solutions to them. I would like to congratulate him for this. At some private locations, people raise demands relating to the Railways, and I would like this to be given due attention in the coming days. People say that they are willing to pay a higher fare. For example, there has been a long-standing demand for a train from Mumbai to Karnataka. This route passes through Maharashtra, and it will benefit the people of Maharashtra as well as Karnataka. At present, when they travel by bus, it costs about Rs. 4,000. They say that they are ready to pay Rs. 2,000 to the Railways, that is, they are prepared to pay a fare that is twice the existing railway fare. Officials of the Railway Board say that if such a new system is introduced from Mumbai, it will have to be implemented across the country. I ask why it should not be done. If people are demanding such a facility and are willing to pay the fare, why should the Government not take a decision? In the coming days, we should introduce such new systems and work towards providing greater

facilities to the people. There is much more that can be said, but you are not permitting me to speak at length. Before concluding, I would once again say that since you are presiding here today as the Chairperson, while the Government has done substantial work and provided significant funds on many issues, there is one task which involves no expenditure at all, and that is the immediate implementation of Ladies Special door-closure trains in the city of Mumbai. I place this demand before you. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. Thank you very much. Bharat Mata Ki Jai.

[English]

***SHRI SAPTAGIRI SANKAR ULAKA (KORAPUT):** Welcome highest ever allocation of Rs.159908 crore for 2019-2020. However, what has been observed is that the budgetary support of central government continues to be the primary source of funds for Capital expenditure for railways. Also the Central Government continues to rely on extra budgetary support to finance railway infrastructure. Key focus area should be around railway safety which continues to be in a poor state given the recent train accident of Samaleswari express at Rayagada (Odisha) wherein three staff from railways died.

Especially, the Rail budget of 2019 provisioned for Odisha is disappointing.

No new lines have been declared. The allocation for construction of new lines have been declining in the last few years due to the missed targets there is huge spill-over of new line construction.

Only 0.10 crores have been allocated to Gunupur-Thervubali Railway line which is a meager amount. Previously Rs.935 crores had been allocated but no visible progress has been made so far.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

Request for new lines: Gopalpur-Singapur Road broad gauge line (via Padmapur, Ramanaguda, Bankili) has been ignored.

Request for dedicated East coast freight corridor from Kharagpur to Vijayawada and east-west dedicated freight corridor from Jharsuguda to Bilaspur has been ignored.

New Train (inter-city) from Jeypore to Bhubaneswar via (Rayagada) has not been honoured after requests from the state of Odisha.

Stoppages of Express Trains at “Ambadola” Station of Rayagada District has not been done.

New train Intercity/Fast train from Gunupur to Bhubneswar/Bhadrak has not been done.

Odisha and its rail infrastructure needs a lot of support from the Central Government. Kindly consider the just demand of the people of Odisha.

Hope Government will certainly consider the request of Odisha on priority.

SHRI SUNIL DATTATRAY TATKARE (RAIGAD): Madam Chairperson, thank you. Konkan Railway was the dream of Konkan people since long. It came to fruition in the form of Konkan Railway Corporation. For that the credit goes to Barrister Nath Pai, the late Madhu Dandavate ji, who was the Finance Minister, the late George Fernandes ji, who was the Railway Minister and to the then Chief Minister, hon. Sharad Pawar ji, who highly contributed towards the formation of Konkan Railway Corporation.

Konkan Railway, constructed, owned and operated by the Konkan Railway Corporation Limited, KRCL, is the only operating railway system, owned and administered as a PSU, seamlessly integrated with the Indian Railway system.

KRCL carries 34 million passengers approximately through its system with 54 pairs of passenger trains. Its route length is 740 kilometres which is approximately one per cent of the Indian Railways. There are various Central funds set up by the Government of India where the Ministry of Railways gets annual allocation of funds for a specific purpose. These funds are for all citizens of India. These funds are for activities, not directly related with train operations, but are given as Indian Railways is not able to generate enough internal resources.

Indian Railways has been spending these funds for the benefit of the people along the railway system across the country except on the Konkan Railway territory. As such, the people of the Konkan, Goa and coastal Karnataka regions are deprived of the benefits of these funds because the Konkan Railway is administered as a PSU where only Rs.17.64 crore has been approved in the Budget.

KRCL is required to incur expenditure on Railway user's safety and comfort on the same lines. There is a need for additional funds for improvement in passenger amenities at stations, other passenger safety works like high level platform, foot over bridge etc., construction of ROBs, and replacement of tracks.

It is understood that Konkan Railway is carrying a huge debt which is the legacy of the money borrowed for its construction. The annual interest burden which is approximately Rs,150 crore, because of which it does not have any surplus for improving passenger amenities and augmenting its capacity to carry the things.

Konkan Railway was first railway started from Apta to Roha which is in Central Railway and from Roha onwards it is in Konkan Railway. From Apta to Roha, the land was acquired in the name of Konkan Railway but the project affected persons are not getting the benefit.

Last time, when Shri Suresh Prabhu was the Minister, the work relating to doubling and electrification was started from my native place Kolad upto Veer. I am asking the hon. Minister that the doubling work should be completed upto Ratanagiri with electrification also. Veer Station is there. Mahad is a highly industrial town. DPR should be formed for the new railway line between Veer and Mahad.

There are several problems in Pen, Mangaon, Khed and Chiplun where Jana Satabdi Express, Mangala Express, Veeravalli Express, Nagercoil Gandhidham Express, Hapa Nizamuddin Express, Matsyagandha Express are needed to be stopped.

I would like to urge the Minister that in my district, there is an RCF plant at Thal. The distance from Pen to Thal is 27 kilometres. Thirty years before, it was a goods carrying track, not used for the passengers. I would like to ask the hon. Minister of State for Railways whether MMRDA will make funds available for that. At least the DPR should be made from Pen to Alibaug. Last time, it was announced also. Unfortunately, it was not done. Express trains are running between Panvel and Karjat, but not the local trains. I am requesting the Minister of State to look into the matter and the new railway station, Chowk should be established. There is a single track

between Karjat and Khopoli which requires double track. There is heavy traffic between Karjat and Kalyan and there are only two tracks. So, the third track should also be made available there. There was a bunker for going from Pune to Karjat. Now, the system has been improved. So, the long route trains going to the Southern should have a stop at Karjat. There are some issues relating to railway overbridge. Karjat station should be upgraded.

I would like to urge for some new railway stations especially in Pen taluka, Kharpada and Devgad. New railway line should be there in Mahad. There was a railway line project considered between Chiplun and Kannad. Kakkanad with Western Maharashtra was to be connected. The budgetary provision was also made in the State Budget. I would like to ask that at least the DPR should be made for connectivity from Kakkanad.

I would like to mention about Konkan Railways, which is not self-sustained. It is being given only Rs. 17 crore as Government's share to a PSU. It should either be taken over by the Central Government or it should be strengthened. Another point that I would like to mention here is that up to Roha it is in the possession of the Central Railways, which should be given to the Konkan Railways so that Konkan Railways can become self-sustained.

I would also request that new DPRs should be prepared for Pen to Alibaug, Veer to Mahad, Chiplun to Karad, and the long-distance express trains should get halt at least at Mangaon, Khed and Chiplun. Thank you very much, Madam.

[Translation]

SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA (MANDSOUR): Madam, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways. On this occasion, I would like to recite a few lines on the Railways written by the poet Ashish -

"When the train moves, carrying the fragrance of the soil,
The hamlet moves, the village moves, the city moves and the nation moves.
East, west, north and south, bonds grow stronger in every direction,
When the train moves, carrying the fragrance of the soil.

The rising sun ascends and at dusk it rests,
But the wheel of the train keeps moving, moving endlessly.
The speed of the railway wheel becomes the symbol of new progress,
When the train moves, carrying the fragrance of the soil."

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, the Railways have always had a deep connection with joy and sorrow. In the year 1893, in racially

segregated South Africa, Mahatma Gandhi ji was seated in a first-class compartment when he was asked by white passengers to vacate it. He refused to do so and was forcibly pushed out of the coach at Pietermaritzburg. In independent India, we have never pushed out anyone on the basis of skin colour, yet we are labelled as intolerant. After that incident, Gandhi ji never travelled in first class again and always travelled in third class. In due course, Gandhi returned and made a determined effort to push the British out of India.

Ian Kerr has written in his book that the Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, Ashutosh Mukherjee, was travelling in a first-class coach. An Englishman seated on the upper berth threw out the slippers of the sleeping Mukherjee. Later, Mukherjee threw out the Englishman's coat. When the Englishman woke up, he asked where his coat was. Ashutosh Mukherjee replied that the coat had gone to look for the slippers. In due course, Ashutosh Mukherjee's son, Dr. Syama Prasad Mukherjee, went on to become the founder of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh. On the night of 17 December 1928, Bhagat Singh, Durga Bhabhi, Chandrashekhar Azad and Rajguru reached Calcutta from Lahore by train, with two first-class tickets and two third-class tickets. How can this country ever forget journeys by train?

When the Partition of India took place in 1947, the largest medium of migration was the Railways. Piles of dead bodies arrived in trains themselves. It was the misfortune of the Indian Railways that 40 per cent of it went to Pakistan, along with 20 per cent of the population and 30 per cent of the land. The leaders remained silent. Asif Ali was the Railway Minister then. Let that be.

In the year 1881, the Indian Tea Association relied upon the Railways to popularise tea in India. Till the year 1900, the number of tea drinkers in India was almost negligible. Today, we ourselves consume nearly 70 per cent of the tea produced.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, the Railways have also had a profound influence on films. *The Burning Train*, *Sholay*, *Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge*, and the song filmed on Ashok Kumar in the film *Aashirwad* are notable examples. The Railways have had a very positive impact on the Indian psyche, especially on children. When Ashok Kumar sang that song, and when little children hold each other’s shirts and form a train, then

"Railgaadi, Railgaadi,

Railgaadi, Chhuk-chhuk, Chhuk-chhuk,

Bich wale station bolei, Ruk-ruk, Ruk-ruk."

Today, we too say to our Hon. Minister that at the intermediate stations, stop-stop, stop-stop. The iron road runs from here to there and from there to here.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, the Railways have a very long history. The idea of railways was conceived in the year 1843. India possessed immense natural resources which Britain sought to exploit. In order to prosper, Britain required speedy transportation of grain, valuable timber, spices, fruits, coal, iron and several other precious materials for export to Britain.

In the year 1844, a proposal was mooted, and in the year 1850, plans were drawn up for Kolkata and Mumbai. The first passenger train ran from Mumbai to Thane in the year 1853. In 1854, rail services commenced from Howrah, and in 1856, from Chennai via Veyasarapadi to Walajah Road. In the year 1881, the railway for the first time advanced into the hills towards Darjeeling. In 1925, the first electric train was introduced. In 1943, the Howrah Bridge was constructed, and in 1945, the first diesel engine was introduced. Thereafter, the country attained Independence. Between 1947 and 1951, regional railways were formed, broadly on the lines left behind by the British. However, after the departure of the British, zones and divisions were created in the Indian Railways, and

successive Governments forgot this aspect for a long time. The North Eastern Railway or North East Frontier Railway, South Central Railway, South Western Railway, North Western Railway, West Central Railway, North Central Railway, South East Central Railway, East Coast Railway, Eastern Railway and Central Railway were constituted during the period 2000 to 2003 under the leadership of Atal ji. This is a very significant achievement for the country. Who can deny that this was a major step in the history of the Indian Railways? In the year 2000, the facility of online train reservation tickets was introduced through the IRCTC system.

I went through the Budget speeches of several years. In them, I tried to find words such as development, expansion, trust, enthusiasm, energy, resolve, decision, hope, courage, prudence, future, happiness, dedication, inspiration, aspiration, options, ideas, processes, systems, promises, intentions, planning, facilities, capacity, change, reform, progress, service, preparedness, implementation and transformation. However, on reading the Budget speech of 14 March 2012, I felt disappointed. In that Budget speech, the Hon. Minister Shri Dinesh Trivedi ji stated:

"Shoulders have drooped, the back has bent,

The poor Railways have grown weary lifting burdens again and

again.

The Railways need a new medicine and a new effect."

Madam, this country was in deep despair when the Hon. Minister made such a statement. The very next year, the Minister was changed and a new Railway Minister was brought in to deliver a "new effect". Shri Pawan Bansal ji presented a new Budget on 26 February 2013. I was hoping that under his leadership, the Railways might move from despair to hope. However, unfortunately, the leader of the coalition partner, the Samajwadi Party, Shri Mulayam Singh ji, stated that the Budget presented that day was anti-people and that the manner in which the UPA Government was breaking the backbone of the people would surely be answered by the public. A few days later, the Hon. Minister became embroiled in a CBI matter on 3 May in Chandigarh. Let that be. Once again, only despair remained. Utter despair. Trains did not run on time, cleanliness was inadequate, and people, eager to return home, would hum:

"Eagerness to go home is great,

But there is delay, because the train is Government-owned."

Madam, the country emerged from despair. In the year 2014, Shri Sadananda Gowda ji came, then Shri Suresh Prabhu ji

came, and thereafter Shri Piyush Goyal ji came with the message:

"There will be heat during the journey,
If you can walk, then walk.
Everyone is in the crowd,
If you can make your way through, then do so."

This resolve to move forward gave a new shape to the Indian Railways. It accorded special attention to my parliamentary constituency. For the first time in its history, Madhya Pradesh witnessed the affection of Hon. Narendra Modi ji and the care of Shri Piyush Goyal ji. During the period 2009 to 2014, the allocation was Rs. 632 crore, whereas during 2014 to 2019 it increased to Rs. 4,205 crore, an increase of 565 per cent. This is remarkable.

Decisions relating to recruitment, bio-toilets, 100 per cent LED lighting at all railway stations across the country, provision of ramps and barrier-free access at 30 per cent of railway stations for persons with disabilities, utilisation of the Nirbhaya Fund, concern for the environment, development of the North East, improvement in signalling systems, savings in diesel consumption, gauge conversion, emphasis on cleanliness, reduction in railway accidents, increase in staff strength, increase in the number of trains, growth in revenue

and enhancement of freight movement all stand as testimony to the work undertaken.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, this is how trust and development are achieved. When we look at the safety record, the Railways deserve to be recognised for achieving the best-ever safety record in the year 2018-19. In the year 2013-14, there were 152 deaths due to railway accidents, whereas in the year 2018-19, this figure has come down to 29. We can witness the philosophy of Innovate India in Varanasi, where diesel locomotives have been converted into electric locomotives. The position of the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works in West Bengal is such that, by manufacturing 402 locomotives, it has emerged as the largest producer of locomotives in the world. The resolve has been such that the Bogibeel Bridge, the longest bridge, is connecting Arunachal Pradesh with the rest of India ahead of schedule as a combined rail and road bridge. The determination is evident in the decision to eliminate all unmanned level crossings on the Broad Gauge network. As far as the process of work is concerned, when I examined the replies to questions, it was revealed that as of the year 2014, more than 26,000 Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges were yet to be constructed. During the period from 2009 to 2014, 1,137 unmanned level crossings were closed.

However, in the single year 2018-19 alone, 3,479 such crossings were eliminated. Owing to the efforts of the Hon. Ministers, 1,220 Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges were constructed during the period from 2014 to 2019. In my parliamentary constituency of Mandsaur, Neemuch and Jaora alone, more than 45 Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges have been sanctioned and completed.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, during the period from 2009 to 2014, the total capital expenditure amounted to Rs. 2.3 lakh crore. In comparison, during the period from 2014 to 2019, there was an encouraging increase in capital expenditure, rising to nearly Rs. 5.1 lakh crore. This provided a major boost to capacity enhancement and accelerated the commissioning of railway lines. As compared to the period from 2009 to 2014, there has been an increase of 6.53 kilometres per day in new line construction and doubling during the period from 2014 to 2018. For the year 2019-20, a target of 15 kilometres per day has been set. In the year 1895, the first locomotive was manufactured at Ajmer for the Rajputana Malwa Railway. However, in my region, no development took place during the Congress regime. Development was carried out either by the British or by the Bharatiya Janata Party. They did come to incite

farmers through agitations, but they did not bring tracks for doubling. Hon. Minister, you have announced an allocation of approximately Rs. 500 crore for the Neemuch to Bari Sadri new line. You have also announced Rs. 260 crore for doubling of the Chittorgarh to Neemuch railway line and approximately Rs. 960 crore for the Neemuch to Ratlam section for my parliamentary constituency.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, such development is connecting lives across India. We are also witnessing rapid railway development in the North Eastern region. We can feel the pace of New India taking shape. Between Delhi and Varanasi, the first indigenous semi high speed train has become operational. The train running between Delhi and Varanasi is the fastest in India and operates at a speed 35 to 40 per cent higher than other trains. A further set of 130 trains is also under preparation.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, through you, I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that the Ratlam-Chittorgarh track of my parliamentary constituency on the Western Railway has already been tested for semi high-speed operations. If the Hon. Minister provides a high-speed train between Mumbai and Delhi via Shamgarh, it will lead to an increase in revenue in my region. We are aware that some

days ago there was discussion regarding Rae Bareli. When I look at it, I find that up to the year 2014, only minor finishing work used to be done at Rae Bareli on coaches brought from Kapurthala, whereas today, in August 2014 itself, the first fully manufactured coach started being produced there. We also know that:

"We kept saving our house from termites,
But a few worms of the chairs devoured the entire nation."

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, today the country is working with tremendous energy. Electrification had begun in the year 1925. The first electric train ran between Mumbai and Kurla, but unfortunately, there was not much progress thereafter for a long time. Today, we see that with firm resolve, Indian Railways will achieve 100 per cent electrification of Broad Gauge routes by the year 2021-22. The biggest benefit of this will accrue to the Western Railway track in my parliamentary constituency, where electrification of the Ratlam-Chittorgarh section, at a cost of nearly Rs. 300 crore, is almost complete. I would like to request the Hon. Minister that its inauguration may be performed at the hands of the Hon. Prime Minister. We also know that modern signalling systems have been developed. The capacity and speed of trains have increased, and the route network has also expanded.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, we are aware that the Dedicated Freight Corridor and the entire DFC are expected to be completed by the year 2020-21. Considerable work has also been undertaken in the country to promote freight movement, and I welcome this initiative of the Hon. Ministers. Across the country, station redevelopment is being carried out at a rapid pace in a new format. In Madhya Pradesh, the Habibganj Railway Station at Bhopal is a part of this chain. With regard to enhancement of passenger services, we find that up to the year 2014, there were only 199 escalators, whereas today 603 escalators are operational across the country. In the year 2014, there were 97 lifts, whereas today 445 lifts are functioning in the Railways. This is an era of memorable journeys. Passenger coaches are being upgraded. Work is underway on operating Antyodaya trains with modern amenities and on running long-distance unreserved trains.

Today, we are living in the era of Digital India. In the digital domain, the Railways are also working at a very fast pace. High-speed Wi-Fi services are being extended rapidly to most railway stations across the country. Passengers are getting relief from long queues. A paperless unreserved ticketing system is being introduced. We recall those days when…*(Interruptions)*

"for migrants, the greatest message of happiness would be when one's name appeared on the reservation list of the village-bound train."

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I am concluding by speaking about cleanliness, because the Railways have taken sanitation forward with great momentum. During the ten-year period from 2004 to 2014, only 9,587 bio-toilets were installed. In contrast, during the five years from 2014 onwards, more than 1,80,000 bio-toilets have been installed across the country. Today, cleanliness coverage has reached 97 per cent in waiting rooms, 93 per cent at main entrances, 97 per cent on foot overbridges, 84 per cent in vendor areas, 89 per cent in open seating areas, and 82 per cent in drinking water areas. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, your time is over.

... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI SUDHEER GUPTA: Madam, I would like to recite one couplet, dedicated to the hard work of Shri Modi ji. Rahi Masoom Raza has said:

"Such was the sleep of my companion that I remained awake,
The night itself, exhausted, fell asleep."

[English]

***SHRI A. GANESHAMURTHI (ERODE):** There is long pending demand for a new railway line between Erode and Palani. Initially this Railway line was proposed between Samnagar of Karnataka and Palani. As the Forest Department refused to issue clearance certificate, it was changed to Sathiamangalam-Erode-Palani railway line and then as Erode-Palani railway line. Funds were allocated for carrying out initial work and a survey of the railway line. Without any reason, this is kept pending. Even after initial fund allocation and carrying out the survey work, the process of starting a new railway line between Erode and Palani has been kept pending. I urge upon the Union Government to immediately start the work relating to the construction of new railway line between Erode and Palani without any further delay. The Railway Gate L.C. No.16 near Pasur Railway station on the Erode-Karur-Tiruchy railway line always remain closed. The Goods trains that are halted at the Pasur railway station is the reason for the permanent closure of thus Railway Gate L.C. no.16. this is State Highway connecting Namakkal and Coimbatore. Moreover there is heavy traffic in this area. I therefore urge upon the Union Government to construct a Road Over Bridge

* English translation of the speech originally laid in Tamil.

(ROB) at L.C. No.16 near Pasur railway station on Erode-Karur-Tiruchy railway line. I also urge upon the Union Government to construct bridges at L.C.No.211 and L.C.No. 122. Thank You.

[Translation]

[*]**DR. ARVIND KUMAR SHARMA (ROHTAK):** I would like to submit that my parliamentary constituency, Rohtak, which is an important part of the National Capital Region and is adjoining the national capital, Delhi. The principal towns of my parliamentary constituency, namely Rohtak, Jhajjar and Bahadurgarh, are major sources of revenue for the Railways because thousands of people from my constituency commute daily to Delhi, Gurugram, Noida and Faridabad for earning their livelihood in Government as well as non-Government sectors. Therefore, in public interest, I would like to request that the following demands may kindly be fulfilled:

Construction of a railway line from Jhajjar to Farrukhnagar, with a length of approximately 20 to 25 kilometres.

Construction of a railway line from Jhajjar to Bahadurgarh, with a length of approximately 35 to 40 kilometres.

Note:- The construction of the railway lines from Jhajjar to Farrukhnagar and from Jhajjar to Bahadurgarh will greatly benefit the general public of the Rohtak parliamentary constituency. It will

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

also lead to an increase in the revenue of the Railways and provide convenience to the people in commuting to Gurugram and Delhi.

Train No. 14717/14718 (Up/Down), running from Bikaner to Haridwar via Bhiwani, Rohtak, Panipat, Ambala, Saharanpur and Haridwar, operates three days a week. Its stoppage at Kalanaur is most essential because Kalanaur is a religious town and people frequently travel from there to Haridwar, Kurukshetra and Amritsar.

I would further like to request that an express or passenger train may kindly be operated from Hisar and Bhiwani to Delhi via Kosli.

The stoppage of the Gorakhdham Express (Train No. 12555/12556) running from Hisar to Gorakhpur may kindly be provided at Kalanaur.

The stoppage of the Chandigarh Garib Rath (Train No. 12983/12984) running from Ajmer to Chandigarh may also kindly be provided at Kalanaur.

Note: The stoppage of these trains at Kalanaur is most essential because Kalanaur is a religious town and people frequently travel from there to Haridwar, Kurukshetra and Amritsar.

An underpass or flyover may kindly be constructed at the railway crossing situated near Sampla Railway Station.

The railway goods yard from Rohtak Railway Station may kindly be shifted to a location near Lahli Railway Station.

Directions may kindly be issued for the construction of a railway halt (station) in village Gurawada, district Rewari, and also for the construction of a railway halt at any suitable location between Hasawas Phatak and Gadla Road Phatak.

Directions may kindly be issued for the reopening of the railway halt (station) at village Olant, district Rewari.

In public interest, the above works may kindly be carried out at the earliest. Respectfully submitted.

SHRI RAM CHANDRA PASWAN (SAMASTIPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. On behalf of my party, I would also like to thank the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal. We would also like to express our gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister for the work he has undertaken to spread the railway network across the entire country. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the country is progressing towards development, in which the Railways constitute a very significant component. Today, I would like to say to the Hon. Minister of Railways that his work is highly commendable, and wherever development was required, all such places are now being developed, whether through the Railways or through any other department. At present, a debate is underway on every department, and particularly on the Railway Budget. I would like to state that we come from Bihar.

My Lok Sabha constituency is Samastipur, which falls in the Mithilanchal region. In 1997, the Hasanpur-Sakri railway line, the Kusheshwar Sthan-Khagaria new railway line and several other such projects were sanctioned. At present, under the leadership of the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, work on these

projects is progressing at a considerable pace. There are many areas where the constituencies and residences of our people are located, where even earth filling work has not yet been undertaken. In such places, work is proceeding at a relatively slow pace. These are flood-prone areas, and due to floods, work gets obstructed at several locations. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister of Railways to ensure that this project, which was recorded in the Pink Book at that time, is completed at the earliest and on a first priority basis. At that time, the Minister of Railways was the Hon. Shri Ram Vilas Paswan. The project was approved during his tenure, and surveys in respect of several works included therein have already been completed. One such matter relates to Bhola Talkies, where an overbridge is to be constructed. This is in Samastipur. We are familiar with the area and frequently visit it. Many patients also come there, and due to the railway gate remaining closed for long durations because of the movement of trains, several patients collapse on the way and even lose their lives. I have raised this issue several times earlier as well, but till now the tender has not been finalised and is still under the tendering process. I would like the tender to be finalised at the earliest.

An overbridge is also required to be constructed at Muktapur. In Rosera, at Mahatma Gandhi Chowk, there has been a long-pending demand for the construction of an overbridge. Even in our meetings held there, this matter is repeatedly discussed. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister of Railways that although these works may appear to be small, they have very significant importance at their respective places. I would like all these works to be undertaken.

I would like to submit, through you, that the survey for the Muktapur-Lohna Road line was conducted during the tenure of the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal. The matter is still under consideration, but the present status of the project is not clear. The survey was completed in the year 2016-17. Therefore, I would like to request that funds may be allocated and financial provision may be made for this scheme. The work relating to the Samastipur-Karpurigram-Tajpur-Mahua-Hajipur-Sugrauli line has also been surveyed, but it is facing a shortage of funds. Funds may kindly be provided for this project as well. Similarly, the survey for the Baheri-Shivajinagar-Karian-Rosera-Begusarai line was conducted in 2017-18, and this project is also suffering from a lack of funds.

Therefore, I would like to submit that our region is interspersed with rivers such as the Kosi and the Kamla Balan, and people have

been deliberating upon these issues for a long time. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, who was the Minister of Railways at that time, for the manner in which this Government is functioning under their leadership. These works may kindly be completed at the earliest. There are several other matters relating to trains, which I would place in writing and submit to the Hon. Minister of Railways at a later stage.

I would like to conclude my remarks by supporting this Budget, through you. I hope that through this Budget, particularly the small issues and minor works relating to my constituency will certainly be taken up and addressed by the Hon. Minister of Railways. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRI KOMATI REDDY VENKAT REDDY (BHONGIR)**: Let me convey my views to Hon. Finance Minister for allocating funds to the ongoing railway works in Telangana for the current financial in the General Budget.

I am happy that Rs.20 crore allotted for Ghatkesar-Yadadri Extension MMTS Phase-II. This project was sanctioned during 2016-17 with an estimated cost of Rs. 412 crore. This is a joint project between Indian Railways and Govt. of Telangana. This comes under my constituency Bhongir.

I request the Hon. Minister to increase funds for this project as Yadadri is considered to be a Telangana's "Balaji" temple. Thousands of passengers do visit this temple every day to seek the blessings of Lord Sri Lakshinarasimha Swamy. In the absence of proper rail connectivity, they mostly use road ways. Journey on roadways is burden sum on poor people. If the work is fast completed, it will benefit the poor in particular surrounding areas of Yadadri in general.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

One more important line between Bibinagar Nadikudi is getting heavy traffic because single line. I request the Government to kindly sanction for doubling the above said section.

Another important project is development of Satellite Terminal at Cherlapalli Station. This project is sanctioned with an intention to down size the burden on Hyderabad and Secunderabad Stations. Once this station is commenced, lot of time will be saved to the passengers who take other means of transport to reach their destinations. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister to increase the fund allocation to this project in the revised budget estimates.

In addition to this more funds have been allocated for various projects in the state of Telangana in general.

- Rs. 200 crore allotted for Manoharabad-Kothapalli new line. This project was originally sanctioned during 2006-07 with an estimated cost of Rs. 1,160 crores. First phase of the project from Manoharabad-Gajwel section is nearing completion. I humbly request the Hon. Finance Minister to allocate more funds in this budget for the long pending project so as to enable the railways to complete it at the earliest.

- Rs.20 crore allotted for Akannapet-Medak new railway line. This project was originally sanctioned in the year 2012-13 with a total estimated cost of Rs. 118 crores. 50% of the project cost to be shared by the state Govt. in addition to providing land on free of cost.
- Rs.275 crores allotted for Munirabad-Mahabubnagar new line. This project was sanction in the year 1997-98 with an estimated cost of Rs.645 crores. Some of the land acquisition is under process. Around 29 km to new line between Devarakadra-Jaklair section is already completed and ready for commissioning.
- Rs. 405 crore allotted for Bhadrachallam-Sattupalli new line. This project was sanction during 2010-11 with an estimated cost of Rs.705 crores. This is a joint project of Indian Railways and Singareni Collieries Limited. Works are in fast progress.
- Rs.265 crore allotted for Kazipet-Balharsha 3rd line. This 3rd line project was sanctioned during 2015-16 with an estimated cost of Rs.2,063 crore. Sections between Raghavapuram-Potkapalli, Bisugir Sharif-Uppal and Wirur-Manikgarh are nearing completion.

- Rs.200 crore allotted for Secunderabad-Mahbubnagar doubling project. This project was sanction during the year 2015-16 with an estimated cost of Rs. 728 crore. Works are in fast progress including 9 major and 92 minor bridges.
- Rs.110 crore allotted for Kazipete-Vijayawada 3rd line project. This project was sanctioned during the year 2013-14 with an estimated cost of Rs. 1,857 crore.
- Rs.10 crore allotted for periodic overhauling workshop at Kazipet.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RANJANBEN BHATT (VADODARA): Hon. Chairperson Madam, first of all, I would like to express my special gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to place my views on the announcements made for the Ministry of Railways. I would like to place on record my appreciation to the dynamic Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, the Hon. Minister of Finance, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi, for affording me this opportunity.

Indian Railways is serving as the engine of the nation's development. Indian Railways is also referred to as the lifeline of the nation. Our Indian Railways connects the entire country and provides a highly reliable and simple mode of connectivity.

In this Budget, approval has been accorded to the PPP model for railway tracks. Emphasis has been laid on clean, safe and time-bound rail travel. A 300-kilometre Metro Rail project has been approved. During this year, operations will commence on 657 kilometres of new Metro network. Along with this, a proposal has also been presented to formulate a model fare law for improvement in railway fares. With private participation in Railways, the

Government is going to commence the operation of private trains in the country for the first time. Indian Railways is focusing on green energy under the pollution-free campaign. Projects have also been prepared to run railway engines on solar energy.

Hon. Chairperson Madam, I feel proud to state that Platform No. 01 of the main railway station in my parliamentary constituency, Vadodara, has been made operational through solar energy. Provision has also been made in this Budget to develop railway stations as multi-modal transport hubs. Through you, I would also like to inform the Hon. Minister that under the Smart City development initiative, a multi-modal transport hub is also under construction in Vadodara by the Vadodara Municipal Corporation. The work of developing 500 railway stations across the country as model stations is also in progress.

I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, for including my Vadodara Lok Sabha constituency in the list of model railway stations. With the allocation of funds amounting to Rs. 17.50 crore, construction work of the main railway station at Vadodara is being undertaken as a model railway station. Vadodara is the 48th railway station in the country where free Wi-Fi services have been provided.

Vadodara is known as a city of education, art, culture and sports in the State of Gujarat. The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Vadodara is the largest residential university in Asia. The country's second, and Gujarat's first, dedicated Sports University is under construction in Desar Taluka of Vadodara.

I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister of the country, Shri Narendra Modi, for deciding to establish and develop the country's first Railway University in my Vadodara Lok Sabha constituency. An amount of Rs. 25 crore has been allocated for the construction and overall development of the Railway University. With the establishment of the country's first Railway University, the identity and prominence of the city of Vadodara have increased significantly.

Hon. Chairperson Madam, for the past nearly 69 years, the National Academy of Indian Railways has been functioning in Vadodara. Newly appointed railway officers from across the country are required to come to the National Academy of Indian Railways for training during their probation period. In this very grand campus, the country's first National Rail and Transportation Institute was established two years ago. The education building of this NRTI was

inaugurated by the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Vijaybhai Rupani.

In the same National Rail and Transportation Institute, students from across the country are pursuing BBA in Transport Management and B.Tech in Transport Technology in collaboration with the highly प्रतिष्ठित Maharaja Sayajirao University of Vadodara, and future transport professionals for the nation are being groomed.

Madam, I have also listened to the remarks made by the Congress leader, Shri Adhir Ranjan. He referred to the Hon. Prime Minister's vision and also mentioned the Bullet Train. I would like to inform him that, as a resident of Vadodara and as a public representative from that area, I can state with pride that the country's first model bus station constructed under the PPP model is functioning in Vadodara. The construction, inauguration and foundation laying of this model bus station were carried out by the then Chief Minister of Gujarat and the present Prime Minister of the country, Shri Narendra Bhai Modi. The structure and facilities of this model bus station are no less than those of an airport. I invite Shri Adhir Ranjan to visit our bus station in Vadodara. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and state with pride before the House, as the Member of Parliament from Vadodara Lok Sabha

constituency, that the country's first Bullet Train, which is proposed to operate between Ahmedabad and Mumbai and for which Vadodara is a major stoppage, has led to Vadodara being selected as the country's only high-speed train training centre for Bullet Train operations. At this centre, more than three thousand कर्मयोगी will come to Vadodara to receive technical training.

Madam, the glorious land of Vadodara is the karmabhoomi of our popular Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. After a gap of more than nearly a decade, Vadodara has received a new train connecting it to another State. It is a fortunate coincidence that this new train connects the karmabhoomi of the Hon. Prime Minister with his constituency of service, Varanasi. The country's second 'Mahamana Train' has been introduced from Vadodara to Varanasi, and this train was inaugurated by the Hon. Prime Minister himself, in the august presence of the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Deputy Chief Minister of Gujarat, Shri Nitinbhai Patel. After about nine years, Vadodara has also been provided with the daily 'Sankalp Train' service to Ahmedabad. In addition to this, a weekly 'Mahamana Train' service has also been commenced from Vadodara to Rewa in Madhya Pradesh. Rewa is named after the fifth longest river of the Indian subcontinent, which

is also popularly known as the Narmada. For all these passenger amenities, I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the then Minister of State for Railways, Shri Manoj Sinha. In this progressive Budget, several extremely important schemes for Indian Railways have been included, such as line doubling, gauge conversion, line segregation, elimination of railway crossings, provision of free Wi-Fi internet services at railway stations, monitoring through CCTV, and development of railway yards. Hon. Chairperson Madam, kindly grant me two more minutes.

16.00 hrs

I would once again like to express my gratitude and thanks to the Hon. Minister of Finance, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, and the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, because in this Budget they have allocated an amount of Rs. 887 crore for the implementation of several schemes in my parliamentary constituency, Vadodara Lok Sabha constituency. These include, inter alia, Anand-Godhra line doubling, Ahmedabad-Godhra line segregation, Samlaya-Timba-Karjan gauge conversion, Dabhoi-Chandod-Kevadia gauge conversion, Vadodara-Chhota Udepur-Dhar railway line, electrification of the Vadodara-Chhota Udepur

railway line, Vadodara-Gertapur loop line, Vadodara RRI and cabin signalling, Miyagam Karjan-Dabhoi subway, and the Samlaya-Timba line. All these development works will make a highly valuable contribution to the comprehensive development of Vadodara Railways and to the enhancement of its capacity.

For the first time in the history of Vadodara Railways, a satellite railway station in the form of Chhayapuri Railway Station has been obtained, which will become operational in the near future. After Ahmedabad and Surat, Vadodara has become the third city in Gujarat to receive a satellite railway station.

16.01 hrs (Shri P.V. Midhun Reddy *in the Chair*)

I would also like to place one more demand here. The Hon. Minister of State is also present here. I would like to request that Pratapnagar Railway Station may be developed as a satellite railway station, because in the previous year's Budget, financial provision was made for the Vadodara-Chhota Udepur and Chhota Udepur-Dhar-Indore railway line. In addition to this, work is in progress for establishing a broad gauge railway line from Vadodara to Dabhoi

and from Dabhoi to Kevadia, leading up to the Statue of Unity, which has become a major centre of attraction for the entire country and the world.

For tourists coming from within the country as well as from abroad, travel by rail from Vadodara to the Statue of Unity will have to be routed through Pratapnagar Railway Station. Therefore, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that Pratapnagar Railway Station may be developed as a satellite railway station. Along with this, I would also like to place a demand for two train services. A large number of devotees of the Gayatri Parivar travel from Vadodara to Shantikunj, Haridwar. Therefore, I would like to request that a train service from Vadodara to Haridwar may be introduced. There are also many families belonging to the Sikh community residing in Vadodara. Therefore, a train service from Vadodara to Amritsar may also be introduced.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I am also thankful to the Hon. Minister and the Hon. Minister of State, and I support this Railway Budget.

Thank you.

[English]

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR (TIRUCHIRAPPALLI): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, at the outset I would like to thank the voters of Tiruchirappalli constituency who have voted for me and made me win with a margin of 4.60 lakh votes. I am grateful to them and I salute them.

The ruling Party MPs and even sometimes Ministers repeatedly ask the question as to what Congress has done in the last 50 years when it was in power and in every sector, in every department and in every walk of life, what the Congress has achieved/delivered. That is the question repeatedly being asked by some of the ruling Party MPs. I just want to bring one or two vocal points to their knowledge so that they could know what Congress has done. They know that but they are pretending as if they do not know it.

Sir, I would like to bring some facts to their knowledge. I will give a few examples in this regard. The total investment in the Railways during 1950-51 was to the tune of Rs. 855 crore and in 2013-14, at the time when the BJP Government came to power and Shri Narendra Modi took over as the Prime Minister of this country, the investment in Railways was to the tune of Rs. 32,662 crore. Number of employees in Railways in 1950-51 was around 9 lakhs

and now it is 12,71,000 and there are vacancies of one lakh in the Railways which have not yet been filled by this Government, though they promised to fill those vacancies in the Railways. The wage Bill in 1950-51 was Rs. 113 crore and in 2013-14, it increased to Rs. 75,893 crore. Passenger earnings were Rs. 98 crore in 1950-51 and in 2013-14, when this Government came to power, it was Rs. 36,532 crore. Gross Revenue Receipts of the Railways in 1950-51 were Rs. 263 crore and in 2013-14 it was Rs. 1,43,213 crore.

Sir, why am I referring to these figures? Which Government was responsible for this increased investments and receipts in the Railways in these many years? Which Government delivered the results? Which Government made it possible? Is it not the Congress Government? Was it not the outcome of the efforts of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru? Was it not because of the efforts of the late Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi and other Congress Prime Ministers until the BJP Government took over in 2014-15? The progress, the achievements and the growth that we have been seeing in the Railways is not because of the efforts of this BJP Government in the last five years of their rule under the Prime Ministership of Shri Narendra Modi.

Sir, some of the hon. Members mentioned here about Public Private Partnership (PPP). The Government attempted to get some Rs. 6 lakhs from PPP last year but they were not able to get it. This year the Government has announced so many programmes and proposals on doubling, gauge conversion, improvement of stations, modern facilities, safety measures. I do not want to repeat them. Everybody has mentioned, in detail, about the funds that have been allocated for these purposes. The Government has announced that in PPP they are going to have Rs. 50 lakh crore …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I am going by your party time. I am ready to give you another two minutes. But I just wanted to remind you.

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Sir, I will finish my speech. If you restrict me, then I will mention two to three points about my constituency and finish it. I will not mention about other things.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I am not trying to restrict you but reminding you of the time.

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR : So, the amount of Rs. 50 lakh crore means it is for a period of ten years and 2030 is the limit. Within that ten years, they are planning to have private investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore in railways. It means that every year, in the

coming ten years, they have to allocate Rs. 5 lakh crore. From where are they going to get this Rs. 5 lakh crore every year and who is going to come and invest? As Shrimati Kanimozhi has asked, “Who is going to invest this much money in loss-making organisations?” This is a clear attempt to privatise railways in which you are not going to succeed.

A mass transport system in our country is the railways. There are 13 lakh employees in the railways and 82 crores of people are using railway transport system. Definitely all the 13 lakh employees and the entire population of the country will oppose privatisation and you are not going to get Rs. 50 lakh crore in future.

There is a decline in passenger earnings. When you compare the figure of 2019-20 with the figure of 2016-17, you will find that it has decreased. The hon. Minister may kindly explain as to why it has come down.

Sir, I would like to mention one or two points about my constituency. Out of five kilometres of work to be done under the Mass Rapid Transit System (Phase II), only three kilometres of work has been completed. Work is still not completed on a stretch of two kilometres. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister about Tiruchy-Thanjavur doubling project. Work on two bridges

near Tiruchirappalli Junction on the way from Pudukottai to Tiruchy has not been completed. It is because defence land has not been handed over to the State Government. Alternative land has already been given by the State Government to the Ministry of Defence of the Central Government. Even then the required order has not been issued. It is still pending with the Government. I request the hon. Minister to clear it and complete the work on the two over-bridges.

There are about 4000 apprentices in Tiruchy alone - and throughout India, there are 25,000 apprentices - who have passed the first level and second level examinations after training. They are not being given proper regular employment. I would request the hon. Minister to consider this aspect also.

The timings of train Nos. 16339 and 16351, which are reaching Nagercoil via Madurai, should be changed. A representation was given by the Tamilians living in Mumbai. With great difficulty, they are getting down at 3 o'clock or 4 o'clock in the night. Change of time will help them. So, I request you to consider that.…*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Now, Shri Ramesh Chander Kaushik.

… (Interruptions)

SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR: Sir, please give me one minute.…*(Interruptions)* The trains going through Keeranur and Pettavaithalai should stop at these two places for two minutes.…*(Interruptions)* This is another request of my Constituency. I request the hon. Minister to consider all these things. Thank you very much.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI GIRISH BHALCHANDRA BAPAT (PUNE):** Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the Pune-Nashik railway line is very essential. There is a very large demand for commuter traffic on this route. What is the present status of the Pune-Nashik railway line? Has the DPR or the survey been completed?

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

[*]SHRI MANSUKHBHAI DHANJIBHAI VASAVA (BHARUCH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, as we all know, the Railways are the lifeline of India. The history of rail transport in India began in the year 1832 and has since been continuously progressing on the path of development up to the present period. Owing to the farsighted vision of the great son of Bharat Mata and the visionary Prime Minister of the country, Shri Narendra Bhai Modi, Indian Railways is consistently scaling new heights and is striving to further simplify mobility for 130 crore Indians. Indian Railways has made provisions such as mechanised cleaning and housekeeping at railway stations in order to provide passengers with safe and comfortable travel facilities. In the Budget for the financial year 2019-20, the Railways has received an allocation of Rs. 65,837 crore. An amount of Rs. 7,255 crore has been allocated for the construction of new railway lines in the country, Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs. 700 crore for doubling, Rs. 6,114.82 crore for rolling stock, and Rs. 1,750 crore for signalling and telecommunications. The above provisions are welcome and are also significant because they will lead to the creation of new industries, new works and new employment opportunities in the country. In this

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Budget, the Hon. Prime Minister's vision of all-round development of India is clearly reflected.

In Gujarat, Bharuch Railway Station, which falls under my parliamentary constituency of Bharuch, is a very important railway station contributing to the development of the country from the perspective of industrial investment and development.

• Here, the country's largest industrial PCPIR (Petroleum, Chemicals and Petrochemicals Investment Region) is expanding in this area. Major industrial units of the country such as ONGC, Reliance, GNFC, Birla, BASF, Petronet LNG and Welspun have been functioning here for many years. A large number of employees, workers and others from various States of the country come here for work. However, due to the absence of stoppages of trains for different parts of the country at Bharuch Railway Station, they have to face considerable hardship. Thereafter, they are compelled to undertake long journeys up to Surat and Vadodara. Therefore, providing stoppages of the following trains at Bharuch Railway Station will bring significant convenience and ease to the people residing in my parliamentary constituency as well as to the travelling public.

- 19053 / 19054 - Surat-Muzaffarpur Express

- 19037 / 19038 - Bandra- Gorakhpur Avadh Express
- 12979 - Bandra-Jaipur Superfast Express
- 22474 - Bandra-Bikaner Superfast Express
- 12909 - Hazrat Nizamuddin Garib Rath Express from Bandra Terminal
- 20903 / 20904 - The Vadodara-Varanasi Mahamana Express, which is presently operating once a week. Its frequency may kindly be increased to at least three days a week, which will provide considerable convenience and ease to North Indian residents living in Bharuch and Ankleshwar.

- Subsequently, the areas around Bharuch, including Vadodara and Surat, are also developed cities from the perspective of industrial investment and development, where people from across the country are residing in search of livelihood. As a result, there is continuous movement of people between Vadodara, Bharuch and Surat for employment and business purposes. Therefore, there is a need to make the following changes in some of the regular trains running between Vadodara and Surat and to enhance passenger convenience.

- Train No. 12929/12930, Valsad-Dahod Intercity, is regularly used by a large number of employees and officers for daily up and

down travel. However, for the past few days, LHB coaches have been attached in place of AC Chair Car coaches. As a result, despite paying nearly four times the normal fare, employees and officers are being compelled to travel in LHB coaches, which are essentially ordinary sleeper coaches, and are facing considerable inconvenience. Therefore, it is requested that the earlier arrangement may be restored and two AC Chair Car coaches may again be attached to Train No. 12929/12930, Valsad-Dahod Intercity.

- Similarly, Train No. 22930/22929, Vadodara-Bhilad Express, 22959/22960, Surat-Jamnagar Intercity Express, and 22954, Gujarat Superfast Express, are also regularly used by a large number of employees and officers for daily commuting. However, in recent times, due to the presence of unauthorised passengers, regular First Class MST pass holders are facing severe difficulties during travel. Therefore, it is necessary that an appropriate number of coaches reserved exclusively for First Class MST pass holders may be earmarked and attached in the above trains. Further, in order to curb unauthorised passengers, regular checking is also required to be conducted.

- In Train No. 22930/22929, Vadodara-Bhilad Express, the design of the ladies' coach was changed some time ago, due to which regular women passengers are facing difficulties. Therefore, it is requested that the earlier configuration of the coaches may be restored in this train, as was the case previously.

- Thereafter, a stoppage may kindly be provided for Train No. 12989, Dadra-Ajmer Superfast Express, at Palej Railway Station, which falls under my parliamentary constituency, as a large number of Muslim pilgrims travel from this area to Ajmer. At present, they are compelled to travel to Vadodara or Surat in order to proceed to Ajmer. Therefore, providing a stoppage of the above train at Palej Railway Station will bring convenience and ease to Muslim pilgrims residing in Palej and Karjan.

- The circulating area on the western side of Bharuch Railway Station needs to be further expanded and upgraded, keeping in view the heavy passenger rush. At the same time, parking facilities may be shifted towards the dock side, and a small garden and fountain may be developed in front of the main entrance of the station.

- At Karjan Railway Station, which plays a very important commercial role between Bharuch and Vadodara, no train halts

between 12 midnight and 6 a.m. Therefore, there is a need to provide stoppage of one or two trains during this time period.

- At Bharuch Railway Station, the facility of escalators or lifts on Platform Nos. 4 and 5 needs to be made operational at the earliest.

- Train No. 59168, running from Rajpipla to Ankleshwar, takes approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes by rail, whereas passengers are able to reach their destination by road within one hour. Therefore, the journey time of this train may kindly be reduced and a timetable fixed in accordance with passenger convenience.

- Train No. 52024, Karjan-Malsar, should be provided stoppage at Sadli Station. This village is very important from the point of view of population and utility. Earlier, this train used to have a stoppage there. The stoppage at Sadli may kindly be restored.

- Ankleshwar Railway Station, which plays a very important commercial role between Bharuch and Vadodara, does not have a shed on Platform No. 1 on the Surat side. Due to the absence of a shed, passengers have to face considerable hardship during heat and rainfall. Therefore, arrangements may kindly be made at the earliest to provide a shed there.

• In my parliamentary constituency, a large number of people from Kerala and other parts of South India reside. In order to travel to their native places, they are required to go up to Vadodara or Surat.

Therefore, the following trains may kindly be provided stoppage at Bharuch Railway Station:

Train No. 22660/22659 - Dehradun-Kochuveli Superfast Express

Train No. 19332/19331 - Indore-Kochuveli Express

Train No. 12484/12483 - Amritsar-Kochuveli Express

Train No. 22634/22633 - Hazrat Nizamuddin-Trivandrum Superfast Express

Train No12978/12977 - Marusagar Superfast Express

With these submissions, I support this progressive Railway Budget.

SHRI RAMESH CHANDRA KAUSHIK (SONIPAT): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, first of all, I would like to express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways. Prior to the tenure of our dynamic Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, Indian Railways was grappling with several serious challenges. In order to address these challenges, a positive effort is being made by giving the green signal for an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore by the year 2030. Indian Railways is the lifeline of this vast country. With its 18 zonal railways and a rail network of 67,368 kilometres, it is the largest employer in the country and the principal pillar of transportation. In freight transportation as well, it has joined the one billion tonne club along with the United States of America, China and Russia. With the proposal to introduce the PPP model, the sector will witness rapid development, connectivity will improve and the railway sector will become more efficient. This will also lead to accelerated development of railway infrastructure. The proposal to invest more in suburban railway systems through the Rapid Regional Transport System on the Delhi-Meerut corridor will enhance connectivity between metropolitan cities and suburban areas and will also reduce pressure on road transport.

Sir, I would like to submit that in the coming years, all suburban areas of our region, including Panipat, which form part of the National Capital Region, should also be connected with Delhi. Electrification of 7,000 kilometres of the broad gauge network of Indian Railways has been targeted for the year 2019-20, with the objective of achieving universal electrification by the year 2021-22. This will make Indian Railways the world's first railway network with 100 per cent electrification. In addition to enhancing safety, and for increasing capacity and improving train efficiency, the Budget has also proposed the introduction of an automatic train protection system using a mix of the European Train Control System along with an indigenously developed system, thereby according priority to passenger safety. Further, in order to enhance passenger security and facilitate safety measures, a large number of CCTV cameras, underpasses and overbridges have been provided at stations and in trains. It has also been proposed to provide free Wi-Fi at all railway stations to improve the rail travel experience. The Government is making efforts to develop railway stations fully to international standards. For this, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Goyal, as well as the Hon. Minister of Finance for making budgetary provisions. Today, I would also like to speak

about my parliamentary constituency. In the last five years, if any major railway project has been established in Haryana, it is the rail coach repair factory, which has been set up in our region. The foundation stone of this project was laid by the Hon. Prime Minister some time ago. It is expected that from the next year onwards, 250 coaches will be manufactured annually. After four years, the target of manufacturing 1,000 coaches per year has been set, and only this Government has the capacity to accomplish such a task. Otherwise, there had been no railway project in Haryana for a long time. Along with this, the container depot in our region, which will make a significant contribution to freight transportation, will also be completed within the next six months. For this as well, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways, as substantial work has been undertaken after the formation of this Government. Similarly, the work of railway electrification in our region has also been completed on the Rohtak-Gohana-Jind railway line. In addition, the very old railway line from Jind to Panipat, which had remained incomplete for the past 50 years, has also been completed. The new Jind-Gohana-Sonipat railway line has been completed, and within one year, three

trains have been introduced on this route. In this manner, the work of moving forward on the path of development has been carried out.

A proposal has also been made to operate a high-speed train on the Delhi-Chandigarh railway line. Two railway stations of my constituency, Sonipat and Jind, have been included in this proposal. Along with this, good catering and all necessary passenger amenities are being provided at railway stations. I would like to place one suggestion with regard to railway security. At present, 50 per cent of the security is provided by the Railway Protection Force and the remaining 50 per cent is provided by the State Government. Many a time, proper coordination is not achieved, even though the entire expenditure is borne by the Railway Department and the Union Government. I would like to submit that if this arrangement is unified, we can make significant progress in matters relating to security. As far as upgrading of stations is concerned, efforts are being made to convert around 500 stations into model stations, to upgrade B category stations to A category, and C category stations to B category. Under the leadership of the Hon. Minister of Railways and the Hon. Prime Minister, efforts are being made to provide all facilities at every station. Our KMP Expressway has been completed. We have proposed a railway project from Palwal to

Kundli, for which the Haryana Government is prepared to bear the entire expenditure. If work on this project is commenced at the earliest, there will be substantial improvement in this region. Freight transportation by rail involves lower costs and also reduces road traffic. All these are development-oriented works. I would like to request the Hon. Minister that the new train introduced from Mathura to Kurukshetra may be provided stoppage at Ganaur. Further, the work on the new railway line from Sonipat-Gohana-Jind-Hisar may be completed at the earliest. We have undertaken development works during the last five years. Earlier, only four kilometres of railway line used to be constructed annually, whereas under this Government a target of 15 kilometres has been set. This demonstrates what a decisive and development-oriented Government can achieve, and this has been possible only under the leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. With these words, I conclude my remarks. Thank you.

[English]

[*]**SHRI NALIN KUMAR KATEEL (DAKSHINA KANNADA)**: I would like to place my views on the demands for grants for the ministry of Railways 2019-20.

The union budget has allocated Rs. 65,837 crore for the Railways. It is the highest ever outlay for capital expenditure amounting to Rs. 1.60 lakh crore in the Budget.

It includes the funds allocated for the passenger amenities, which has increased by 200 per cent from the previous year. Last year, the outlay for the railways was Rs. 1.48 lakh crore while the Budget allocation was Rs. 55,088 crore. In the interim Budget, the allocation was Rs. 1.58 lakh crore.

The Union government has given significant importance for the Railway Infrastructure. It proposes for an investment of 50 lakh crores between 2018-2030. The intention of the government is very clear that it will emphasis on completing all sanctioned projects at the earliest. It is a welcome step.

The union government has proposed for construction of New Metro Rail Projects for a total route length of 300 kilometers during

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

2019-20. It is also a bold step taken by the government for increasing the Metro Rail network in the country.

I would like to point out that though the Indian Railways is constantly making its efforts to induct new technologies and modernize its existing operating system, there is still a lot needs to be done as far as increasing the speed, signaling systems, ensuring the safety of train passengers, removing the bottlenecks of level crossings, maintenance of cleanliness in the trains and outside the railway stations etc. are concerned.

As far as railway freight services are concerned there is also need to take more effective steps to reduce energy conservation, higher capacity wagons, new design wagons for new commodities like automobile, bulk fly ash, cement, steel products etc.

Indian Railways is the oldest railway network in the world. There are hundreds of railway stations built more than a century ago. There is a need for reconstruction of those old railway stations. In this connection, I would like to mention that Mangaluru Central Railway Station of my Dakshina Kannada Lok Sabha constituency was built hundred years ago. Now it is in a dilapidated condition as there is no effective maintenance of the station. Therefore, I would like to request the Hon. Railway minister to take steps for

construction of New Building for Mangaluru Central Railway Station.

Apart from this some other important demands for my Parliamentary constituency are:

- Speeding up the Construction work of Platform No. 4 & 5 at Mangaluru Central Railway Station (MAQ) to enable it to accommodate more trains
- Creation of Mangaluru Railway Division by merging South Western Railway Zone or Konkan railway with Divisional headquarters at Mangaluru.

1) Tri weekly Gomateshwara Express (16575/16576) to be run daily.

2) Train No. 16586 running between Mangalore (MAQ) - Bangalore (MAQ - YPR Express) should run daily. There is huge demand from the commuters and several organizations for this train. So take steps in this regard at the earliest.

3) Introduction of new Train between MAQ and Pune to provide connectivity for coastal regions.

4) Reintroduction of Mangalore-Miraj Mahalaxmi Express Train with an Extension upto Mumbai (MCST) (Old No: 6203/04).

5) Restart Kasaragodu Mookambika Road Train (56665/66) with extension upto Guruvayur.

6) Increase the speed of all the trains run between Mangalore Central and Yashwantpur (via Hassan - Kunigal). So that the travel time could be reduced (8.30 to 9 hrs.) for convenience of train passengers.

7) Merger of HMRDC with SW Railway - Mysore Division.

8) Extension of (16515/16) Yeshwanthpur to Karwar day train (via MAJN) upto Tirupathi (via) Bangalore / Yeshwanthpur with revised timing (Tri weekly).

9) Request for New Train between Mangalore - Tirupati:

There is huge demand from the general public for a new train between Mangalore and Tirupati Via - Hasan - Bengaluru-Thirupathi and/or via Shornur - Palakkad -Erode - Salem - Katapadi. So if it is introduced, it will benefit thousands of pilgrims from costal Karnataka and Kerala.

10) Request for New Train between Mangalore - Varanasi / Pragyaraj / Gorakhpur:

If a new train introduced between Mangalore -Varansi / Pragya / Gorakhpur will benefit thousands of workers & students from North

India are staying in coastal Karnataka. It will also benefit pilgrims visiting holy places like Varanasi / Prayagraj / Gorakhpur.

11) DEMU Train running between Madgaon - MAQ should run daily.

12) Request for stoppage of Mangalore - Coimbatore Inter City Express (22609/10) at Kuttipuram.

If the stoppage is provided to Mangalore - Coimbatore Inter City Express (22609/10) at Kuttipuram it will be very convenient for commuters to travel to Guruvayur, which is a famous pilgrimage centre of Kerala.

13) Regularising Coimbatore - Mangalore Junction - Jabalpur Express Train

The special train runs between Coimbatore - Mangalore Junction and Jabalpur is one of the popular trains in the region. However the train fare is very expensive and has caused inconvenience to the general public. So, if this train runs as regular train with reduced fare, it will benefit thousands of railway commuters.

14) Train No. 56642/43/44/45 - Subramanya - Puttur - Mangalore Passenger Subramanya Road (Night train) Earlier, the Broad gauge train was halting at Subramanya, should start at 6.30 AM and reach

Mangalore by 8.45 AM. So that, students, officer goers, traders and all other people could be benefitted from this train.

15) SBC - Karwar Express 16513 / (Night Train) should start at 5.20 AM at Mangalore Central, instead of 6.00 AM. Now this train takes 1.45 hrs reach Puttur from MAQ (Dist 49 Km).

[Translation]

DR. S.T. HASAN (MORADABAD): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to submit a few points with reference to Moradabad. The city of Moradabad is known all over the world as the Brass City. From Europe to America and Japan, there is hardly any drawing room where utensils or decorative items manufactured in Moradabad are not displayed. Moradabad has an annual turnover of approximately Rs. 20,000 crore. Exporters from this region are required to travel to Mumbai frequently. However, till date, there is no direct train from Moradabad to Mumbai. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that provision may kindly be made for a direct train from Moradabad to Mumbai so that exporters may be facilitated.

Sir, on the Delhi-Lucknow railway track, there is a sharp curve near the Ramganga Bridge from Moradabad Junction. On the other side of this curve, there is a large population in Govind Nagar. Fast trains pass through this section, and people are unable to notice them from a distance. As a result, nearly two to three accidents occur every month. This has been a long-pending demand that either an underpass or an overbridge may be constructed at Govind Nagar so that human lives can be saved. Through you, I would like to request

the Hon. Minister to give due attention to this matter so that loss of human lives can be prevented in future. Sir, Kanth area is in Moradabad, from where surgical cotton and surgical bandages are supplied to the entire Northern India.But unfortunately, there is no stoppage of fast trains at Kanth station.

Sir, the Kanth area also falls within Moradabad, from where surgical cotton and surgical bandages are supplied across the whole of North India. Unfortunately, there is no stoppage of fast trains at Kanth Railway Station.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to submit a request that a stoppage of the Kanth-Godam Daily Express may be provided at Kanth Railway Station. There is no reservation counter at Kanth. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that a reservation counter may be established at Kanth Railway Station. People from all over the world visit Moradabad, including from the United States of America, England, Russia and the Middle East. There are two road overbridges in Moradabad, one at the Loco Shed and another from Dassarai to Sambhal Chauraha. These overbridges have become very narrow, resulting in frequent traffic congestion. When our buyers get stuck in traffic jams, it causes us considerable embarrassment. Even in the 21st century, we are faced with such

situations. When people from across the world visit, they make critical remarks. Therefore, I would like to request that at the Loco Shed overbridge, the Public Works Department has completed its work, but the Railway authorities have kept the matter pending for the past one year. This work may kindly be completed at the earliest so that the difficulties faced by the people are resolved. Further, the overbridge from Dassarai to Sambhal Chauraha may be widened at the earliest so that people can travel conveniently and we do not have to face embarrassment before our buyers who come from outside, including from foreign countries.

Sir, Moradabad Railway Station receives visitors from across the world. Therefore, through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that the station may be upgraded and beautified, so that an impression is conveyed worldwide of how capable our Railways are and how many facilities are provided to passengers. As Indians, we tend to endure many inconveniences. However, when we have to face such conditions in the presence of foreigners, we do feel a sense of embarrassment. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that all these demands may kindly be taken up on a priority basis.

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR (TIKAMGARH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you. Our colleagues have placed before the House matters relating to safety and operations in their respective regions while speaking on the Railway Budget. Members from both the Treasury Benches and the Opposition are presenting their views in a very constructive manner. A Railway Budget is such that every Member feels the need to prominently place before the House the railway-related problems and requirements of his or her parliamentary constituency. I was observing that while some of our colleagues spoke about the history of the Railways from its inception till the present day, some Members who have come to the House for the first time have also presented their views in a very natural and articulate manner, which is indeed commendable.

Before commencing my submission, I would like to state that this year we are going to observe the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi. The Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh C. Angadi, is present here. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Shri Piyush Goyal, and Shri Suresh Angadi. Through them, I would like to make a request. As we are observing the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi this year, and as we all know that Mahatma Gandhi was regarded as a symbol

of peace, compassion, love and non-violence, to which he devoted his entire life, I would like to propose that during this 150th birth anniversary year, a National Integration Train may be run. This train may commence from his birthplace and travel across the country. Visual depictions of the important events associated with the life of Mahatma Gandhi may be displayed on the train, along with his photographs. Wherever the train halts, special efforts may be made to invite and involve the younger generation, particularly children, who are the citizens of tomorrow.

Just now one of our colleagues from Moradabad was speaking. When such a train goes to different cities, every city has its own distinct characteristics, and every State has its own special features. Moradabad is renowned for its excellent brass work. Our colleagues from Karnataka may note that high-quality wooden toys are produced near Bengaluru. Similarly, Rajasthan is well known for its fine puppet craft. Mahatma Gandhi greatly encouraged small-scale and cottage industries. When this National Integration Train passes through such cities across various States, arrangements may also be made to provide space and other necessary facilities near the train for setting up stalls of such small-scale and cottage industries, with a view to promoting them.

Along with this, all other requisite facilities may also be provided so that people visiting the train not only learn about the life of Mahatma Gandhi but, through this train, an innovative initiative to promote small-scale and cottage industries can also be launched.

Sir, I would like to thank Shri Piyush Goyal. The Railway Budget for this year is commendable and praiseworthy in many respects. In this Railway Budget, safety has been accorded high priority, and as a result, there has been a reduction of 62 per cent in railway accidents which used to occur earlier. In the year 2013-14, there were 118 such railway accidents, whereas in 2017-18, their number has come down to only 73. This is the outcome of strong willpower. When our Ministry of Railways and the employees working in the Railways resolved with determination that railway accidents must be prevented and their number reduced, it is only due to this collective resolve that such a substantial reduction has been achieved. With regard to the remote regions of our country, one of our colleagues from Tripura was speaking about this. Efforts had been underway for a long time, but the train reached Agartala only on 31 July, 2016, with the introduction of the New Delhi-Tripura Sundari Express. In the year 2014, the Hon. Shri Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister, and in 2016 this Tripura Sundari

Express was started. If this train could be introduced within two years, then those who say that all these works were already in progress earlier must reflect on why it was not started earlier. It did not happen then. After Shri Modi became the Prime Minister, when the Hon. Minister of Railways made dedicated efforts and demonstrated firm resolve, we saw that in Tripura, along with the Tripura Sundari Express, the Rajdhani Express from New Delhi reached Agartala on 28 October, 2017. This is the result of the willpower of the Government of the Bharatiya Janata Party and its allied parties. Not only in the North-Eastern region, but also in Jammu and Kashmir, where some of our colleagues are present here, railway facilities have been extended even to those remote areas where trains had not reached earlier. This work has also been carried out by the Government led by the Hon. Shri Narendra Modi. The steps taken by the Ministry of Railways to install GPS systems in every railway engine are truly commendable. With the installation of such GPS systems, we will be able to know the exact position and status of trains, including where a train is and in what condition it is operating. This is a very positive and forward-looking step taken by the Ministry of Railways.

Sir, I would like to submit one point to the Hon. Minister of State for Railways. At many places near our railway stations, hundreds of acres of surplus railway land are lying vacant. Such land is not being put to any productive use. On the contrary, it is often seen that certain musclemen and influential elements encroach upon such land. Why should the Railway Department not take a proactive initiative in this regard and formulate an action plan for the commercial utilisation of this surplus land, thereby providing employment opportunities to our youth and the new generation? Such utilisation would not only help in generating employment but would also ensure that the land is protected from encroachment.

Sir, I would like to place before the House a few issues relating to my region. From our area, there is a train operating from Khajuraho to New Delhi. Half of this train originates from Manikpur and the other half from Khajuraho, and it is known as the Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express. The two portions are linked at Mahoba. The people of Bundelkhand have been demanding a direct train service from Chhatarpur-Tikamgarh to New Delhi, but such a facility is still not available to us. Earlier, there were virtually no train facilities for our region. Rail connectivity for Bundelkhand became available only after the Government led by the Hon. Shri

Narendra Modi came to power. Prior to that, only a single passenger train had been introduced. During the previous tenure of the Hon. Prime Minister, the Mahamana Express was introduced from Khajuraho to Bhopal. Thereafter, efforts were made, just before the elections, for an additional train. I would like to thank the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, for introducing a second train from Khajuraho to Indore, thereby providing an additional rail facility to the Bundelkhand region.

Sir, I would like to make a specific request in this regard. The Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express, which presently runs with one portion from Manikpur and another from Khajuraho and is linked at Mahoba, does not require the introduction of any additional train. Instead of linking the Khajuraho portion at Mahoba, the next logical step would be to extend it from Khajuraho to Chhatarpur and further to Tikamgarh. If the trains are linked at Jhansi, this region of Bundelkhand, which has long remained deprived of adequate rail facilities, will also receive much-needed connectivity. A very large number of labourers from Chhatarpur and Tikamgarh, which form my parliamentary constituency, as well as from Panna, travel to Delhi in search of employment. Improved rail connectivity on this route would greatly benefit them.

If one were to visit Platform Nos. 4 and 5 at Jhansi, especially after six o'clock in the evening, the labourers seen there would almost entirely be from the Bundelkhand region. I would like to request that if this Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express is extended from Khajuraho to Chhatarpur, Tikamgarh and Lalitpur and then linked at Jhansi, there would be no need to introduce a new train, and Bundelkhand would also get the benefit of a major train service.

I would also like to submit one more point. The Mahamana Express that operates from Khajuraho presently runs in the evening and reaches Bhopal at around 11.30 p.m. There it remains stationed on the outer line for nearly 45 minutes. I have been demanding for a long time that this Mahamana Express should be operated from Khajuraho in the morning. If it departs in the morning, it would reach Bhopal around 11 a.m. Since Bhopal is the State capital, people travelling there for official work would be able to complete their work during the day. When the train returns in the evening, it would reach Khajuraho via Tikamgarh and Chhatarpur by around midnight. For this, only a change in timing is required.

There is one more train. ... *(Interruptions)* Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to take a little more time. Another train has been

introduced from Khajuraho to Indore. The Khajuraho-Indore train is running with very low occupancy. When this train was introduced, its timing was fixed incorrectly. As a result, passengers are not being adequately benefited and the Railways is also suffering a loss of revenue. I would like to request that this Bhopal-Indore train may be operated as per the timing of the Mahamana Express. The Mahamana Express may be run from Khajuraho in the morning and brought back from Bhopal in the evening, so that the people may derive proper benefit from this train. Further, the Mahamana Express does not have a stoppage at Ishanagar Station. A stoppage of the Mahamana Express may kindly be provided at Ishanagar Station.

Orchha is a very important religious and tourist destination. However, at Orchha Railway Station, where tourists arrive in large numbers not only from within the country but also from abroad, no train other than passenger trains halts. The Hon. Prime Minister has also mentioned the importance of Orchha in his ‘Mann Ki Baat’ programme. If stoppage of trains is provided at Orchha Railway Station, tourists who come to Orchha from Jhansi will be able to proceed directly from Orchha to the next major tourist destination, Varanasi. Along with this, there has been a long-pending demand for the stoppage of the Bundelkhand Express at Teharka Station. I

would like this demand for providing stoppage of the Bundelkhand Express at Teharka Station to be fulfilled. If a train is introduced from Khajuraho to Mumbai, it will greatly benefit the people of our region who travel to Mumbai for medical treatment and at present have to change trains at two or three places. Availability of a direct train will contribute significantly to the development of the Bundelkhand region. If a train is operated via Tikamgarh and Sagar up to Jabalpur, it will save a distance of approximately 150 kilometres. The operation of this train will provide considerable convenience and will be beneficial for the development of Bundelkhand.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, with these words, I would like to conclude my remarks while supporting the Railway Budget.

[English]

[*]**SHRIMATI POONAMBEN MAADAM (JAMNAGAR)**: First and foremost, I would like to thank and congratulate our Hon. PM Shri Narendra Modi ji and Hon. FM, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji for presenting a balanced and a visionary budget. This is the first ever budget that has been presented to the country with a long term vision and for improving the lives of the common man. Ease of living, as it has been emphasized time and again in the budget speech of the Hon. FM, is not just about individual growth but about improving every sector in the economy so that they benefit every individual of the country. This Government has always been holistic about development intertwined with 'Maximum Governance and minimum Government and development of India is dependent on development of its infrastructure, ideologies and individuals.

As it has been talked through in the Budget about various sectors, railways hold an important position; not just for its standpoint in the economy but for its wide range of services to the common man and in this regard, I support the DFG no. 82 under Ministry of Railways for FY 2019-2020.

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Railways is considered to be the soul of public transport in India and this Budget reflects the aspirations of each and every member of the Indian family; a Budget that reflects the aspirations of the common citizens of India who have waiting to see tangible changes in the Indian Railways.

A lot has been done in the Railway sector in the last 5 years; right from merging the Railway budget with the General budget to help enhance capital expenditure and boost economic growth of the sector to electrification and doubling of tracks to redevelopment of stations of focusing on passenger safety-much reforms have been initiated in the Railway sector in the last 5 years. These reforms were primary agendas of the present Government under the leadership of our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji.

The Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji and once said, “My vision is to be make railways the backbone of India’s progress and economic development.”

All the above mentioned efforts are being made to translate his vision into reality and the core objective is to improve the quality of customer experience, become an engine of employment generation and boost economic growth at the national level and convert India’s largest institution into a template for transformation.

Railway are the backbone of the Indian public transport system and without furthering investment and technological interventions; the Indian Railways will not go any further. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to our Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji for acknowledging the need of the hour and the Railways has got a budgetary allocation of Rs.65,837 crore and the highest ever outlay for capital expenditure amounting to Rs. 1.60 lakh crore in the Union Budget 2019-20.

Moving on, to one the many takeaways from the Railway Budget is that, there has been a switch from mere Railway announcements of new lines and projects in favour of execution. This is extremely important step to improving the financial health of the railways in India. As mentioned in the Budget 2019-2020 railway infrastructure would need an investment of Rs.50 lakh crore between 2018 and 2030; this has been conceptualized keeping in mind a 10 year vision to improve the sector exponentially. Rs. 50 lakh core investment as mentioned by the finance minister will be needed to modernise stations and build passenger amenities. Some of the old projects like 100 percent electrification, advanced signaling and station development were already being accounted for. Now, with new investment it can be considered so as to how to

create additional capacities so that model share of freight can go up, cost of logistics can come down and passengers along with good amenities get more avenue to travel by trains to reach their destinations. Better services for the passengers have always been the goal of the Government and opportunities and viability of attracting more investments can go a long way in ensuring this. Electrification has been carried out at a faster pace in the last 5 years; and railways are carrying almost half of its freight and passengers on electrified routes now. The electrification of Indian Railways' broad gauge network will be done by 2021-22. In 2019-20, 7000 route kilometers has been targeted for electrification.

Secondly, another important shift is focus on passenger comfort in Railways. I thank our Hon. Finance Minister, Shri Sitharamanji for allocating more than Rs. 3,000 crore for rail passenger amenities in the 2019-2020 Budget, an around 200 per cent rise from the last fiscal. The allocation for rail passenger comfort this fiscal has gone up to Rs. 3,422.57 crore from Rs. 1,657 crore in the Budget presented last year.

Improving the quality of travel and services has always been the focus of the government and in this regard the Government intends to build world-class modern train sets. Redevelopment of 6000

major railway stations has also been taken up which will improve passenger amenities at stations and turn them into world-class facilities with Wi-Fi, drinking water facilities, upgraded waiting rooms, television sets, passenger information kiosks and other such facilities. Providing Wi-Fi at all stations is also on the agenda to improve train travel experience and bridge the digital divide between the rural and urban citizens; courtesy the Government's flagship 'Digital India,' program.

Thirdly, besides station development and comfort; safety has been a top priority of the Government. Railways has also planned to provide CCTV Surveillance System at all stations (excluding halt stations) and in trains by using state-of-the art video surveillance technology to enhance safety of passengers. CCTV surveillance systems at 455 railway stations have been provided and rests of the stations are targeted by 2020-21. Similarly, 1,203 coaches were equipped with CCTV surveillance system and rest passenger coaches are targeted by 2021-22. For passenger safety complete elimination of unmanned level crossings of Broad Gauge network has been achieved in 2018-19. Now, the national transporter is aiming to eliminate all 2,568 manned level crossings.

These reforms are much needed to develop and sustain the Railways sector. This budget will have long-term positive impact on the national economy by effective execution, enhanced capital investment and infusion of technology along with IT, in the Railways. Appropriate steps have been taken towards fulfilling the Government's promise to enhance connectivity in the backward areas of the country.

Infrastructure has always been a non-negotiable with this Government; and to augment Railway infrastructure; Indian Railways has launched a massive programme for modernization of railway stations, making railway travel a pleasant and satisfying experience for passengers. The railways has also introduced fully indigenous semi high-speed Train 18 under 'Make in India'.

With this, I would like to draw your attention to issues pertaining to my constituency, Jamnagar. The induction of Shatabdi Express between Ahmedabad and Dwarka by the then Hon. Railway Minister Shri Suresh Prabhu ji was a long-standing demand of people of my constituency. If a fast train like Shatabdi Express is introduced, the journey period can be reduced to half. The intended high speed train service (Ahmedabad - Dwarka) will ba a major boost in connectivity between the Industrial hubs in Gujarat (Jamnagar and Rajkot) to the

state capital of Ahmedabad. Also, these towns are the hubs for the casting/forging and brass component industries. I also sincerely thank our Hon. Prime Minister for dedicating the Okha-Kanalus and Porbandar-Wansjaliya Sections in Gujarat of Western Railways as Green Corridor Sections. Indian Railways, being the biggest commercial organization of the country, is continuously in practice to adopt environmentally sustainable practices so that environment is not degraded. Since the existence of Indian Railways, it has been a problem to make the railway-lines free from human waste discharge. But now, bio-toilets will be fitted in all new and existing trains and all railway lines in due course will be made completely free from human excreta. Further, due to the strategic location of Jamnagar city, all three wings of the Armed Forces i.e. Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Indian Navy have units/establishments in Jamnagar will be benefitted. A high speed train line with Ahmedabad would provide a major respite to the men in uniform. Secondly, conversion of Rajkot- New Delhi weekly train no. 19579-19580 to bi-weekly will make travel easier for the people who have to travel to New Delhi regularly for work and business purposes.

Lastly, electrification and doubling of tracks are crucial for the expansion of rail network. Railways will embark on large scale

electrification through tenders given on engineering, procurement and construction mode. A similar plan is afoot for upgrading the signaling system. As we are all aware of the focus of the Government towards the development and modernisation of facilities in railways especially with regard to electrification and doubling of tracks, I align my demands with the Government's agenda of electrification of 7000 route Kms for 2019-2020. It would be good if electrification and doubling of tracks is prioritised for all the existing routes of my constituency. Therefore, I would request higher allocation to demand for grants and speeding up pending issues under Railways concerning the execution of infrastructure projects pertaining to my constituency.

Moderisation of Jamnagar railway station must be prioritised. Jamnagar being the district headquarters of all the three defence forces and hosting close to 3500 brass and small scale industrial units has an ever increasing footfall of travellers. Additionally, biggest oil refineries of Reliance and Essar are situated near Jamnagar. Even though many long distance trains originates and passes through Jamnagar, passenger amenities provided at the station is inadequate. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to take necessary steps to modernize Jamnagar railway station. This would

also facilitate most long distance trains that originate or terminate at Hapa Railway station to be extended to Jamnagar Railway station. Next, I request the Minister to construct a railway over-bridge near the entrance of Hapa Railway station. Also cleaning facilities must be upgraded at the stations. Finally, I would request the Ministry to expedite the work of second platform at Khambaliya station.

With this, I would like to specially mention that this budget will be an important tool towards the renovation of the nation. Along with that an effort has been made to seek the co-operation of passengers and the Railway Employees, as well. For the first time the Railway Budget 2019 has said to launch a scheme of Integrated Skill Development, where all 13 lakh railway employees will be given a foundational training. The programme will focus on 3Cs-Customer, Cost, and (work) Culture. Cost optimization, efficiency in management and accountability to the consumer is focus of our Government, which is reflected in this budget. The government has accorded the highest priority to safety along with infrastructure in line with its philosophy that every life is precious.

[Translation]

This Budget is a Budget of a New India. This Government has given a new direction to the country and has provided a new identity to the Railways. The progress of the nation is linked with progress in every sector, and the Railways is an important service dedicated to serving the people of the country at large. In order to further strengthen and advance this service, I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways, DFG (No. 83).

[English]

The Budget perfectly encapsulates the Hon. PM's vision of 'New India' and once again I congratulations the Hon. FM, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji for presenting a budget for the 'New India.' As I talk about new India, I conclude by saying that the journey has already begun and very soon in the words of Shri Narendra Modi ji "The Indian Railways will become the growth engine of the nation's Vikas Yatra."

Thank you.

SHRI P.K. KUNHALIKUTTY (MALAPPURAM): Sir, while we are discussing the Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Railways, one can very well see that a lot of Members, especially the Ruling Party Members, are thinking with a lot of hope and are saying that so many things, so many wonders are going to happen under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister and the Railway Minister and so many things are going to take place for the first time and so on and so forth. But when one goes through the documents, nobody can see the required allocation for any of these things. There is no required allocation generally and there is not much allocation even to take forward the usual things like line extension, maintenance, electrification and things like that.

I do not know what is the wonder that is going to happen in this country. Without allocation of funds, will you be able to do anything? The fact is that in this Government, they do not have much focus on Railways. Like any other public sector undertaking, like Air India, like BSNL, like all other public sector undertakings, the general feeling and impression is that the Railways is also losing its focus. Railways has become a losing proposition. It is waiting for its mercy killing like any other public sector undertaking.

In the morning, we were hearing from the Civil Aviation Minister. He was saying about the pathetic condition of Air India. One can very well understand as to what has happened to Air India within a couple of years. When we travel by Air India, we all think as to how many days our Air India will be there. In this way, a general impression is there. The Railways also is going to be privatised. It is waiting for its mercy killing. It is very well seen from the fact that the Railways had a separate Budget. At that time, what was the condition? Everybody from all the States used to wait for the Railway Budget. With many hopes, all the States used to wait at that time. Now, it is a part of the General Budget and there is no focus on the Railway Budget. One can very well see, when we go through the documents, there is not much allocation even for the usual works. Southern States are being neglected in general and Kerala in particular. Kerala may not be there on your political map but it should be there in your Railway map. It does not have provisions for many projects. There is no fund allocation for Kerala. I will not go into the examples. Perhaps I will write about this to the hon. Minister of Railways later on. There are many extension works, doubling of tracks, electrification of tracks, maintenance of tracks, track renewals and so on for which no funds have been allocated.

There was a proposal for a new coach factory at Kanjikode. There is no talk about that nowadays. The Government had given a lot of land to this particular coach factory and it was the priority of the then UPA Government. During the last five years, there is no talk about that coach factory. Nothing has been heard about this Kanjikode coach factory. Are you waiting for any special purpose vehicle? Land is lying vacant. It is not a good thing. We all know that States like Kerala get their income from tourism and all that. Many tourists come from abroad. During rainy season, one should have to carry one umbrella too to prevent themselves from getting wet even in coaches. Such is the condition. Otherwise, they will become wet because of the leakage in the coaches. Such is the condition of train coaches that run through Kerala.

Like that, there were proposals for new lines. There was a proposal for a line between Nilambur and Nanjangud. It is a very good line and it has tourism importance. It connects Kerala with Mysore, and from there it can go everywhere. There is not even a DPR done on this line. At least, some survey can be done on that line. That is what I wanted to bring to the notice of the Government.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, kindly conclude.

SHRI P.K. KUNHALIKUTTY: Yes, I am going to conclude.

I am leaving all other points because of paucity of time. But I want to bring one thing to their notice. In a thickly populated and dense State like Kerala, there is one problem. It will be there in other States also. It is very difficult for the people, who are residing near the railways, to get NoC for doing their construction activities. That 30-metre law is very much harsher compared to the old one. So, the Government should take some initiatives to have some change in that. This law has to be scrapped and a new law has to be brought.

The southern States in general, and Kerala in particular is looking for a little more generous allocation of funds about which I mentioned. I wanted to bring this to their notice.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO (BOLANGIR): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways.

At the very outset, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulations to the hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji, who has indeed done the women of our country proud by creating history as India's first full time lady Finance Minister. The hon. Minister has presented a futuristic, progressive, benevolent and inclusive Budget. She has succeeded in translating the thought and vision of our esteemed Prime Minister who has established firmly his position on the world stage as a global leader and statesman.

The spirit of this outstanding Budget conforms to the principles of Jeremy Bentham's Theory of Utilitarianism, which advocates for the greatest happiness of the greatest number, and this thought has clearly been reflected in the Prime Minister's slogan of "Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikaas, Sabka Vishwas", in order to create a new India.

It is only in the Modi era, post-2014, that the Government has actually started fulfilling its role as was envisaged in the Preamble of

our Constitution as a “Sovereign Socialist Secular Democratic Republic”. It is also in the Modi era that the Government has started seriously fulfilling its obligations as a welfare state by protecting and promoting the socio-economic well-being of our citizens, based on the principles of equality and social justice, at the same time continuing to be the world’s fastest growing economy.

After this, I would like to come down to the Demands for Grants. Our country is in a period of transition and is experiencing a paradigm shift. The Railway Budget is totally in sync with the new India vision. It is estimated that the railway infrastructure would need an investment of Rs.50 lakh crore between 2018 and 2030. Given that, the capital expenditure outlays of Railways are around Rs.1.5 to 1.6 lakh crore per annum. It is, therefore, proposed to use public-private partnership to unleash faster development and completion of the railway works.

Sir, as there is a paucity of time, I will mention just a few highlights of the Rail Budget because then it would be remiss of me if I do not convey the demands and sentiments of my own constituency.

Firstly, the Government focuses on manufacturing world-class trains with the help of transfer of technology through Make in India.

Secondly, Indian Railways is to be a big growth driver and is going to contribute majorly towards making $5 trillion economy a reality.

Indian Railways has tied up with France to set up world-class stations.

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is being encouraged to develop railway infrastructure.

Then, no railway fare hike has been announced.

The state-of-the-art stations will be set up under station redevelopment programme.

Investment in suburban railways has been encouraged through Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) structures like Rapid Regional Transport System (RRTS).

Public Private Partnership (PPP) in Metro rail initiative is being encouraged.

Focus on green energy by Indian Railways is the new engine of growth.

There is a great emphasis on safe railway travel. When we are talking about high speed trains, simultaneously we are worried about safe travel. To avoid accidents and untoward incidents, CCTVs on

stations and trains have been set up so that sabotage can be controlled.

As far as new signalling is concerned, India is looking to adopt European signalling infrastructure for safer yet faster movement of passenger trains.

Swachh Rail, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is going to take place on getting a green rating.

Elimination of unmanned level crossings is a big step aiming to prevent railway accidents due to trespassing on railway tracks. This Government has taken it seriously.

Vande Bharat Express, which is a flagship project, is also doing well and is a big success story of 'Make in India'.

Dedicated Freight Corridors are going to be set up. This will mitigate the congestion within the railway network, which is going to benefit the common man.

Indian Railways carries lakhs of passengers. There has been a further increase of 2.09 per cent in the number of passengers carried by the Indian Railways in the Financial Year 2018. This is a very encouraging, a very optimistic and a promising figure, which just helps us to work harder to excel in our work in this Ministry.

Last but not the least, the thing which really struck a chord within me is that there are 86,500 woman employees in Railways and it is heartening to note that they are very well looked after and granted maternity leave, childcare leave and special leave for promoting family welfare. The Railways stresses greatly on the welfare, development and empowerment of women. I think we should take a leaf out of the book of the Railways. A unique feature of women empowerment in Railways is the Women Welfare Organisation.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Sir, you have been most patient. I have just finished with the preliminary points. Let me just come down to my constituency.

Coming to Odisha, I would like to whole-heartedly thank our dynamic, tenacious, committed hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal who is a man with tremendous foresight. He works relentlessly to spearhead the Ministry of Railways into the New India era. He has been benevolent to the State of Odisha and I want to thank him from the bottom of my heart. I just want to elucidate a few points here.

Since 2014, a total of Rs.20,213 crore has been earmarked in the railway budgetary allocation for Odisha. This is a whopping five-fold increase over the budgetary allocation of Rs.4190 crore during the UPA Government.

The current Railway Budget has provided for a 13 per cent increase in the allotment of funds for the East-Coast Railways to the tune of Rs. 7,010 crore, which includes a 63 per cent allotment for new lines, which comes to Rs. 2,630 crore. There is 118 per cent increase in the allotment for passenger amenities to the tune of Rs. 182 crore. New railway lines are being constructed in Odisha at 29 km. per year from 2014 to 2018 as opposed to the construction of 10 km per year which was being done during the tenure from 2004 to 2014, before the Modi era. Doubling work has gone up to 83 km. per year during 2014-2018. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, please conclude your speech.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: I just want a few more minutes. It is my maiden speech. So, please be kind to me. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please address the Chair.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: Doubling work has gone up to 83 km. per year during 2014-2018 in comparison to 16 km. which was being done during the UPA tenure.

Electrification of lines in Odisha has increased by 110 kms. per year in comparison to 35 km. which was being done during 2014-18 period. This comparison is self-explanatory that which Government has the inclination and the will to work for the people.

As far as my constituency is concerned, I thank the hon. Minister for the Budgetary allocation of Rs. 350 crore for the Khurda-Balangir railway line; Rs. 170 crore for doubling of the Sambalpur-Titlagarh railway line, Titlagarh-Muribahal overbridge; doubling of the Titlagarh-Raipur railway line and the Vizianagram-Titlagarh third line.

It would be really negligent of me if I do not elucidate some of the important demands. We want an early and time-bound completion of the Khurda-Balangir railway line which has been going on for the last 20 years.

I want to raise a very important point. There is a place called Kantabanji in my constituency where 750 acres of land has been lying idle for the last 75 years. No ancillary unit or wagon maintenance workshop has been set up there. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Rampreet Mandal ji.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA KUMARI SINGH DEO: It is a no-industry district. We would request the hon. Minister to be benevolent and set up something here. A MEMU rake maintenance facility could be established there. The most important point is that there should be some Budgetary allocation for the proposed new railway line from Balangir to Nuapada via Patnagarh. This is a very old request. The survey has been completed. It is pending before the Railway Board since 2014. The DPR of this project has also been submitted in 2016.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMPRIT MANDAL (JHANJHARPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways for the year 2019-20. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Minister of Railways and the Hon. Shri Nitish Kumar. I have come to this House from the position of a Mukhiya.

I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all the Hon. Members of Parliament. In recent years, the NDA Government has taken wide-ranging and effective steps to bring about revolutionary reforms in the Railways, which is the principal mode of transport in the country. Earlier, the Railway Budget and the General Budget used to be presented separately. However, the NDA Government has integrated the Railway Budget with the General Budget, which I wholeheartedly welcome. Earlier, the Railways used to grapple with financial stress. By enabling financial support through the General Budget to revive it, the intention of the NDA Government towards railway reforms is commendable, and I warmly welcome it.

17.00 hrs

In my view, where the intention is clean and oriented towards public welfare, there may be occasional errors in policy assessment,

but over time, even such policies become capable of promoting public welfare and creating a clean and healthy environment.

17.01 hrs (Shri N.K. Premachandran *in the Chair*)

As the Hon. Minister of Finance, while presenting the Budget for the year 2019-20 before Parliament, has showered several beneficial measures aimed at developing Indian Railways and making it more people-oriented, these are both commendable and necessary. I extend my wholehearted welcome to this step of the Government. Keeping in view the constraints of time, the projects announced in the Budget for 2019-20 for the development of the Railways and for public welfare in society are highly commendable.

Indian Railways is one of the largest institutions not only in the country but also in the world. Approximately 150 crore passengers constitute a major source of revenue for Indian Railways. Moreover, this institution has been functioning for more than a century. It is true that those who established the railway system in the country did not do so with the objective of national development, but rather as an effective instrument to control the country. However, today the country is independent, and we Indians are the architects of our own destiny. Therefore, we must change our outlook towards the Railways and develop it as a major instrument of national

development. I am surprised that such a gigantic institution, endowed with so many resources, continues to struggle with financial losses. After examining various studies and surveys conducted in recent years, certain reasons for the financial losses incurred by the Railways have come to my notice.

Despite being the principal mode of transport in the country today, the Railways has lagged behind road transport in the overall transport system. The primary reason for this is that the Railways incurs financial losses in carrying passengers. Governments have repeatedly attempted to offset these losses by increasing freight charges in order to compensate for the losses, but they have failed to adequately cover the financial losses arising from passenger travel. In my view, there are two distinct categories of passenger travel. The first relates to long-distance journeys, and the second relates to short-distance journeys.

It has been observed that trains operating on long-distance routes are not running at a loss, whereas short-distance trains are certainly operating at a loss. This is because the common passenger of the country undertakes short-distance travel by rail only out of compulsion. Generally, such passengers prefer to use road transport. In order to understand the reasons for this, I would like to request the

Hon. Minister of Railways to personally experience travel on these short-distance trains. At night, there is no electricity in these trains, in the morning the fans do not function, the toilets are filled with filth, and there is complete uncertainty about when the train will reach its destination.

In this context, I would like to place before the House and the Government a few ground realities relating to my area, Jhanjharpur in Bihar. There is a project of 188 kilometres from Sursand via Sitamarhi to Nirmali, which was inaugurated in the year 2008 by the then Minister of Railways, but construction work on this project remains at a standstill. The projects relating to the rail link from Jaynagar to Janakpur, despite completion of construction, have still not become operational due to the absence of formal inauguration. This is essential because it serves as a major mode of transport between two countries. From Khajauli, two trains, namely the Gangasagar Express and the Janaki Express, are operating, but no stoppage has been provided there. A large population resides in this area and is suffering due to this inconvenience. The Government should immediately issue directions to provide stoppage of these trains.

A bridge over the Kosi River was constructed in the year 2001, the foundation stone of which was laid by the then Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar, and the programme was also graced by the revered Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. Today, the bridge has been completed, but its feeder railway line from Sakri towards Assam via Jhanjharpur, though being laid as a broad gauge line, is progressing at such a slow pace that I fear that by the time this railway line is completed, its intended benefits may be lost. I would like this construction work to be completed expeditiously within a fixed time-frame so that the residents of Jhanjharpur may get relief from flooding and water-related problems. At the same time, this railway line will also prove effective in strengthening the security of the country's northern frontier.

Sir, the Budhi Gandak Express, which used to run from Jaynagar to Gorakhpur via Narkatiaganj, has been discontinued since 2008. Through this train, lakhs of families in Mithilanchal and the bordering areas of Nepal earned their livelihood, but today they are forced to wander in search of employment. Further, the construction of the Jhanjharpur-Laukaha-Laukahi railway line is progressing at a very slow pace. Therefore, I urge that these projects may be restarted immediately. Thank you. I would like to express my gratitude to the

Hon. Minister of Railways, the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, the Hon. Prime Minister, and all the Hon. Members present in this House.

[English]

***SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE (GADCHIROLI-CHIMUR):** Thank you Chairman Sir, Hon. Finance Minister has presented an all-inclusive General Budget 2019-20 which has touched upon all the walks of our life and hence I would like to thank and congratulate her on behalf of my constituency and myself. Hon. Chairman Sir, I rise to speak on the demands for grants 2019-20 for the Ministry of Railways.

First of all, I would like to thank Hon. Railway Minister Piyush Goyal ji for doing justice to my constituency Gadchiroli-Chimur which is the largest tribal dominated and mostly backward and Naxal-affected forest region. All the important rail-line projects like Wadsa-Gadchiroli, Nagbhid-Nagpur; Gadchiroli-Mancherial upto Adilabad connecting to Telangana alongwith Nagbhid-Kampatempa-Chimur-Warora have been sanctioned. These rail lines would boost the development activities in my Constituency.

I would also like to thank Hon. Union Minister Nitin Gadhari ji, Hon. Chief Minister of Maharashtra Devendra Fadnavis ji, Forest and Finance Minister of Maharashtra Sudhir Bhau Mungantiwarji

* English translation of the speech originally delivered in Marathi

and the then Railway Minister Shri Suresh Prabhu ji for playing an important role in sanctioning these rail projects.

Hon. Chairman Sir, Wadsa-Gadchiroli Railine project was sanctioned 3-4 years ago. This is a 52.36 km long railway line project worth Rs.734 crore but the pace of progress is very slow. Land acquition was delayed due to forest objections. But Hon. Nitin Gadkari ji, Devendra Fadnavis ji and Sudhir Mungantiwarji took initiative to settle the issue and arranged a meeting between Railway Ministry and Forest Department six month ago. But this is yet to be completed due to delay in land acquisition. *

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Are you speaking in Marathi language?

SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE: Yes, Sir.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: There is no interpretation available.

SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE: Sir, I gave it in writing stating that I would like to speak in Marathi.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I have no hesitation in you speaking in Marathi. But you have to give prior notice in advance. There is no interpretation available as of now.

[Translation]

SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE: I had given a written request in the chit stating that I wish to speak in Marathi.

[English]

HON. SPEAKER: I think, you can also speak in Hindi because there is no Marathi interpretation. *[Translation]* You may speak in Hindi, because translation from Marathi is not being provided.

SHRI ASHOK MAHADEORAO NETE: Alright, Sir. Sir, I would like to speak about the Wadasa-Gadchiroli route. An obstruction arose in this project due to issues relating to the Forest Department. In this regard, a meeting was held involving the Hon. Shri Nitin Gadkari, the Chief Minister of Maharashtra, Shri Devendra

Fadnavis, and the Hon. Minister of Finance and Forests, Shri Sudhir Mungantiwar. In that meeting, this obstruction was resolved. In my view, it is necessary that a joint meeting of the National Tiger Conservation Authority and the Wildlife Institute of India be convened and an NOC be issued by these agencies. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to take immediate cognisance of this matter, complete the land acquisition process, and ensure that the Wadasa-Gadchiroli railway line is commenced at the earliest so that relief may be provided to the people of that area.

The second important railway line is the Nagbhid-Nagpur railway line. Earlier, this was a narrow gauge railway line, which has now been converted into broad gauge. This railway project involves an expenditure of Rs. 922 crore. This railway line should also be commissioned at the earliest. As far as I am aware, it has already received approval from the Railway Board and the Finance Department, and approval of the Policy Department is pending. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to also give attention to this matter and ensure that this railway line is completed at the earliest so that the problems faced by passengers may be resolved. Further, once this railway line is completed, people will be able to travel to Nagpur at a lower cost. This will benefit the Railways as well as the

passengers. Therefore, it is very important that due attention is given to this matter.

17.12 hrs (Dr. (Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai Solanki *in the Chair*)

Sir, two new railway route surveys have been approved, and it is necessary that attention is also paid to these. In my parliamentary constituency, the Deori-Amgaon Assembly segment falls within Gondia district. The people of this area have been demanding that a DEMU train should be operated from Gondia to Durg via Amgaon, Salekasa and Dongargarh, because after 12 noon there is no train service available. The people of the area have submitted representations several times. I myself, in my capacity as a Member of Parliament, have written to the Hon. Minister on several occasions and have also held meetings, but this service has still not commenced. If one or two trains are introduced after 12 noon, it will provide considerable relief and benefit to the people of that area. This is my request.

Sir, in the same Assembly segment, there is the Dhanoli road, which has been stalled for a long time. This stretch is about one and a half kilometres, in fact only about 1,190 metres. It has remained pending for a long time. The Railways considers that it does not fall under its jurisdiction, and the State Government also feels that it

does not pertain to it. However, when we held a meeting with the concerned authorities, it emerged that only the consent of the Railway Department is required and that the State Government is ready to undertake the construction. If this road is constructed, a detour of about 25 kilometres will be avoided. Therefore, I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways to also give due attention to this matter. That is all I wish to submit. Thank you. Jai Hind, Jai Bharat.

[*]SHRI RATANSINH MAGANSINH RATHOD (PANCHMAHAL): I would like to place my views on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways for the Central Budget for the year 2019-2020. Looking at the railway allocations made in this year's Budget, it appears that such a Budget will have a positive impact on the people of the country through the Railway Department. The manner in which the Government has accorded priority to passenger safety will put a complete check on the frequent accidents that occur. Along with this, various other facilities have also been provided. For this impactful Budget, I congratulate the Government of the Hon. Shri Narendra Modi and the Hon. Minister of Railways. I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the Lunawada-Godhra railway line, which falls within my parliamentary constituency of Panchmahal in Gujarat and is presently closed. The Lunawada-Godhra railway line was operated for the benefit of local traders and the general public, but it has been closed for the past few years and even the tracks have been removed. As a result, local traders and the general public residing in this area are facing considerable difficulties. I would like to request the Government and the Hon.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Minister of Railways that, in public interest, the Lunawada-Godhra railway line may be reconstructed and railway services may be restarted.

[English]

SHRIMATI MALA ROY (KOLKATA DAKSHIN): Hon. Chairman, Sir, as the whole country listened in anticipation, they were highly disappointed with the negligence shown towards the Indian Railways by the hon. Minister.

One should not forget that the railways is the lifeline of India. It is the fourth largest network carrying over eight billion passengers a year; the second in capacity after China. It is going through its most critical phase as the operating ratio has been quite high in the last few years. Today, India spends Rs. 97.3 in order to earn Rs. 100 from the railways. Now, the hon. Minister wishes to lower this ratio by increasing the gross budgetary support. In 2018-19, the gross budgetary support from the Central Government was proposed at Rs. 55,088 crore. This is a 38 per cent increase compared to the Revised Estimates of 2017-18 which was Rs. 41,813 crore. This year, the Central Government has again increased the budgetary support to Rs. 66,105 crore. This means that in the last two years, the Central Government has increased 61 per cent of its budgetary support.

The earnings from the internal sources, mainly, the freight and the passenger traffic, has gone from 31 per cent in 2010 to just a meagre eight per cent in 2019. With declining internal revenue, the

major source of earning of the Railways is budgetary support and borrowings. The Indian Railways Finance Corporation has taken a loan of US$ 750 million from Asian Development Bank in order to finance the electrification of railway tracks as proposed by the hon. Minister. The percentage of revenue from borrowings has increased from 20 per cent in 2010 to 55 per cent in 2019 and this will be an extra burden on the common people of India. The financial condition of the Indian Railways is shattered but there is no roadmap for increasing earnings in the Budget. The Budget talks about raising Rs. 50 lakh crore for the railways sector till 2030. The hon. Minister said in the Budget Speech that this money would be raised through the PPP route as finishing the sanctioned projects through budgetary support of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore to Rs. 1.6 lakh crore per year would take decades. The PPP model has not been a success in Railways in the past, as admitted in the first Railway Budget Speech of NDA Government in 2014. The Budget does not elaborate any plan to raise this capital. It is believed that this is a way to bring in capital through loans, which will increase the debt burden on the Indian Railways. Even LIC has refused to give the promised loan of Rs. 1.5 lakh crore that was decided in the MoU a few years ago. The unions

believe that this is sowing the seeds of privatisation in future, like Air India.

Six railway stations were identified for redevelopment which was to be executed by the contractors. Even the adjacent lands owned by the Railways were supposed to be given to these private players on 45 years' lease for building malls and plazas for their commercial use. It is nothing but filling of private coffers at the cost of national assets at the instance of the Government.

At present, 491 railway projects including 189 new lines, 55 gauge conversions and 247 doubling projects are in different stages of execution, planning and sanction. The total length of these projects is 48,860.64 km amounting to Rs. 6,476 lakh crore. During the last three years and in the current year, Railways have taken up surveys of 272 railway projects like new line, gauge conversion and doubling works for a total length of 26,954 kilometre. The expenditure on 491 projects up to March, 2019 has been Rs. 1.43 lakh crore. The projects that get less money and are on slow lane are low on priority like the projects in Bengal.

The bullet train project has missed its internal deadline for land acquisition. The Government first wanted to advance the deadline to August 2022 from 2023.

Now it says that only one small stretch will be opened by August, 2022. Going by the progress on the ground, it looks unlikely.

There is no announcement for replacing and modernising the old tracks and non-functional level crossing barriers which will eventually decrease the number of train accidents and increase speed for passenger convenience.

The Budget of the Government should not aim at privatisation of Railways and to increase earnings through plugging the loopholes in the system. The Government should keep in mind that the Government-owned Railways provide nationwide connectivity for the common people. It appears that the Government is more and more taking the path of PPP by furthering complete privatisation in the garb of modernisation and efficiency.

If the Government does not make the Budget more friendly for common people, we will be reminded of the famous saying, “If a train does not stop at your station, then it is not your train.”

Thank you.

[Translation]

SUSHRI PRATIMA BHOUMIK (TRIPURA WEST): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me this opportunity. I would also like to express my gratitude to the party leadership for reposing confidence in me, as a newly elected Member of the Lok Sabha, to participate in the discussion on this important issue.

Sir, when we speak about the development of the Railways, under the guidance of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, the Ministry of Railways began working with a clear objective of reducing the distance between the heartland of the country and the North-Eastern region. With the expansion of an additional 5,158 kilometres of railway network, work was taken up at a rapid pace to connect the capitals of all the North-Eastern States with the railway network by the year 2020. In Tripura, we had never even imagined the presence of trains. The people of Tripura used to long to see what a train actually was. On 21 June, 2016, we got the opportunity to travel directly from Agartala to Delhi by the 'Tripura Sundari Express'. In the year 2017, Hon. Shri Narendra Modi gave us the 'Rajdhani' Express. We used to feel that not only had we not seen trains, but perhaps even the next generation would not be able to see

them. After 70 years of Independence, it was only because of Shri Narendra Modi that railways reached our State. On behalf of the entire North-Eastern region, we thank the Hon. Prime Minister. All the North-Eastern States, namely Assam, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Manipur, have now been connected with the railway network. Mizoram and Nagaland will also be connected to the railway network very soon. I feel proud to state that it is only because of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, that the work of the 112-kilometre railway line from Agartala to Sabroom, constructed at a cost of Rs. 3,451 crore, has been completed in my parliamentary constituency. The trial run of trains on this route has also been completed. In the North-Eastern region, railway works are being completed ahead of schedule.

Sir, the expansion of the railway network in the North-Eastern region has not only reduced the distance to Delhi, but has also brought us closer to neighbouring countries. From Sabroom, the distance to Chittagong in Bangladesh will be reduced to merely 90 kilometres. I am pleased to inform the House that the work on the India-Bangladesh Friendship Bridge being constructed over the Feni River is also progressing rapidly. Once this bridge becomes operational, it will bring about a significant transformation in the

economy of the North-Eastern region. Owing to the far-sighted vision of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, distances have been reduced not only within the country but also between us and our neighbouring countries. Apart from the Agartala-Sabroom railway line, work on the expansion of the railway network between India and Bangladesh, involving an expenditure of Rs. 968 crore, is also progressing swiftly from my parliamentary constituency. This will make travel from our State to Kolkata much easier. At present, travelling by road from Haldia to Agartala, a distance of nearly 2,500 kilometres, takes considerable time, but with this connectivity, the time taken to cover this distance will be significantly reduced.

Sir, the North-East, which once longed merely to see trains, is now witnessing the establishment of industries due to the successful policies of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi. A factory for LSB coaches is being set up by National Transport in Assam, which will generate employment opportunities in the North-Eastern region. I was informed only yesterday, through the Hon. Minister of Railways, that by the year 2022, railway services across the entire North-Eastern region will be fully electrified. Work in this direction is progressing at a rapid pace. This is a matter of great happiness for the entire North-East. In the true sense, the Hon. Prime Minister,

Shri Narendra Modi, is the real well-wisher of the development of the North-Eastern region. Otherwise, although a Prime Minister from the North-East did come to the Upper House earlier, development in the North-Eastern region remained silent during that tenure.

Sir, for the development of any State or region, there must be sincere commitment in one's heart. If one resolves from the heart to undertake any noble task, lack of resources does not become an obstacle. This is what the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, has demonstrated before all of us. Owing to his energetic and far-sighted leadership, the distance between the country's mainland, that is, the Hindi heartland, and the North-Eastern region has been reduced. This distance was not merely geographical, but developmental in nature, and today we have come much closer to each other. For the development of the North-Eastern region, Shri Modi has adopted a new model, known as the 'HIRA' model, and he has successfully implemented it.

I salute his vision for the comprehensive development of the North-Eastern region. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, who has described the North-Eastern region as the 'Ashta Lakshmi' of the country. Under his leadership, for the

first time since Independence, a provision of Rs. 60,000 crore has been made for the development of the North-Eastern region in the General Budget of the Government for the year 2019-20, which is the highest allocation in history. For this, on behalf of the people of the North-Eastern region and Tripura, I congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Finance, and assure them that we shall stand firmly with them in making their efforts meaningful. ... *(Interruptions)*

I would like to place a few demands. An overnight express train may be started from Silchar to Agartala. I would also like to request that provision be made for a Shatabdi train service from Guwahati to Silchar. By providing a rail link from Lumding to Agartala, the Government has accomplished one of the most difficult tasks. Now, one more step is required, namely, to convert this section into a double line....*(Interruptions*) You do not know the North-East beyond Guwahati. …*(Interruptions*) You are all privileged individuals. ...*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please address the Chair.

... (Interruptions)

SUSHRI PRATIMA BHOUMIK: Through you, Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that a Railway

Recruitment Board may be established at Agartala. For railway security, an RPF Board also needs to be inaugurated. I further propose the construction of a railway line from Lumding to Chandrapur and from Chandranathpur to Lanka. I also demand that a railway project be initiated from Makum in Assam to Parshuram Kund in Arunachal Pradesh, which is a sacred place.

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE (MUMBAI SOUTH-CENTRAL): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways.

Mumbai local rail is the lifeline of Mumbai. The Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, who hails from Mumbai, and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi, who also has a close association with Mumbai, deserve appreciation. I thank both of them for making efforts through this Budget to improve the lifeline of Mumbai. For improving the Mumbai local services, step-wise programmes were undertaken, namely MUTP Phase-II and MUTP Phase-III. Recently, MUTP Phase-III A has been announced, which can bring about several improvements in the Mumbai suburban railway system. MUTP Phase-III A includes proposals such as the CBTC system and elevated corridors, which can provide significant relief to Mumbai local passengers.

I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways that just as an elevated corridor from CST to Panvel has been announced under MUTP Phase-III A, if elevated corridors are also developed from CST to Kalyan and from Churchgate to Virar, it would provide substantial convenience to Mumbai passengers. Such elevated

corridors can be constructed at nearly half the cost involved in metro construction. The Hon. Minister may kindly consider this proposal.

Women passengers travelling by Mumbai local trains face several difficulties. Due to the heavy rains over the past two months, serious concerns were raised regarding the safety and facilities available to women passengers.

Women passengers have been demanding that the absence of toilets in Mumbai local trains causes them considerable inconvenience. Earlier, Mumbai local trains operated only up to Thane. Now, they run from CST to Kalyan, further up to Khopoli, from CST to Panvel, and from Churchgate to Dahanu. The duration of these journeys is about two to two and a half hours. During such long travel time, the absence of toilets in Mumbai local trains causes serious inconvenience to women passengers. If toilets are provided in Mumbai local trains, it will offer significant relief and facility to women.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, another demand raised by women passengers relates to pregnant women. If pregnant women are permitted to travel in the handicapped compartments, it would provide them much-needed convenience. If one looks at the situation in Mumbai local trains, women often find it difficult even to board

the trains. Therefore, the Hon. Minister may kindly pay due attention to all demands relating to the convenience and safety of women passengers. Through you, I would also like to place a demand regarding Dadar Railway Station. There is substantial land belonging to Central Railway and Western Railway at Dadar. We have already submitted a proposal to the Railway Board for redevelopment of this area. This land should be commercially utilised.

Sir, Mumbai is also facing serious issues relating to hawkers and parking. If railway stations are developed vertically, hawkers can be accommodated and proper parking facilities can also be created. The Railway Board has already considered this proposal. An FSI of five has been announced for this purpose. A proposal to create a dedicated planning authority for the development of railway stations is also under consideration by the Railway Board. I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that the Government of South Korea is ready to undertake this project. If this project is taken up on a Government-to-Government basis, we will be able to develop Dadar Railway Station vertically. This will enable us to make arrangements for hawkers, parking and commercial activities, which will also help in generating revenue. Mankhurd Railway Station, which is a very important station in the South-Central constituency, connects

Mumbai and Navi Mumbai. This station should also be developed as a terminus, as a large amount of railway land is available there as well. Dharavi is the largest slum in the world. If Sion Station and Matunga Station are connected through a Dharavi station, the people of Dharavi will get the facility of a new railway station. The Railway Department has started AC trains on the Western Railway. If AC trains are also started on the Central Railway and Harbour Railway lines, passengers on those routes will also receive improved facilities.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, all the projects under MUTP-III A must be completed within the stipulated time-frame. If we look at MUTP-II and MUTP-III, I would like to cite one example. The Diva-Thane project of 12 kilometres took as long as 11 years to be completed. Because of this prolonged delay, the project was substantially delayed, its cost escalated, and yet the intended facilities did not reach the people in time. To resolve the problems of Mumbai local services, several efforts are being made through the Ministry of Railways.

Through you, Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that the headquarters of Central Railway is located in Mumbai. However, the post of General Manager has been lying

vacant for the past three months. Due to the absence of a responsible officer, the condition of Mumbai local services has deteriorated over the last three months. While there may be technical reasons for this situation, one important reason is also that the post of General Manager is vacant. The absence of a General Manager is causing serious difficulties. During the monsoon, the condition of Mumbai local trains becomes particularly distressing. Therefore, a White Paper should be placed before the public explaining the technical reasons for these issues, so that people are made aware of the actual causes and are properly informed.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, senior citizens have also been demanding that a separate coach should be provided for them. If one looks at the condition of Mumbai local trains, even an ordinary passenger finds it difficult to board them, and senior citizens face even greater hardship. Therefore, a separate coach facility may kindly be provided for senior citizens. My final point is that for the past ten years, railway passengers have been demanding that, in order to make railway functioning more effective in Mumbai, there should be a single Mumbai zone. This would ensure smoother and more coordinated development of the Railways in Mumbai. At present, there are two zones, namely Central Railway and Western Railway,

each having its own General Manager and Divisional Railway Managers. Due to this, it becomes difficult to implement uniform rules and policies.

For example, many issues relating to the Vasai-Diva-Panvel line are not resolved expeditiously because it does not fall under a single zone. Just as there are separate divisions under the Central and Western Railways, a separate division should also be created for the Harbour line. This division should include the Harbour line, the Trans-Harbour line and the Belapur-Ulwe Harbour line. Further, in order to prevent flooding during the monsoon, the height of railway tracks was increased. As a result, once again the distance between the platform and the train footboard has increased. Therefore, it is necessary that a comprehensive study of the height of all platforms be undertaken.

Over the past few years, trains have been operating broadly in accordance with the timetable. However, in order to make operations even smoother, it is necessary that all level crossings are eliminated by providing gates or appropriate alternatives. Free Wi-Fi is being provided at railway stations, but passengers are still charged Rs. 5 for using toilets at railway stations. Just as the Railway Department

provides free Wi-Fi facilities, free toilet facilities should also be provided to all passengers.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH C. ANGADI): Sir, we are providing free Wi-Fi at all stations.

SHRI RAHUL RAMESH SHEWALE: Sir, I have one more demand, which has been consistently followed up for the last five years by the Hon. Minister for Heavy Industries, Shri Arvind Sawant. Asia's first railway ran from Mumbai to Thane. One of the foremost contributors to the introduction of this railway, a visionary who laid the foundation for the development of the city of Mumbai, was the revered Nana Shankarsheth. Mumbai Central Railway Station should be named after him. This was also a cherished dream of the venerable Shiv Sena chief, Balasaheb Thackeray. His contribution led to the expansion of the Railways across the country. His work should be honoured by naming Mumbai Central accordingly. I would like to place this request before the Ministry of Railways. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI M. SELVARAJ (NAGAPATTINAM): Mr. Chairman, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on Demands for Grants, under the control of the Ministry of Railways, for 2019-20. I do not want to speak on the Budget document. I would restrict myself to the demands of my constituency. I would demand more grants to clear many long pending projects of my constituency.

A new line from Velankanni to Thiruthuraipoondi was proposed in 2012. This 33 km. long project is still pending. It should be completed at the earliest.

The gauge conversion of Thiruthuraipoondi to Agastiampalli line should be speeded up. The Ministry should allocate more funds to complete this project at the earliest. Underground passages are being constructed in this line. Since the line is passing through coastal area, heavy rain lashes frequently. So, the rainwater fills the underground passages and this causes a lot of hardship to the local people. The residents of this area are more agitated. I would suggest that unmanned level crossings are the better choice for this.

Tiruvarur-Karaikudi line has 72 crossings. Since there is no gatekeeper, the trains take nearly seven hours to cover 140 km.

distance. I would request the Government to appoint 72 gatekeepers immediately to avoid delay in travel time.

Mannargudi-Tirupati Express is running twice a week. It should run on daily basis and it should also stop at Peralam station.

Ernakulam Express and Mannai Express should stop at Koradacheri. This is my birth place and my residence is also there. No train stops there. This station is in main panchayat town. Earlier, all trains used to stop at this station.

Though there are two passenger services between Thiruvarur and Tiruchrapalli, it is not sufficient to clear the rush of passengers. More passenger train services should be introduced from Thiruvarur to Tiruchirapalli to clear the rush of passengers.

Muthupettai is a Grade-I station. No train stops at this station. A computer booking centre, which used to be there earlier, was also withdrawn from this station. All express trains should stop at this station and a computer booking centre should also be opened there.

After gauge conversion, services of the Boat Mail, which was earlier called Kamban Express, have been stopped. I would request the Government to start its service immediately.

As there are a lot of railway lines around Thiruvarur, I would request the Government to establish a primary maintenance centre for all trains which come up to Thiruvarur. Thiruvarur is a main junction. An ATM centre should also be opened at this junction.

There should be a computerised booking centre in Tiruthuraipoondi as it is the taluk headquarters and it is surrounded by many populated towns.

Needamangalam is a major junction as many trains pass through this junction. Most of the times, the crossing is closed. The crossing is on the National Highway 69. It creates a lot problems for road users. Sometimes, the buses and trucks have to wait for hours at the crossing. So, an overbridge is urgently needed to avoid traffic congestion.

The Vasco da Gama Express on Velankanni-Goa line is twice a week. Velankanni is a very important place. It is a Christian tourist place. Lokmanya Bal Gangadhar Tilak Express on Velankanni-Mumbai line is once a week. Both these trains should be started on daily basis. Here I would like to mention once again that Velankanni is a holy place for the Christians. A lot of tourists visit this place.

I would request the Minister to kindly consider my above demands.

SHRI DEVENDRA SINGH 'BHOLE' (AKBARPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, first of all, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the multidimensional Budget of Indian Railways for the year 2019-20, which has been integrated with the General Budget. Through you, I would also like to congratulate Shri Piyush Goyal for the journey of transformation that Indian Railways has embarked upon under his leadership, inspired by the Hon. Prime Minister. This journey is moving in the right direction and progressing towards its goal at an appropriate pace.

Sir, whereas under previous Governments, prior to the year 2014, the rate of laying railway lines was 4.3 kilometres per day, during the period from 2014 to 2019, our Government has achieved the laying of railway lines at the rate of 7 kilometres per day. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal has presented this Railway Budget for 2019-20 with the ambitious target of laying 15 kilometres of railway line per day, in order to take the country forward. For this, I would like to congratulate him. For the year 2019-20, a target of 12 crore man-days of labour has been set, and for the period from 2020 to 2022, a target of 15 crore man-days

has been envisaged. I would also like to extend my congratulations for setting these targets.

Sir, through you, I would like to place before the Hon. Minister of Railways a few important demands relating to my region. In our Lok Sabha constituency, there is Panki Railway Station, which under the leadership of the Hon. Shri Manoj Sinha and Shri Piyush Goyal has been accorded the status of *Panki Dham* by our Government. Due to the rapidly increasing population of Kanpur and the heavy pressure on rail services, a large number of trains halt at Panki Station. However, owing to outdated infrastructure, there is still no underpass, no overbridge, no lifts, no widening of facilities, and no escalators at the station. As a result, senior citizens and the general public face considerable inconvenience. Secondly, Indian Railways aims to eliminate all unmanned level crossings across the country. However, due to this process, traffic congestion has increased at several locations in our region. In view of the rising passenger load and traffic movement, there is an urgent need to construct overbridges at Sarsaul, Bhaupur, Rura, Jhinjhak and Kanchosi. Traffic from Bundelkhand to Lucknow and from Agra to Allahabad passes through our area, adding to the congestion. Thirdly, I would like to draw attention to the Anwarganj-Mandhana-Bithoor line. In

the year 2017-18, the population of Kanpur was approximately 60 lakh. Kanpur is divided into two parts by the G.T. Road, and due to the heavy population, severe traffic congestion persists. In view of this, a provision of Rs. 1,789 crore was made in the Budget for the year 2017-18, and a survey was also conducted. However, the work has not yet been taken up. I would like to request that this project may kindly be taken up at the earliest. Through you, Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would also like to submit that Bithoor is a historic place in our region. If a new railway line is laid from Bithoor to Mandhana and Panki, which would also help in connecting Uttarakhand, the traffic congestion in Kanpur would be significantly reduced. Even if this is not feasible at present, the construction of railway overbridges at Jarib Chowki, Gumti, Rawatpur Crossing and Kalyanpur Crossing would provide substantial relief from traffic congestion. Bithoor is a centre of faith in our region. During the uprising of 1857, Brahm Nagar and Bithoor formed an important backdrop of the events. During the British period, there was a railway line up to Bithoor, which was later dismantled. Our Government has now completed the construction of the railway line up to that area.

Our Government has completed the entire railway line; only the work of electrification remains. If this is completed at the earliest, along with a few minor ancillary works, the problems of Bithoor and Kanpur will be resolved. Thirdly, if the Railway Department expedites work on the proposals relating to the Etawah-Gwalior railway route, covering Udi to Orai, Sikandra, Musa Nagar, Ghatampur, Jahanabad and Bindki, the traffic load will be considerably reduced. As Kanpur has a very high population density, it is pertinent to note that whenever there is a political change anywhere in the country, it emanates from Uttar Pradesh, and within Uttar Pradesh, Kanpur is at the very core of that change. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and recall that on 19 October 2013, he addressed a public meeting there. Thereafter, such a wave swept across the country that our Government was formed in the year 2014. On 8 March, the Hon. Prime Minister again visited Kanpur, which further underlined the historic importance of Kanpur for the entire nation. If these factors are taken into consideration, the issues faced by the region will be effectively addressed.

I would like to make one more request. In our region, Ghatampur also connects Bundelkhand. There is Shambhua Railway Station there, which has been closed due to the indifference of the

concerned officials. I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways that Shambhua Railway Station may be made operational again, and that Ghatampur Station may be declared a model station, with Kathara, Patara and Dohru also being developed. At Bhimsen Station, there are industrial units, several institutes, a mandi and important commercial centres. There is no overbridge at this station, which causes considerable inconvenience. In Kanpur Dehat, fertilisers, chemicals and other goods arrive from across the country, but there is no rake point available there. Therefore, through you, I would like to request the Government that a rake point may be established there. Thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak.

[*]**SHRIMATI KESHARI DEVI PATEL (PHULPUR):** There is a need to expand Subedarganj Railway Station under North Central Railway, Prayagraj (Allahabad). The station should be developed, passenger amenities should be enhanced, and necessary directions should be issued for providing stoppages of trains. The New Delhi-Allahabad Duronto Express (12275/12276), which was operating three days a week, is proposed to be discontinued from September 2019. The decision to discontinue an important train like the Duronto Express will cause great inconvenience to the people of the region and passengers from several neighbouring districts. In its place, the Humsafar Express (22437/22438) is proposed to be operated throughout the week. The Humsafar Express follows a flexi-fare system, under which passengers will have to pay higher fares compared to normal trains. Further, the Humsafar Express does not have First AC and Second AC coaches, which will increase pressure on the Prayagraj Express. Moreover, the Humsafar Express will be operated from Subedarganj Railway Station instead of Allahabad Junction. Subedarganj Railway Station is located at a distance of more than 5 kilometres from Allahabad Junction, and access to the station is not yet convenient. Additionally, the

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Humsafar Express will not come to New Delhi Junction and will operate only up to Anand Vihar Railway Station. Prayagraj houses several offices and headquarters of both the State Government and the Union Government. The discontinuation of the Duronto Express will therefore cause serious inconvenience. Therefore, I would like to request that instead of discontinuing the Duronto Express 12275/12276, it may be operated on all seven days of the week. With due respect.

SHRI SHYAM SINGH YADAV (JAUNPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. At the same time, there is also a sense of pain in my heart. I submitted several supplementary requests and made many representations, but despite being a first-time Member of Parliament, I was never given an opportunity to speak. I believe there are many Members like me in this House. Nevertheless, I am happy that you have given me the opportunity to speak for the first time. I had spoken once earlier, when the Hon. Speaker was elected. On that occasion, I congratulated him and also sought his blessings. I do not know whether that speech will be counted as my maiden speech or whether today's speech will be considered as such. Be that as it may, through you, I would like to convey my feelings to the Hon. Speaker.

HON. SPEAKER: Please proceed with your remarks.

SHRI SHYAM SINGH YADAV: Sir, I would like to begin by saying that I have a very old association with the Railways, perhaps older and deeper than that of many Members of this House. When I took admission in B.Sc. Part-I at Allahabad University in the year 1971, there used to be a train called the Allahabad-Jaunpur AJ train. I used to travel on that train from my home railway station,

Mariyahu, to Prayag. The fare for both sides was Rs. 2.50 each. In the year 1971, Rs. 5 was considered a substantial amount. Many people did not purchase tickets, but I used to spend Rs. 5 every day on train fare. When I came to the station to catch the train, others used to eat dosa for 50 paise, while I remained hungry because I had already spent Rs. 5 on the train ticket. Gradually, my financial situation worsened. First, I started purchasing tickets only for half the distance, then for a quarter of the distance, and eventually there came a time when I started travelling without a ticket. It went even further. I used to keep my motorcycle at the hostel, and whenever there was a vacation of 10-15 days, I would load my motorcycle onto the train while travelling back to my village.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please confine yourself to the subject.

SHRI SHYAM SINGH YADAV: Today, through this House, I begin my remarks by offering my sincere apology to *Train Mata*. God forbid, if I were ever to become the Minister of Railways of this country, I would work wholeheartedly for the growth and improvement of this Railways and repay my entire debt to it through good and meaningful work.

I bow in reverence to my revered teachers Jyotiba Phule, Narayan Guru and Chhatrapati Shahuji Maharaj. I pay my tributes to

the respected Kanshiram Ji and Babasaheb Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, and I express my sincere thanks to our sister, Sushri Mayawati Ji. I shall try to place my views briefly. I have only two submissions to make to the Hon. Minister of Railways. First, railway safety must be strengthened. Many Hon. Members have been demanding the introduction of new train services from one place to another. If possible, for the next one or two years, instead of introducing new trains, priority should be given to safety, so that accidents are reduced. This is my first submission.

Just now, an Hon. Member mentioned that railway accidents have reduced by 62 per cent. I would like to say that whether it is 62 per cent, 92 per cent or even 102 per cent, the Railway Department should make the system completely accident-proof so that accidents do not occur at all. In many areas, whether related to Railways or otherwise, we are adopting foreign practices. We import technology from abroad in signalling systems, in coaches, engines, tracks and several other areas. We should also learn one important lesson from abroad, namely punctuality in rail operations. When we travel abroad, the display shows that a train will arrive at 12:43. Until that exact time, one feels that the train may not arrive, but the moment the clock strikes 12:43, the train arrives at the platform precisely on

time. I would, therefore, like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways to make sincere efforts to bring greater punctuality into the functioning of the Railways.

We have heard of landlocked areas and waterlogged areas, but the district of Jaunpur has, in effect, been surrounded on all sides by the Railways. Whether one travels from Jaunpur to Varanasi, from Jaunpur to Ghazipur, from Jaunpur to Azamgarh, from Jaunpur to Prayagraj, or from Jaunpur to Lucknow, there is not a single exit road on which a flyover has been constructed. Long queues build up for half an hour at a time, leading to severe traffic congestion. *… (Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRI SHYAM SINGH YADAV: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am concluding. Everyone has spoken for ten minutes, whereas I have not even completed five minutes yet. *…(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Everyone is being given only five minutes.

... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: There are other Members from your party as well.... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please make your point and conclude.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SHYAM SINGH YADAV: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I will conclude my remarks in a minute or two. At present, several Rajdhani Express trains are operating across the country. My demand is that, even if a new Rajdhani Express cannot be introduced, those Rajdhani trains which are running towards Mumbai, Agartala or other destinations may be routed via Jaunpur city at least for one or two days. The Patna-Mathura-Kota Express does not halt at Jaunpur city. A stoppage may kindly be provided at Jaunpur City Railway Station. All railway crossings in our area should be provided with flyovers. On Mariyahu Road, a flyover at a railway crossing has been under construction for the past six years. That work should also be completed at the earliest. *... (Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now. I am calling the next name.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SHYAM SINGH YADAV: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, there are a few more demands relating to Jaunpur Railway Station, therefore

kindly give me just one more minute. The condition of Platform No. 5 at Jaunpur Railway Station is very poor. There is no shed, no lighting, and there is a lack of adequate space. ... *(Interruptions)* With these words, I conclude my remarks by saying: Jai Bharat, Jai Ambedkar, Jai Bhim and Jai Samajwad.

SHRI RAVINDER KUSHWAHA (SALEMPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways. Prior to the year 2014, the condition of the Railways was such that when people travelled by train across the country, there used to be heaps of filth everywhere. After our Government was formed in 2014, when the Hon. Prime Minister launched the cleanliness campaign across the country, I believe the Railways benefited the most from it. Today, whether it is trains, coaches, platforms or railway stations, cleanliness has been ensured everywhere. Our trains have become clean and well maintained, and as a result, passengers travelling today experience a sense of comfort and satisfaction.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, when we compare the situation prior to 2014 with the period between 2014 and 2019, we can clearly see that a very significant transformation has taken place in the Railways. Narrow gauge and metre gauge lines have been converted into broad gauge. Work relating to doubling and electrification, which had remained incomplete on several railway sections, has been carried out at a very fast pace. Wherever there was a need for road overbridges or underpasses, these are now being constructed

expeditiously. I would like to inform the House that in my parliamentary constituency of Salempur, which lies on the border of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, the Bhathni-Varanasi railway section passes through our area. This section had remained incomplete in terms of electrification and doubling. After winning the election in 2014, I met the then Hon. Minister of Railways and also wrote to him in this regard. I am pleased to state, and I would like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways, that the work of doubling and electrification from Aunrihar to Bhathni is now progressing at a very fast pace. For this, I extend my appreciation and salutations to the Hon. Minister of Railways and to our Government.

Sir, I would like to submit one more point. There are around 12 to 14 Members of Parliament who come from Bihar and eastern Uttar Pradesh. Whenever we come to participate in the proceedings of the House, the only train available to us is the Vaishali Express. When we board this train, we often reach here at nine or sometimes ten o'clock. Similarly, when we return to our parliamentary constituencies from here on Fridays, it takes almost half of Saturday to reach there. This is not an issue of reservation. Therefore, through you, Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to request that the Vaishali

Express, which is regularly used by around 12 to 14 Members of Parliament for travelling to and from the Session, may be operated in a more regular and punctual manner. This is our request. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, our country is certainly moving forward in the field of Railways. With these words, I thank you very much.

[English]

ADV. A. M. ARIFF (ALAPPUZHA): Thank you, hon. Chairperson Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

I would like to express my views on the Railway Budget for the year 2019-20, presented by Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman*ji.* This Budget 2019-20 is an obvious evidence of regional discrimination by the Central Government to the State of Kerala. I am sorry to say that Kerala has been a vehemently neglected region for railways.

The long pending demand of Railway Zone for Kerala is neglected in this Budget also. The State of Kerala occupies a significant position on the Indian Railway Map with 1050 route kilometres and 1588 kilometres of total track. The Thiruvananthapuram and Palakkad divisions of the Southern Railway Zone make up the divisions of the State for the railways. The railway development in Kerala is not as desired and is reflected in terms of railway development and fund allocation. Currently, the State is at the mercy of the Southern Railway Authorities in Chennai to receive a share of funds and diversion of money to other projects outside the State. The only way to speed up railway development in Kerala is to have a separate zone. The creation of such a railway

zone will ensure that the funds allocated in the Budget are directly received by the State to be utilised for the developmental work.

I would also like to say some points regarding my Constituency. The doubling of Ernakulam-Kayamkulam coastal line is a major issue. The line was opened for railway traffic on 16th October, 1989. The required land could not be acquired for doubling because of lack of proper fund allocation. Till now, the Railways has not given the compensation amount for many those who have given the land for track doubling in Kerala. As an elected representative from that area, I will take personal initiative for acquisition of the required land for the completion of Ernakulam-Kayamkulam line doubling. But the railway authorities should also take necessary steps in this regard.

18.00 hrs

The other main issue is that after the departure of Intercity Express from Alappuzha to Trivandrum at 6:25 AM, there is no train till 4 PM to that side. I request you to extend some trains to that end at Ernakulam station. It can be done by extension of some trains. The extension of Ernakulam Intercity Express Train (16306) and Mangala Express Train (12618) from Delhi to Ernakulam and Trivandrum will be a relief to people of Alappuzha.

The development of Adarsh stations at Alappuzha, Cherthala, Mararikulam has not been made. No funds have been received for these stations for several years. The demand for Railway overbridge at Thuravoor, Cherthala, Chittumoola, Malikamakku, Vavvakavu Road under Thiruvananthapuram division are neglected because of non-completion of ROBs at Kuthirapanthi and Malikamakku. The Alappuzha bypass road work has been delayed.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please wait a minute. Hon. Members, I have a long list of speakers to speak on the Demands for Grants of Railways. If the House agrees, the time for the discussion may be extended by another four hours.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes Sir.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. We extend the time.

ADV. A.M. ARIFF: This bypass road project is a big budget project. The State Government had deposited Rs. 7.13 crore to the Railways for the construction of Kuthirapanthi and Malimukku ROBs. For the construction of these ROBs, rail traffic needs to be controlled and electric lines need to be shifted.

A proposal of under-passage in Chandiroor, Kazhividamoola in Aroor Panchayat, EAK-63 is pending before the Railways for long time, this neds to be cleared at the earliest.

Karungappally railway station has 6000 passengers daily. There is a major problem here which is not seen in any other railway station in India. The only way to get to the station is to cross the railway track. This is legally punishable in Railways. So, a flyover needs to be constructed in Karungappally railway station. The biggest obstacle in the development of Karungappally railway station is the loop track in platform No. 1.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

ADV. A.M. ARIFF: Sir, give me two more minutes. Autokast Ltd. in Cherthala is a Kerala PSU. They have the technology and skills for the production of rail coaches and goods wagons. They have approached the Railways for getting the contract. The Railways told them to take part in the financial bidding. Considering Autokast as a State PSU, necessary steps needed for giving the contract to this Government PSU. Unfortunately, that has not happened.

Rail coach factory at Kanjikode is a dream project of Kerala State. The other Members have also stated this fact. Kerala has acquired 235 acres of land for the Kanjikode factory. Even after

laying the foundation stone seven years ago, nothing has been done on that land.

While talking tall on security and safety, the Budget Speech on Railways is silent on the shortage of human resources. Around 3 lakh vacancies, majority of which are related to management and maintenance of safety standards in Railway operations, remained unfilled with Indian Railways. Going on the way of every PSU, Railways is also going through privatization. All of us know that Railways is the largest public sector in the world. I request this Government not to put India's national railway system in the hands of corporates.

I conclude my speech with the hope that the Budget 2019-20 will consider the demands of Kerala and the demands of my Constituency.

[Translation]

***SHRI R. K. SINGH PATEL (BANDA):** while speaking on the Railway Budget, I would like to place, point by point, certain demands aimed at improving the backward and deteriorated railway system of my region as well as of Bundelkhand. These include doubling of railway lines, electrification, increasing the frequency of long-standing train services, and augmenting the number of general coaches in all trains passing through the Manikpur-Jhansi section of Bundelkhand. My specific demands are as follows:-

The number of general coaches may be increased in all trains operating from Manikpur via Banda.

Rewa-Delhi Express, Train No. 12427, which currently runs via Satna, Manikpur, Prayagraj and Kanpur up to Anand Vihar, Delhi, may have its route changed and be operated from Rewa via Satna, Manikpur, Chitrakoot Dham-Karvi, Banda and Kanpur up to Anand Vihar.

Train Nos. 12176 and 12178, operating from Gwalior and Mathura respectively and currently running four days a week, may be operated daily.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

Train Nos. 18204 and 18203, Betwa Express, running between Kanpur and Durg twice a week, may be operated daily.

Train No. 22130, Tulsi Express, running from Prayagraj (Allahabad) to Kurla, Mumbai twice a week, may be operated daily.

Train No. 12535, Garib Rath Express, running from Lucknow to Raipur twice a week, may also be operated daily.

In addition to all the trains mentioned above, a special package may kindly be provided for the beautification and upgradation of Chitrakoot Dham Karvi and Banda Railway Stations of the Bundelkhand region.

The work of doubling and electrification of the Jhansi-Manikpur and Khairar-Kanpur railway lines may be commenced and completed at the earliest, so that the Bundelkhand region may move forward on the path of progress along with the developed regions of the country.

Therefore, I request the Government, through you, that the Hon. Minister of Railways may kindly take the above submissions into consideration and include my demands in the current Budget so as to provide improved railway facilities.

With due respect.

SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHTO (JAMSHEDPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, first of all, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Hon. Minister of Finance, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi, for giving me the opportunity to speak on this Railway Budget. The history of the Railways began in the year 1832, and today, under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, Indian Railways is undergoing a fundamental transformation. Indian Railways is among the world's third largest railway networks.

At present, Indian Railways operates over a vast network of about 63,000 kilometres, on which around 22,000 trains are running, with approximately 1.5 crore people travelling every day. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the Union Government has significantly enhanced investment in the Railways and has actively promoted it, so that along with maintaining existing facilities, the growing requirements can also be adequately met.

Sir, the railway network of Indian Railways is expanding in the eastern, western, northern and southern regions alike. Just now, my sister from Tripura was also referring to this. With the commissioning of the 4.94-kilometre-long Bogibeel rail and road

bridge over the Brahmaputra river near Dibrugarh, which is the longest such bridge in the country, a new link has been established between Assam and Arunachal Pradesh. This bridge was dedicated to the nation by the Hon. Prime Minister on 25 December, 2018.

Sir, the Railway Budget today stands at approximately Rs. 65,837 crore. In the Budget for the financial year 2019-20, a budgetary allocation of Rs. 65,837 crore has been provided, and the highest-ever capital expenditure of Rs. 1.60 lakh crore has been earmarked. This includes an increase of 200 per cent in funds allocated for passenger amenities. In the previous year, the total outlay of the Railways was Rs. 1.48 lakh crore, while the budgetary allocation was Rs. 55,088 crore. In the Interim Budget, the allocation stood at Rs. 1.58 lakh crore.

In the Budget for the financial year 2019-20, an amount of Rs. 7,255 crore has been allocated for the construction of new railway lines, Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs. 700 crore for doubling, and Rs. 6,114.82 crore for rolling stock. Similarly, with a view to ensuring rapid development of the Railways and improving passenger and freight services, a proposal has been made to utilise the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model so as to enhance connectivity.

Sir, I now turn to issues relating to my own region. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Shri Piyush Goyal for approving a long-pending demand of our area, namely, the railway line connecting Chakulia to Odisha via Bahragora. The Tata-Kandra-Namkum railway line has also been approved, but work on it has not yet commenced. Further, the estimated cost of the proposed new railway line from Chandil via Bodam, Patamda, Katin and Bandwan to Jhargram has been assessed at Rs. 1,844 crore. This line covers three Lok Sabha constituencies, namely Ranchi, Jamshedpur and Jhargram. For years, there has been a persistent demand from the people that this railway line should be constructed. Since Independence, the people have been hoping that trains would one day run on this route. Similarly, the Chakulia-Budamara and Tata-Kandra sections are almost complete, and there is now an urgent need to operationalise these lines at the earliest.

Sir, with regard to road overbridges, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister. Since Independence, there had been a long-standing demand for the Jugsalai overbridge. There used to be extremely heavy traffic there, and every year 20 to 30 people lost their lives in accidents. With the blessings of the Hon. Minister, this road overbridge has now become operational. On the other hand, on the

Tatanagar-Kharagpur railway section, an overbridge at Govindpur has already been approved, but it has not yet been commissioned. On the Tata-Badampahar railway section, construction of an overbridge at Parsudih-Makdumpur needs to be taken up. Approval has also been granted for nearly two halts. For several years, there has been a demand for the construction of a halt at Barkola between Dhalbhumgarh and Kokpara. I request the Hon. Minister to kindly take these matters into consideration and ensure that they are completed at the earliest.

I now turn to issues relating to my constituency. This is a very old demand of our region. My Jamshedpur Lok Sabha constituency represents a mini India. Due to the presence of Tata Steel, Vedanta Steel and several other major industries, connectivity from this region extends across the entire country. Despite this, train facilities here are extremely limited. After the formation of Jharkhand as a separate State from Bihar, a very large population from this region continues to reside in Bihar, particularly in areas such as Jayanagar. I would like to submit that the Purushottam Express, which runs from New Delhi to Puri, remains stationed in Delhi for about 20 hours. We request that this train may be extended up to Jaipur. Further, a direct rail service between Tatanagar and Buxar may be introduced,

as a large number of people frequently travel on this route. In Train No. 18181, Tatanagar-Chhapra Express, the Katihar link may be separated and the train may be operated via Katihar up to New Jalpaiguri (NJP). Additionally, rail services from Tatanagar to Bhagalpur, which were operating earlier, may be restarted. This train used to depart from here at around midnight and from there at about 1.30 a.m. These measures will greatly improve connectivity and provide substantial relief to the people of my constituency.

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Due to the absence of a fixed timetable, passengers are facing considerable inconvenience. We would like this service to be restarted after re-fixing its timing. A special train service from Tatanagar to Jaynagar may also be introduced, as a very large population resides there.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO: Sir, a new rail service may be started from Tatanagar to Bengaluru via Katpadi, as a large number of people from our region travel to Bengaluru for medical treatment and education. This train should be operated with minimum travel time. A Shatabdi Express service may be introduced between Tatanagar and Patna. A MEMU train service may be provided between Tatanagar and Rourkela.

Sir, there are also certain trains which operate only once a week. The stoppage of the Utkal Express at Rakha Mines Station has been a long-pending demand.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO: Sir, I will conclude my remarks in a minute. The Jallianwala Bagh Express may be operated at least four days a week. The Tatanagar-Yesvantpur train may be

operated at least three days a week, as this train carries a large number of patients. The Shalimar-Gorakhpur train may be operated two days a week. The Tatanagar-Jammu Tawi train may be extended up to Katra and operated at least two days a week. Stoppages of Train Nos. 18103 and 18104 (Express) may be provided at Jaunpur and Shahganj Junction. The Tatanagar-Baiyappanahalli Express may be operated twice a week. The Shirdi-Sai Express may be operated three times a week. The Puri-Jaynagar-Puri train may be routed via Hijli-Tatanagar instead of Kharagpur. The Tatanagar-Asansol Intercity Express, which presently operates three days a week, may be extended and operated as Tatanagar-Bhagalpur Intercity Express via Kiul, Jamalpur and Sultanganj.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You have already placed all your points. Please conclude now.

SHRI BIDYUT BARAN MAHATO: Sir, there is a fairly large railway network in that area. A large number of people have come there for employment and are living in huts along the railway tracks. Notices have been issued for the demolition of at least two thousand such huts. Through you, I seek an assurance from the Union Government that, at the very least, these huts may not be demolished

during the monsoon season. Even birds' nests are not disturbed during the rainy season.

[English]

SHRI N. REDDEPPA (CHITTOOR): Respected Chairman, Sir, thank you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways in 2019-20 Budget.

Worldwide, the railway sector has attracted private capital. The private sector investors seek to earn a return on investments that is consummated with the risk of the investment. As per the estimation of the Railway Ministry, an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore required for Railway infrastructure between 2018 and 2030 and almost Rs. 1.6 lakh crore required annually.

As far as public-private partnership in Railways is concerned, if investment comes for doubling and tripling of dedicated freight corridors and for regional connectivity, it will be good for the country. The private sector can play a key role in the country to take national transporters to another level.

If the capital expenditure outlays of Indian Railways stand at approximately Rs. 1.5 lakh crore to Rs. 1.6 lakh crore per annum, then the sanctioned projects will take decades to complete.

I do not have any doubt about PPP Model. It will help the national transportation system. It will help in enhancing its technology along with upgradation of its infrastructure.

18.13 hrs (Shri Rajendra Agrawal *in the Chair*)

The dedicated freight corridors will play a key role in order to decongest the Indian Railways network. It will ensure faster movement of, both, goods and passenger trains. The development of inland waterways will help in reducing the pressure on the Indian Railways. I urge the Government to think over establishing one dedicated freight corridor from North to South on the lines of the Western Front and the Eastern Front.

Sir, the private investment in railways may be good but we should not forget that our Railways is the single largest employer in the country and eighth largest in the world. I request the Government to protect the existing jobs and create more jobs.

Regarding Andhra Pradesh, I would like to say that our role model, Chief Minister Shri Y. S. Jaganmohan Reddy is seeking financial assistance from the Union Government to establish new railway lines in our State. Required funds are not at all sanctioned by the Central Government.

[English] A railway line from Kadapa to Bengaluru was sanctioned in 2008-09, but adequate funds were not at all released till now. Another railway line from Chittoor to Bengaluru *via* Kolar was also proposed long back. It is also pending for a long time. We would request the Central Government to release funds to establish another new railway line from Chittoor to Bengaluru.

There is a place in my district which is called Mango Nagar or Damalcheruvu. It supplies mangoes through thousands of lorries to Kolkata, Bengaluru, Chennai etc. Worldwide, it is a famous centre. There is no railway station to give boost to this business and to provide more facilities in the district. Chittoor is a backward district which is adjacent to Tamil Nadu and Bengaluru but no facilities have been provided till date. Particularly, Chittoor is the district headquarters but the Chittoor Railway Station has not at all been improved by the Railway Department. Therefore, I would urge upon the Central Government to sanction adequate funds to improve the Chittoor Railway Station.

Everybody knows that Tirupati, Tiruchanur and Kanipakam are the pilgrim centres but adequate facilities are not there for the passengers. Passengers visit Tiruptai from all over the country to have *darshan* of Lord Venkateswara. I would request the Central

Government to release adequate funds in this Budget as early as possible. We are thankful to the hon. Speaker and also to Modi *ji*'s Government.

Thank you very much.

[*]**SHRI B.Y. RAGHAVENDRA (SHIMOGA):** I express my views on the demands for grants for the Ministry of Railway 2019-20.

At the outset I would like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister for his sincere and continuous efforts for the alround development of the country, Hon. Ministers for Railways Shri Piyush Goyal ji and Shri Suresh Angadi ji for making all efforts to provide better railway services to the people of country.

We are all aware that the India railways is the lifeline of the country and it has the 3rd largest rail network in the world. Our NDA Government has focused on the service of the people of the country. All facilities of the government, whether it is transportation, education, social security should be available to the very one including the person who lives in a hut in a remote village of the country.

The union budget has allocated Rs 65,837 crore for the Railways in the 2019-20 Budget. Funds of Rs 7,255 crore have been allocated for construction of new lines, Rs 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs 700 crore for doubling, Rs 6,114.82 crore for rolling stock and Rs 1,750 crore for signaling and telecommunications.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

The Government has taken a very good initiative by launching National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) to enable people to pay multiple kinds of transport charges, including bus travel, metro services and toll tax, parking charges across the country. This will be very much useful for the people of the country.

Indian Railways is the oldest railway network in the world. There are hundreds of railway stations built more than a century ago. There is a need for reconstruction of all those old railway stations in the country including Karnataka.

I would like to point out that though the India Railway is constantly making its efforts to induct new technologies and modernize its existing operating system, there is still a lot needs to be done as far as increasing the speed, signaling systems, ensuring the safety of train passengers, removing the bottlenecks of level crossings, maintenance of cleanliness in the trains and outside the railway stations etc. are concerned.

I would like to point out that the provisions of separate rest rooms, cloak rooms for women should be made in all the railway stations of two tier and three tier cities and towns also.

As far as the safety of train journey is concerned, since the last budget was announced, nearly 78 people were died in railway

accidents across the country. While the railway ministry has repeatedly promised heavy investments into ensuring greater safety, continued accidents point to loopholes in the existing infrastructure plugging which could result in fewer tragedies. The Government is yet to come close to its target of eliminating 4,267 unmanned railway crossings by 2020.

I would like to request the Government to consider the following demands of my state and also my Parliamentary Constituency Shivamoga.

Mookambika Road Byndoor to Kasargod passenger train was introduced about three years ago to facilitate the pilgrims visiting Mookambika temple. Later, the train service was withdrawn. As a result the passengers and the devotees are facing inconvenient to commute on these places. Hence I would like to request the authorities concerned to ensure that the said train service is re-introduced with a convenient time schedule to cater to the needs of passengers.

Further, I would also like to request the authorities of Railway to take steps to extend the train service up-to Guruvayur, so that the devotees of both Kerala and Karnataka states would be benefitted. And this service could be considered as an overnight fast passenger

train (with sleeper coaches) from Guruvayur to Mookambika Road, Byndoor.

There is another demand pertaining to this train is that the people of the region are demanding to re-name the train as 'Murali Mookambika Fast Passenger'.

Some other major demands of my people are a new Train should be introduced between Shivamoga to Tirupati facilitate the devotees of Shivamogga and adjoining districts to visit the holy place and have darshan of Lord Venkateswara Swami in Tirupati. Extension of Shivamoga and Bengalore train upto Chennai. Establish Satellite Railway station to Shivamogga.

Hence, I would like to request the Hon. minister of Railway to kindly consider the genuine demand of people of my Parliamentary constituency and take all necessary steps to address them at the earliest.

[*]**SHRIMATI DARSHANA VIKRAM JARDOSH:** The present Government, upon assuming office, decided to present the Railway Budget and the General Budget together. This has not only resulted in saving parliamentary time but has also accelerated the pace of the development process of the Railways.

When we came into Government, we inherited from the UPA several bridges across the country which, despite the approach roads on both sides having been completed, remained unfinished for years merely because permission from the Railways for work over the railway tracks was not granted. The present Government has brought this situation almost to zero. Our country is so vast that connecting it from one end to the other, and further creating a network reaching every corner of the country, is a distinction that perhaps only the Indian Railways holds in the world. The biggest challenge before it has been the expansion of its network. The present Government has taken a step towards resolving this problem by deciding to approve track laying on the PPP model. This decision will not only expedite the work of laying tracks but will also improve quality and enhance the revenue of the Railways.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

The Hon. Minister has apprised the country of the requirement of about Rs. 50,000 crore. This itself is a fine example of the work undertaken by previous Governments in the modernisation of the Railways. Even after so many years of Independence, such a large amount is still required to improve the railway system and machinery. However, the people have faith that under the leadership of Hon. Narendra Bhai Modi, the Government will not allow this difficulty to become an obstacle in the development of the Railways.

My demand to the Hon. Minister for Railways is that the efforts already initiated to develop Surat, a railway station from which lakhs of passengers commute daily, into a world-class railway station should be expedited, and appropriate arrangements should be made to ensure that this work is completed during the tenure of the present Government.

The Surat (Gujarat) railway station has been declared by the Ministry of Railways as one of the world-class railway stations. Surat is included among the top five highest revenue-generating stations of Western Railway. The Railways earn more than about Rs. 200 crore annually from Surat railway station. The population of Surat city is over 60 lakh. The city has more than 200 textile markets, making it the largest textile hub in the country. Traders

from across the country and the world frequently visit these markets for business purposes.

Apart from the textile industry, Surat has more than 5,000 diamond factories and accounts for the largest share of diamond processing, due to which lakhs of traders regularly travel to and from Surat. Further, in the Hazira industrial belt of Surat, major industrial companies of the country such as Kribhco, Essar, Reliance, NTPC, Adani and ONGC are operational. As a result, thousands of passengers associated with these companies travel by rail, contributing to the revenue of the railway system. In addition, several goods and parcel trains operate daily for these companies, through which substantial revenue also accrues to the railway system via Surat railway station.

Keeping in view the revenue, population and level of development of Surat, and the fact that it has been declared a world-class station by the railway system, I would like to make a request that a Divisional Office (DRM Office) be sanctioned for Surat at the earliest.

Surat is a city to which people from all over the world come and go for employment and livelihood. People from almost every district, and from districts and tehsils across India, are settling in

Surat, with a large number belonging to Bhavnagar. I would like to request that the Bhavnagar-Mahuva train (12945-46) be operated on a daily basis, that its timings be revised, and that, after revising the schedule, it be made to depart from Surat at night.

I would also like to request that Pradhan Mantri Generic Medicine Stores be started at Surat railway station.

The country's most important trains, 12951 and 12952 Rajdhani Express and August Kranti Express, halt at Surat. Therefore, I would like to request that eight Sampark Kranti trains (12431-32, 12907-08, 12217-18) and twelve Duronto Express trains (12264-63, 12297-98, 12268-67, 12240-39, 12228-27, 12284-83) also be provided stoppages at a world-class station like Surat by making necessary changes in the existing rules. This would remove the inconvenience being faced by passengers and would be a step towards increasing the earnings of the Railways.

I would like to make a request that the following facilities be provided at Kim station of the Vadodara Division, which contributes earnings of more than Rs. 4 crore annually. Although 28 trains have stoppages at Kim station, due to the absence of coach display boards and indicators on the platforms, elderly passengers, women and sick passengers face serious difficulty in locating their coaches.

Therefore, I request that coach indicators and display boards be installed at the earliest.

Keeping in view the earnings, population and development of Kim station, I would like to request that stoppages be provided at Kim station for trains Nos. 22927-28, 19017-20, 18402, 18406, 12844, 12993, 19453 and 19037.

I would also like to request that stoppages be provided for trains Nos. 19024 and 19216-19060 at Utran station under the Vadodara Division. Due to the absence of a Foot Over Bridge (FOB) at the station, accidents are occurring repeatedly and several passengers have lost their lives. Therefore, an FOB should be constructed immediately, and the length of the platform sheds on both platforms should be extended.

I would further like to request that trains Nos. 16733-34 Jodhpur-Chennai and 16125-26 Okha-Rameswaram be operated on a daily basis.

SHRI AJAY BHATT (NANITAL-UDHAMSINGH NAGAR): Sir**,** I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. Sir, our friends said earlier in the morning that no benefit has accrued anywhere, that the Budget has not been increased and that no new trains have been added, and it was projected as though nothing at all has been done. They themselves tried to take complete credit. If we look only at the previous ten years of the UPA Government, they did not fulfil even a single commitment during those ten years. Not even ten per cent of the promises they made were completed. The records testify to this. They had neither the political will nor the administrative capacity. When the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi came to power, the Hon. Prime Minister, immediately upon assuming office, accelerated the pace of work across all departments, including the Railways, to such an extent that today we are on the path to becoming a global power.

Sir, the Railway Budget that has been presented here contains all those elements which ought to be there. We wish to build a modern railway system and to make the Railways world class, and all those aspects have been incorporated in this Budget. We are moving forward towards creating world-class Railways. Our position among

the railways of the world is also set to improve. To bring the Railways to this level, the Hon. Prime Minister has made every possible effort, and the Hon. Minister for Railways has fully internalised this vision. At present, we rank number one in the world in terms of passenger movement and fourth in terms of freight transportation. Of the total Railway Budget, 67 per cent of the revenue is earned from freight traffic and 23 per cent from passenger services. The Railways provide employment to about 17 to 18 lakh people. Even more people are provided employment through tea stalls, bidi, paan, cigarettes, food and related services. If we describe the Railways as the lifeline of the country, it would not be an exaggeration. I have observed certain aspects in this Budget which clearly reflect the intent of the Government, of the Hon. Minister for Railways and of the Hon. Prime Minister.

What should we do to build world-class Railways? First of all, the focus has been placed on capacity enhancement. Electrification, construction of third lines, construction works and renewal of tracks are being undertaken so that we can secure a place among the railways of the world. The Dedicated Freight Corridor is a very significant initiative. This is happening for the first time in India. Dedicated Freight Corridors are being constructed from east to west,

from Delhi to Howrah, and from Delhi to Mumbai. This is unique in itself and is the first such experiment in the country. Under this arrangement, freight trains will no longer operate on the tracks on which they currently run. Separate tracks will be laid exclusively for freight trains. This is an innovative initiative in itself. As a result, more passenger trains can be operated, time will be saved, and trains will reach their destinations faster.

The foremost priority under passenger safety has been to ensure how passengers can be kept safe, whether inside trains or outside. Whether it is about reducing accidents, if we look at the percentage of accidents, it has come down substantially compared to the past. There was a time when accidents had increased to such an extent that, on moral grounds, a former Minister for Railways even tendered his resignation, despite the fact that little was done personally. That was the situation earlier. On this issue, we have exercised proper restraint and have succeeded in preventing accidents to a great extent. As regards the redevelopment of important stations, we have undertaken renovation and modernisation of stations across the country. Work on this is progressing at a very fast pace. Facilities such as CCTV cameras, improved toilets, Wi-Fi and escalators have been provided. There are

proper arrangements for drinking water. Earlier, trains used to be unhygienic and foul-smelling, but they have now been completely transformed. If one sits in a First Class coach today, it feels as though one is travelling in a train abroad. Thereafter, work has commenced on train sets such as T-18 and T-20. Under this initiative, we have begun manufacturing trains to increase speed. Coaches for this purpose are already being manufactured in Chennai. This is the first innovative experiment of its kind.

You have seen that the Hon. Prime Minister inaugurated the Varanasi-Delhi train. Similarly, at least fifteen to twenty more such trains are in the pipeline. No one could have imagined that when the first passenger train ran in Bombay on 16 April 1893, it would one day reach hilly regions. Till now, no one paid attention to this, nor was it considered necessary that trains should reach remote areas of strategic importance.

A team was constituted under the leadership of Shri Bhagat Singh Koshiyari. For the first time, trains reached regions such as Poonch, Jammu, Manali, Leh, Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura and the North Eastern region. Earlier, no one had ever given thought to this. The preliminary work has been completed, and work is underway at several places. Although this Committee made its

recommendations, one railway line, from Tanakpur to Bageshwar, was left out. This line is also of strategic importance, as it connects with the Nepal-China border. Apart from this, the Government is undertaking work to extend railway connectivity to all areas adjoining the international borders. The capital of Uttarakhand is proposed to be established in the Gairsain region. A railway line is envisaged to run via Ramnagar, Chaukhutia and Khansar to Gairsain and Karnaprayag. The Rishikesh-Karnaprayag route will form a circuit for the Char Dham Yatra. Its construction is extremely necessary. The sanction of the Kashipur-Jaspur-Dhampur railway line is also of great importance. Once constructed, it will eliminate the need to travel via Moradabad to reach Dhampur from Kashipur.

This will save both time and money for the people. There is also a proposal to construct a railway line from Haldwani to the renowned Gurudwara Reetha Sahib. A railway line should also be constructed between Dehradun and Rishikesh, as the capital is not directly connected with the holy city of Rishikesh.

I feel extremely happy to inform this House that work has commenced on the Char Dham railway line for which funds were sanctioned by Hon. Modi Ji. In the coming days, the entire country

will be able to complete the Char Dham Yatra within four hours and return to Haridwar.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Ajay Bhatt, please conclude now.

SHRI AJAY BHATT: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to make one further submission. In the year 2022, the Kumbh Mela is being organised in Haridwar. It is extremely necessary to enhance the capacity of Haridwar station and Jwalapur station, and this should be extended up to Motichur. Rishikesh station should also be beautified. My Lok Sabha constituency is Nainital. The H.M.T. factory there has been closed. The Railways Department may take it over for manufacturing railway coaches. This would generate employment and the closed factory would also become operational again. The railway stations at Haldwani, Kathgodam, Kashipur and Ramnagar should also be beautified and expanded. Tourists from across the country and abroad visit Nainital and the world-famous Jim Corbett Park throughout the year. Therefore, a new train may be operated from Ramnagar, Corbett to Dehradun. Trains should also be operated from Kathgodam-Haldwani and Ramnagar to the major cities of the country. Trains which currently operate only once a week from Kathgodam to Jammu Tawi and from Ramnagar to Mumbai should be run on all seven days of the week.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, if you permit, may I beg to lay this on the Table?

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No, it cannot be laid now.

SHRI AJAY BHATT: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, please give me one more minute.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude immediately. I have already called the name.

SHRI AJAY BHATT: Jim Corbett Park is a world-class park. The train operating from there to Delhi does not have air-conditioned coaches, even though foreign tourists travel on it. Therefore, air-conditioned coaches should be provided in those trains.

[English]

[*]**SHRI S.C. UDASI (HAVERI)**: I have some suggestions to improve the railway network in my Parliamentary Constituency, Haveri. Gadag is one of the backward districts in Karnataka. People of my Constituency are dreaming for better railway services. I urge the Hon. Minister to give due consideration to be following pending railway projects, concerning of my Parliamentary Constituency:

Inclusion of Survey of Gadag-Mundargi-Hadagali-Harpanhalli, new line in the current budget 2019-20.

One of the ambitious railway projects of North Karnataka Gadag-Haveri new line expedite. Both Gadag and Haveri are district head quarters.

Speed up new 98 kms line between **Shimoga-shikaripur-Ranebennur** on sharing basis between Union and State Governments at a cost of Rs. 1700 crore.

Inclusion of Survey of Shimoga-Shikaripura-Hanagal-Tads-Hubli.

Gadag-Bijapur Passenger Train: There is lot of time gap between the two trains, travelling from Gadag to Bijapur (i.e., first

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

train in morning 6 AM and the next at 2.30 PM, in the afternoon). Passengers commuting between these two Cities are demanding additional passenger trains in between these two timings. They also demanded that the officials introduce additional train between BIjapur-Gadag to help passengers catch the trains going to Bangalore, Mumbai and Pune. The demand is in the interests of the people and that the officials should consider this request seriously.

To improve passenger amenities and up gradation/modernization of Infrastructures facilities at Haveri, Ranebennur, Byadgi, Yalavagi, Devaragudda Stations. (All these stations are in my Parliamentary Constituency).

Expansion of Goodshed at Byadagi Station: Byadagi is known to be a world renowned market for chilly. To facilitate traders to directly supply chilly to major cities. If the existing Goodshed is expanded it would be of greater help to the traders of this town.

Provision of Trains stoppage at Halligudi station: Earlier trains were stopping at this station. After Gauge conversion, passengers of this station are demanding restoration of stoppage of trains for their convenience and cost saving. Halligudi was the only Railway Station in entire Mundaragi Taluk, Dt. Gadag, Karnataka.

Enhancement in the Reservation Quota from Gadag, Haveri Renebennur and Byadagi, for trains running via these Stations. I sincerely urge you to get the quota increased for the trains for the above Stations in my Parliamentary Constituency and earmark at least 10 per cent quota for the above Stations, so that the people of this section will be benefited.

At present, there is no Government Railway Police (GRP) outpost at Haveri Railway Station. There are repeated complaints of scuffles between commuters and railway staff at Haveri railway station. To enhance safety of railway commuters in the wake of increased traffic at Haveri railway station, the GRP should create an outpost at Haveri railway station.

I request to arrange a stoppage of one minute of all the trains mentioned below at Haveri Station.

1) Karnataka Sampark Kranti Express 22685-86 (weekly twice)

Chandigar - Yeshwantpur - Chandigarh vai Hubli

2) Yeshwantpur - Barmer - Yeshwantpur Ac Express, Train No. 14805-06 (Weekly Once).

3) TPJ Humsafar superfast Train No. 22497-98 (Weekly Once) Shri Ganganagar - Tiruchchirpalli-Shri Ganganagar.

4) Yeshwantpur - Bikaner-Yeshwantpur Train No. 16587-88

5) Yeshwantpur-Pandharpur-Yeshwantpur Train No. 06541-42 (Weekly once)

6) There has been a long standing demand of the people of Harlapur, Tq. Gadag, Dt.Gadag, to stop Hubli Tirupati Intercity Train passing via this Railway Station. Hubli-Tirupati-Hubli intercity, all days of the week (57273 / 57274).

7) Recently New Special Train has started from Belgaum to Bangalore to Belgaum (Everyday) request you to arrange a stoppage for one minute at Haveri and Ranebennur.

Speeding up the actions to initiate the construction of the following two Railway bridge.

1. New RUB at old LC:22:371 Kakola Village.

2. RUB at LC 223 balance approach work kakkola village.

3. New RUB near Haveri station toward Hubli side, Nagedramatti area.

4. New RUB Shirabadagi-Kadakola Road.

5. RUB 221 Devargudda Station, construction of drainage.

6. Construction of ROB Near RUB Near 221 (Kajjari village road).

7. LC no. 222 near Hanumanatti Asundi Road Construction of RUB.

8. LC no. 217 Ranebennur Medleri Road ROB Construction.

9. LC no. 218 Ranebennur Gangaur Road ROB Construction.

10. LC No. 2019 RUB Ranebennur Guttal Road, RUB Construction under process and local people demanded ROB.

11. LC No. 224 Byadgi Kakol Road, RUB is under process and local people demanded for ROB.

12. Near Byadgi Station 54 A Bridge, demanded for drainage facilities.

13. RUB 48A near Nelogical village people demanded drainage and C.C. Road. Please do the needful in this regard at the earliest.

[Translation]

[*]SHRI SUKHBIR SINGH JAUNAPURIA (TONK-SAWAI MADHOPUR): The Hon. Minister has made provisions in the Railway Budget for further strengthening railway infrastructure, which is a very significant step. To reinforce the basic infrastructure of the Railways, it has been stated that an investment of about Rs. 50 lakh crore would be required during the period from 2018 to 2030, and it has been estimated that this quantum of investment will be necessary for rail infrastructure during that period. In view of this, the annual capital expenditure of the Railways is about Rs. 1.5 to 1.6 lakh crore. Often, the completion of all approved projects takes several decades. Therefore, the proposal made by the Hon. Minister to utilise Public Private Partnership (PPP) for rapid development, track laying, rolling stock manufacturing, and the delivery of passenger and freight services is a highly commendable initiative.

Suburban railways have been extremely successful in metropolitan cities such as Mumbai and Delhi. The Ministry of Railways proposes to expand suburban railways through Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs), for which investment will also be mobilised through the PPP model. The Hon. Minister has stated that

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

the suburban and long-distance services of Indian Railways are performing remarkably well in cities like Mumbai as well as in smaller towns. The Railways will be encouraged to invest more in suburban railways through SPV institutions such as the proposed Rapid Regional Transport System (RRTS) on the Delhi-Meerut corridor. Supporting Transit Oriented Development (TOD) to ensure commercial activity around transit hubs, the Hon. Minister has proposed to promote metro railway initiatives by encouraging more PPP initiatives and by ensuring the completion of approved works, which is an extremely important step.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the approved new railway line project costing Rs. 873.70 crore, which will commence from Nasirabad railway station and connect to the existing Chauth ka Barwada railway station via Tonk. The total length of this project is 165 km, and it was approved in the Railway Budget for 2015-16. The detailed survey of this project commenced in April, 2016, and at present the survey work and alignment work have been completed. As per the approved arrangement, the final cost of execution of this project is to be shared equally by the Ministry of Railways and the Government of Rajasthan, excluding

the cost of land acquisition. However, the State Government has expressed its inability to bear its half share of the project cost.

Therefore, I urge that the work on this approved railway project be commenced at the earliest, so that I and the people of my parliamentary constituency may derive the intended benefits.

***SHRI GANESH SINGH (SATNA):** In my Lok Sabha constituency of Satna, there are certain important railway-related works which have been pending for a long time. I have been continuously corresponding with and meeting the Hon. Minister in this regard. The point-wise details are as follows:-

A MEMU car shed should be established near Kaima in Satna district. Satna is one of the highest revenue-earning stations for the Railways. There is an industrial area and several cement companies in Satna, yet there is no railway workshop here. There is a pressing need for a MEMU car shed. LHB coaches should be provided in Passenger Train Nos. 12185/12186 Mahakaushal Express, 12189/12190 Rewanchal Express, and Train Nos. 12321/12322 Howrah-Mumbai Mail. Passenger Train Nos. 12427/12428 Rewanchal Express are fitted with old LHB coaches, which cannot be cleaned properly. These should be replaced with new LHB coaches. A fourth platform should be constructed at Satna and Maihar railway stations, and an exit should also be provided from the fourth platform at Satna. The length of the platform shed at Unchehara railway station under West Central Railway should be increased, and the entrance gate should also be beautified. Passenger

* Speech was laid on the Table.

Train Nos. 22161/22162 Rajrani Express, which presently runs from Bhopal to Damoh, should be extended up to Rewa-Satna.

A railway under-bridge should be constructed at the Unchehara railway crossing on the Satna-Katni rail route.

Under-bridges should be constructed at Birhuli and Bamhori on the Rewa-Satna rail route.

An under-bridge should be constructed at the Khutaha railway crossing on the Satna-Majhgawan rail route.

For the provision of terminal and maintenance facilities at Satna.

Stoppages should be provided at Majhgawan railway station for Rewa-Anand Vihar Train Nos. 12427/12428, Kamayani Express Train Nos. 11071/11072, and a halt stoppage should be provided at Ghunwara for the Manikpur-Katni DMU.

Steps should be taken to regularise Rewa-Indore Express Train Nos. 11703/11704 and Rewa-Nagpur Express Train Nos. 22135/22136. The Allahabad-Mumbai Duronto Express should also be regularised. Further, a new passenger train should be introduced from Satna-Rewa to Mumbai.

Respectfully submitted.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU (SRIKAKULAM): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you very much for giving us an opportunity to speak on this important subject. We consider ourselves fortunate that we have been given this opportunity while you are presiding over the House. Today, we will not cause you much inconvenience and will conclude our remarks within the stipulated time.

First of all, for the last five years we have been consistently raising an important issue concerning our State, namely the issue of a Railway Zone. For nearly twenty years, the people of Andhra Pradesh have had this aspiration that a separate Railway Zone should be created specifically for Andhra Pradesh. Recognising the seriousness of this issue, when Andhra Pradesh and Telangana were bifurcated, it was clearly mentioned in the Act itself that Andhra Pradesh would be granted a new Railway Zone. On this basis, we repeatedly approached the Government and reminded them that this Zone should be created at the earliest. However, for five years, the matter did not move forward at all. Instead, just before the elections, an announcement regarding the creation of a new Railway Zone was made on 27 February, almost like an electoral declaration. We do thank the Government for this announcement. However, as I

mentioned earlier, it has remained only an announcement in the nature of an election promise. There are several reasons why we are not agreeable to the manner in which this Railway Zone has been proposed. When the issue of a Railway Zone was discussed, the demand of Andhra Pradesh was very clear. The four Divisions in the State, namely the Waltair Division, Guntur, Guntakal and Vijayawada, should be merged to form a new Zone, and the Divisional Headquarters of the Waltair Division, which is located in Visakhapatnam, should be made the Zonal Headquarters. This example clearly illustrates what we had asked for and what we were given. We asked the Government for a cow, but the Government gave us a buffalo. When we questioned how a buffalo could be given when we had asked for a cow, the Government responded by saying that we had asked for an animal and they had given an animal. We do not agree with this approach. Keeping in view the sentiment of the people, the time frame involved and the budgetary implications, the Union Government should announce and operationalise the Railway Zone for Andhra Pradesh at the earliest. Apart from this, I would also like to draw attention to some of the smaller issues related to the Railway Zone. First of all, the Waltair Division, which has a history of 125 years, deserves due consideration.

Attempts are being made to wind up the Waltair Division and to render it non-existent, which we do not agree with at all. The Waltair Division is a matter of pride for Indian Railways. It was established even before Independence and, from that time till today, it has remained a profitable Division. It has consistently upheld the dignity of Indian Railways by demonstrating a unique work culture. To make such a Division non-existent is extremely unfortunate. We want the Waltair Division to be strengthened and taken forward. Instead of curtailing it, it should be continued. Within the proposed jurisdiction of this Zone, Srikakulam lies at one end of Andhra Pradesh. In Srikakulam, there are seven stations, from Palasa to Ichapuram, which presently fall under the Khurda Road Division. We have placed before the Government our demand that these stations should be included in the new Zone. Another demand of ours relates to the RRB and the RRC. For this newly created Zone, a new RRB and a new RRC should be sanctioned. It is being termed an election announcement because it has remained confined only to an announcement. In the Budget that has been presented today, no allocation whatsoever has been made for this new Zone. Therefore, once again, we urge the Union Government to ensure that adequate

budgetary provisions are included for the infrastructure required for the new Railway Zone.

We should also speak about Metro Rail, which has been provided for in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. There is a need to develop two Metro Rail projects, one in Visakhapatnam and the other in Vijayawada. We have discussed this matter with the Union Government on several occasions, but till date neither has any budgetary provision been made nor has any proposal been taken forward. Therefore, once again, we urge the Union Government to move forward with these two Metro Rail projects, particularly because when Hon. Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Budget, significant emphasis was laid on Metro Rail. We request that these Metro Rail projects be taken forward. The A.P. Express, which operates from New Delhi to Amaravati, near our new capital Vijayawada, is facing repeated problems. The train runs late by three to four hours, the air-conditioning does not function properly, and rodents are seen in the coaches. These issues keep arising. We would like to urge the Union Government and the Hon. Minister for Railways to address and rectify these problems. From Visakhapatnam station, there is a long-standing demand for a train to Varanasi to cater to the convenience of nearly one crore passengers.

This demand has existed for many years. As you are aware, Varanasi is a major religious centre. People travel there on pilgrimages, and when a person passes away, family members go there to perform the last rites. From nearly four districts, namely Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam, around one crore people are hopeful that a new train will be introduced from Visakhapatnam to Varanasi. We have made this request several times. We request the Union Government to consider this matter and take an appropriate decision. ... *(Interruptions)* Sir, please give me two minutes. Today I am speaking properly. Sir, please give me two minutes. I will conclude my remarks. For the main station in my area, Srikakulam, we have repeatedly placed a request for the construction of a Foot Over Bridge (FOB). This should also be taken up at the earliest. We place this request once again before the Union Government. There has also been discussion on Public Private Partnership. Even when Shri Suresh Prabhu was the Minister, this model was promoted, and it was stated that under the PPP model, new tracks would be laid and new stations would be developed on a large scale. ...*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRI RAM MOHAN NAIDU KINJARAPU: Sir, I am concluding in just one minute. I would like to submit that a specific rule should be framed for smaller stations so that Public Private Partnership can also be utilised there. This would be beneficial because, in my area, there is Harishchandrapuram station where we wish to develop a parking lot. However, the Railways do not have sufficient funds for this. We considered involving private parties and creating a form of partnership, but when we approached the DRM and the GM with this demand, we were informed that the necessary rules have not yet been framed. Therefore, we urge that such small works, which can also help generate employment, should be taken forward under the PPP model. Finally, with regard to Andhra Pradesh, there is a need to construct 18 new railway lines and undertake 15 doubling projects. We also place a request that work on these projects be taken up at the earliest.

There is a new city, Amaravati, which is our new capital, and connectivity from there to Hyderabad, as well as to several other places in Telangana, has been provided for in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act. A Committee has also been constituted in this regard. What is the present status of that Committee? It would be

appropriate if the Hon. Minister for Railways could clarify this in his reply. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: If anything remains, you may submit it directly to the Hon. Minister in writing.

... *(Interruptions)*

[*]KUMARI SHOBHA KARANDLAJE (UDUPI CHIKMAGALUR): The demands relating to railway development in my Lok Sabha constituency of Udupi-Chikmagalur are as follows. The Konkan Railway is the lifeline of transport in the coastal region. It connects Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra. The Konkan Railway was a dream project of Hon. George Fernandes. Lakhs of people from the coastal districts of Karnataka reside in Mumbai, where they are engaged in trade, industry and labour. The Konkan Railway is the sole means of transport for all of them. The people of Karnataka living in Karnataka as well as in Mumbai demand that the Konkan Railway be modernised, doubled and electrified at the earliest so that the number of train services can be increased and train speeds enhanced. I request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly undertake the modernisation, doubling and electrification of the Konkan Railway. Chikmagalur district in my constituency is a major tourist destination. Thousands of people travel to and from Chikmagalur every day. However, there is only one train operating from Chikmagalur to Bengaluru, namely Passenger Train No. 65277. This passenger train takes more than six hours to reach Bengaluru from Chikmagalur. I request that the speed of this train be increased.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Train Nos. 12089/12090 Jan Shatabdi Express pass through Chikmagalur district but do not halt at Tarikere railway station in the district. I request that arrangements be made for the up and down Jan Shatabdi Express trains to halt there. I also demand stoppages at Bengaluru railway station and Shivani railway station for Belanahalli railway station in my constituency. There are several manned level crossings in my area. I request that Railway Under Bridges (RUBs) be constructed at Belanahalli, Kodikemp-Karaibhosadi, Ajjampura-Vasadurg Road and at Shivapura village at the earliest. I further demand that two new railway lines be laid in my constituency.

(a) Hasan-Belur-Chikmagalur-Sringeri-Koppa-Shivamogga

(b) Sringeri-Karkala-Mangaluru

The Udupi-Chikmagalur region is a major tourist area. A large number of people travel to and from the region for trade and tourism. Therefore, I request that provisions for the modernisation of the Railways in my constituency be included in this year’s Budget so that the pace of development of the district may be accelerated.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (RAJU BHAIYA) (ETAH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I was fully confident that when you came to preside over the House, I would get an opportunity to speak. ... *(Interruptions)* I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. ... *(Interruptions)*

Sir, Etah and Kasganj are the two districts that fall within my Lok Sabha constituency, and since the country attained Independence in 1947 till today, both these districts have not been connected by a railway line. When Shri Kharge was the Minister earlier, a survey had also been conducted. ...**(Interruptions)* Sir, similarly, when the Congress Government was in power, whenever there was money, there was no plan, and whenever there was a plan, there was no money. Therefore… ... **(Interruptions)*

Sir, today our Government has both the money as well as the plans. In my Lok Sabha constituency of Etah… ... *(Interruptions)* Madam, you may speak after me. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please sit down. If anything is inappropriate, it will be expunged. All of you may please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

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* Not recorded.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH (RAJU BHAIYA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, if just a 29-kilometre railway line is connected, please consider that it will benefit several Lok Sabha constituencies. ... *(Interruptions)* Similar railway works like ours have also received approval. ... *(Interruptions)* Such approvals have been given in Bihar, ... *(Interruptions)* and in Uttar Pradesh, Ghazipur has also been granted approval. My railway line is included in the same approved category. ... *(Interruptions)* I have brought the entire documentation with me. ... *(Interruptions)* It figures in the year 2018-19 as well as in 2017-18. ... *(Interruptions)* This is merely a 29-kilometre railway line, and it has already been approved. ... *(Interruptions)* Through you, I would like to request that just as funds have been released for other railway lines falling in my category, ... *(Interruptions)* funds may also kindly be released for my railway line. I have come before you to make this humble request. Thank you very much. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: All of you may please sit down. If anything is objectionable, it will be expunged.

... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: This has already been stated. Please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: I have already said so. The Chair has given its direction. Please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: The Chair has already given its direction. Please sit down.

... (Interruptions)

[*]SHRI JASHVANTSINH SUNMANBHAI BHABHOR (DAHOD): Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways, the Railway Department is today continuously moving on the path of progress. When we came to Government in 2014, what we inherited in the name of Indian Railways was a system gasping for survival, as if admitted in an ICU. However, under the leadership of Hon. Modi Ji, our Government accepted this challenge and initiated efforts to revive the Railways. As a result, today the Railways are moving forward to provide a comfortable and convenient journey to their users. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister for Railways for his continuous efforts in developing the Railways into a healthy system.

Through the Make in India initiative, we are moving forward with the resolve to promote indigenous manufacturing and to build a new India. An India that is fully self-reliant and strong. In addition to this, our Government is also working in the direction of modernising the country.

Our Government has announced, in this Budget, the development of the railway sector on the basis of the Public Private Partnership (PPP) model. We are aware that the completion of all

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

approved railway projects often takes several decades. Therefore, our Government has planned to utilise Public Private Partnership (PPP) for the rapid development of railway projects within a defined time frame, including track laying, rolling stock manufacturing, and the delivery of passenger and freight services, so that the stipulated targets may be achieved in time.

Public Private Partnership will lead to a substantial increase in employment opportunities in the country and will also enable the Railways to earn significant revenue.

Our Government has set a target of investment amounting to Rs. 50 lakh crore during the period from 2018 to 2030 to bring about improvements in railway infrastructure and to strengthen the basic framework of the Railways. In view of this, the annual capital expenditure of the Railways will be in the range of Rs. 1.5 to 1.6 lakh crore.

I would like to place certain demands of my parliamentary constituency before the Government. In order to connect my Lok Sabha constituency of Dahod with Indore, work on the Indore-Dahod railway project is progressing at a very fast pace. On behalf of the people of Dahod Lok Sabha constituency, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister and the

Hon. Minister for Railways for making funds available for this project in the accounts of the current financial year. There is no doubt that upon completion of this project, not only Gujarat but also voters from several Lok Sabha constituencies of Madhya Pradesh will benefit, and the region will witness all-round development. I represent the Dahod Lok Sabha constituency of the State of Gujarat, which is a tribal-dominated area and is economically very backward. Most of the residents here earn their livelihood through hard manual labour. Indian Railways can play a very significant role in the development of this region and in the upliftment of its residents. Therefore, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways to accord priority to the Dahod region for creating the necessary railway infrastructure required for its development.

One of the important demands of the people of the Dahod region is the construction of a new railway line connecting Dahod to Banswara in Rajasthan. Keeping in view this long-standing demand of the people of the region, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly initiate the work on the new railway project from Dahod in Gujarat to Banswara in Rajasthan by passing a revised proposal in the accounts of the current financial year and to commence this work at the earliest.

I would also like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways to include the new railway project from Dahod to Modasa in the accounts of the current financial year.

Just as arteries function in the human body by ensuring the operation of vital organs in every part, in the same manner Indian Railways, by continuously serving the nation, is setting exemplary benchmarks in the development of the country. In conclusion, I express my gratitude to all the employees of Indian Railways. I also wholeheartedly commend Shri Piyush Goyal, who is working day and night to maintain the momentum of railway development and to realise the vision of a developed India under the leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. I am grateful for having been given the opportunity to place my views on this important subject.

[English]

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (KOLLAM): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to take part in the discussion on the Demand for Grants of the Railway Ministry, that is Demand no.82.

Sir, Indian railways is the lifeline of the nation and is the unique integrator of modern India which meets the road of its socio-economic development. Indian Railways play an important pivotal role in maintaining the unity and integrity of our country. It is the third largest railway network in the world. It maintains a gigantic network of 63,000 kilometres and 22 thousand trains run per day to transport 15 million passengers. Sir, in order to maintain this infrastructure of this railway network, which is the third largest in the world, we have to keep the infrastructure like railway track, bridges, signalling and telecommunication etc. in a proper and fit condition.

Let us analyse the past performance of the Indian Railways. I would like to appreciate the performance made of the Railways during the last few years especially in respect of freight traffic in which there is a marginal or incremental increase. During 2016-17,

freight traffic registered an incremental growth of 4.83 per cent. In 2017-18, It had an increase of 5.33 per cent.

Sir, regarding passenger traffic, in 2017-18, there was a marginal increase of 2.09 per cent in the number of passengers. In 2018-19, it had a marginal increase of 0.64 per cent in the number of passengers. That means, the passenger traffic, as we expected, has not increased according to the estimate which we made in the last year's Budget.

Sir, 65 per cent of the railway revenue comes from the freight traffic. In the Demand for Grants also, it is stated that by completing the dedicated freight corridors by 2020, the freight earnings will also be increased. That is a positive and welcome suggestion. It is also a welcome move on the part of the Government for which I place my appreciation on record.

Sir, if you see the Demand for Grants of the Ministry of Railways for 2019-20, the total budget outlay is Rs.65,837 crore which is the highest outlay since Independence. Out of which, the capital expenditure is Rs.1,60,176 crore. It is 20 per cent higher than that of the previous year and I do appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, you may please see that the hon. Finance Minister, Madam, Nirmala Sitharaman Ji, in presenting the Budget,

has announced that Indian Railways require fifty lakh crores of rupees as investment infrastructure for the year from 2018 to 2030; 2018 is already over. Now the financial year, 2019-20 is running. An infrastructure investment of fifty lakh crores of rupees is required to have better infrastructure condition of international standard. That means, Railways require fifty lakh crore of rupees in eleven years. It further means that at least five lakh crore of rupees per year is required to achieve the goal to have international standard of the infrastructure. But the capital outlay given in the Demand for Grants is only Rs.1,60176 crore.

So, my question to the hon. Railway Minister is: how will you be able to achieve the target of fifty lakh crore of rupees by 2030, that is, within 10 year or 11 years? If at least five lakh crore of rupees per year is invested, then only you will be able to achieve the target by 2030. How is the Government and the Railway Ministry going to achieve this target?

Sir, the only solution or the only proposal which is suggested in the Budget is Public Private Partnership (PPP). The Government is totally depending on the PPP. I would like to cite an example of the NDA Government led by Narendra Modi Ji in which Shri Suresh Prabhu was the Minister. That was the Budget of 2015-16. There

was also a big announcement. At that time, Railways had a separate Budget.

What was the announcement made at that time? A five-year development plan was enunciated in the Railway Budget of 2015-16 by which Rs. 8.5 lakh crore was to be invested in the Railway infrastructure. During that Budget discussion, I myself had raised a question : “How are you going to mobilise the Extra Budgetary Resources? What are the ways and means to achieve it?”. The then Railway Minister -- an efficient and dynamic Minister who had initiated development in such a way -- is none other than Mr. Suresh Prabhu. I have no hesitation in accepting his wonderful contribution to the Indian Railways. The immediate reply given by him was that : “It is by means of Joint Venture, Foreign Direct Investment, Private-Public Participation and Special Purpose Vehicle.”.

How much have you achieved from it? According to my information, it is nothing even at this juncture as no Public-Private Participation has come into the picture. How is the Railways going to achieve this goal by 2030? This is the main question that I would like to pose here.

I have some suggestions. The first suggestion is that you have to depend on the profit-making Public Sector Undertakings. We are

having Navratna companies. Why are you always depending on the Joint Venture, Foreign Direct Investment, Private-Public Participation and Special Purpose Vehicle? *[English]* We are having the Navratna PSUs. Why do we not utilize the resources of the PSUs so as to have capacity augmentation by the Indian Railways? This is an important suggestion that I would like to make here.

Coming to the Operating Ratio of the Indian Railways, the Operating Ratio is an important parameter to gauge the health of the Railway finances. It is a measure of expenditure against revenue. In the 2015-16 Budget, there was also a proposal to enhance the efficiency of the Indian Railways by reducing the Operating Ratio from 93.6 per cent to 88.5 per cent. What is the latest position in this regard? If you examine, the Operating Ratio in 2017-18 was 98.4 per cent; in 2018-2019, it was 96.2 per cent; and in 2019-20, it was 95 per cent. Of course, it is declining, but what happened to 88.5 per cent? This was the Budget of 2015-16 of the same Government led by Shri Narendra Modi and the Railway Minister. What was the impact of the announcement made in the year 2015-16? I would like to suggest improving efficiency and thereby reducing the Operating Ratio.

In order to achieve the capacity augmentation and thereby reduce the Operating Ratio, my suggestion is that major thrust should be given to the electrification of the Indian Railways. Since time is not there, I am not going into the details of the issue. Electrification will reduce the use of imported fuels and thereby improve the energy security.

I would also like to make another very important suggestion. More thrust should be given to promote sub-urban railway transport system through the Regional Rapid Transport System. We had a plan in our State of Kerala to have this Regional Rapid Transport System from Trivandrum to Chengannur, but huge investment was required for it. So, that issue should be given much thrust.

I would like to make four more suggestions. Firstly, we should enhance the efficiency of the Indian Railways by reducing the Operating Ratio. Secondly, the resources of the profit-making PSUs may be utilised for capacity augmentation of the Indian Railways instead of depending on the Joint Venture, Foreign Direct Investment, Private-Public Participation and Special Purpose Vehicle. Thirdly, there should be commercial utilisation of the surplus land of the Indian Railways. So far, we were not able to utilise the surplus land of the Indian Railways. Fourthly, we should

improve other sources of revenue using innovative marketing technology, and other sources of revenue may also be found out so as to meet the infrastructure investment and maintenance of the Indian Railways.

I am now coming to issues relating to my Constituency and my State. There is a long pending demand from the State of Kerala to have an exclusive Railway Zone for the State of Kerala. We are finding it very difficult to have a good scenario in our State because even from the Southern Railway Headquarters we are facing discrimination.

As regards my Constituency and bullet train, Kollam-Shenkottai gauge conversion is already completed. My suggestion here is that all the trains, which were there before the gauge conversion may be re-introduced. Secondly, the electrification of Kollam to Punalur and Punalur to Shenkottai sections may be taken into account and completed in a timebound manner.

Vellankanni weekly train from Ernakulam may be declared as a regular train on all days. Vistadome coaches may be introduced in the Kottayam section. Punalur railway station is the nearest to the Sabarimala temple. The same may be declared and developed as a pilgrimage railway station. Kollam railway station should be

developed to a level of international standard. With these proposals, I conclude my speech. Thank you very much, Sir.

***SHRI P.C. MOHAN (BANGALORE CENTRAL):** Railways as a mode of transportation is a great unifier of the country. With over 67000 route kilometers and 7200 stations Indian Railway carries passengers the size of the population of Australia in a single day of the 12000 odd train run every day. This is a matter of immense pride for every Indian. Indian Railways has long been the driving force for the development on country. The increasing density of railway networks in various States have helped the speedy development of the States.

Karnataka State is on the threshold of immense growth in the areas of infrastructure, education, healthcare, transportation and inclusive development. It is one on the preferred investment destination among the States of India due to the conducive ecosystem, educational excellence and favourable weather conditions.

Some of the key parameters for furthering the growth and all-round development of Karnataka is highlighted here for necessary action.

Government of Karnataka and Indian Railways has planned for the implementation of the suburban Railway system in Bengaluru for

* Speech was laid on the Table.

resolving the urban/suburban transportation owes of Bengaluru and its inhabitants. RITES a subsidiary of Indian Railways was engaged to prepare the Detailed Project Report (DPR). RITES submitted the DPR. State Government raised some issues connected with the DPR which was solved with the intervention of the Hon. Minister of Railways. Further the DPR was forwarded to the Central Government for obtaining the approval of the Cabinet. Prior to the DPR being placed before the Cabinet, PMO raised certain issues which are very relevant for the holistic development of the suburban railway system which would serve the needs of Greater Bengaluru for the next 30-40 years. Observations raised by PMO are valid for the long term and holistic development Bengaluru and its suburban areas. Hence immediate action should be taken by the State Government and the Railways to sort out the issues raised by PMO and prepare a revised DPR for the approval of Union Cabinet. Bengaluru being a hub of knowledge, IT/ITES services, manufacturing centre with a huge flow of migrant population. This growth will increase in the coming years. This required the increasing of capacity of the city which is possible by increasing the footprint of the city through faster mode of transportation to cover distance of 50-60 kilometers around the city. As it stands there is an

urgent need for expansion of Bengaluru beyond the present boundaries for decongesting the core area of the Bengaluru CBD. This is possible by moving the economic activities beyond Bengaluru city to form a greater Bengaluru which connects the suburban corridors of Bengaluru viz.

- Malur-Bangarapete,
- Whitefield-Hosakote,
- Ramanagaram-Channapatna-Mandya
- Yesvantapur-Nelamangala-Kunigal
- Bengaluru-Tumakuru
- Yelahanka-Doddaballapur-Gauribidanur
- Yelahanka-Devahanalli-Chikkaballapura-Kolar-Bangarapete
- Bengaluru-KIAL (Bengaluru Airport)
- Banaswadi-Baiyyappanahalli-Hosur

The development of suburban transportation infrastructure would spread the city beyond its present boundaries. This will ensure demographic spread of population. State Government should ensure development of necessary infrastructure for development of

residential localities like water, electricity, educational institutions, hospitals and market places.

To decongest railway capacity at KSR Bengaluru and Yeshvantpur railway stations a new coaching terminal is coming up at Baiyyappanahalli. The location being centrally located will help citizen of Bengaluru to commence their rail journey to various parts of the country. Here the main requirement is the seamless connectivity to the Metro Rail (BMRCL) system which will integrate the entire transportation network in the Bengaluru. A well-planned sheltered skywalk/travellator of international standards should be provided to connect Baiyyappanahalli BMRCL station to the new coaching terminal at Baiyyappanahalli.

During the last five years of NDA Government led by Shri Narendra Modi Ji, the entire railway network in Karnataka has immense great development. It has changed the very face of railway network in the State which activities like new lines connecting important cities providing rail transport to smaller cities, doubling and electrification of existing lines and modernization of trains and improved amenities to passengers at stations and onboard. Citizen of Karnataka has great hope from the present Central Government to further push the railway infrastructure in the State. Some of the

major railway infrastructural developments delivered in the last five years are doubling and electrification between Bengaluru - Mysuru, Bengaluru - Dharmavaram, doubling between Bengaluru and Miraj (in patches beyond Tumakuru). Further, work of doubling is in progress between Hosapete to Vasco. In short the entire span of railway trunk routes in Karnataka is in the process of being doubled and electrified. This will increase the train handling capacity and faster movement of trains. The development of a new Coaching Terminal at Baiyyappanahalli will greatly increase the train handling capacity at Bengaluru and thus facilitate connectivity to all part of the country. New train services can be started from Baiyyappanahalli to Jammu/Uddampur, cities in Rajasthan like, Udaipur, Jaiselmer, Marwar, Indore, Nagpur, Vishakapatnam, Howrah, Guwahathi, etc.

To tide over the transportation bottleneck in the Bengaluru Metropolitan area, consequent to shifting of trains presently being dealt at KSR Bengaluru and Yeshwanthpur railway stations, suburban trains will be started from Yeshwantpur railway station till the commencement of Suburban Railway Stem in Bengaluru.

Further, to augment the railways capacity to handle more passenger services, there is an urgent need for development of mini-coaching terminals around Bengaluru, viz. Yelahanka/Rajankunte,

Hejjala, Bengarapete. These terminals should be equipped to taken up maintenance of rolling stock so that the major railway stations can handle more passenger services. This will also increase the job opportunities in the railways in Karnataka.

Mahadevapura in Bengaluru, which is part of my constituency has developed into a major IT/ITES hub. Many large, medium and small IT companies (MNC & Indian) have set up their development centres and employs thousands of skilled, semi-skilled and service labourers. The railway Satellite Goods Terminal and CONCOR managed Inland Container Depot are functioning in this area. These facilities were established on the outskirts of Bengaluru when it was a small city. Now, Bengaluru has grown beyond this by great distances. Heavy trucks ply in and around Whitfield area during the morning and evening hours which creates huge traffic jams.

In the present scenario the railway goods shed and Inland Container Depot facilities should be shifted to Malur or beyond so that the area occupied by these terminals can be utilized as maintenance yard for passenger trains. In times to come all terminal activities should be concentrated at this yard and the major stations like KSR Bengaluru, yeswanthpur and Baiyyappanahalli should be utilized only for running train only. This will help in construction of

more platforms and passenger related amenities which will help in running more and more passenger trains and it will also benefit running of suburban trains.

Apart from Bengaluru, Mysuru is also an important travel destination, particularly for education and tourism. In recent times many long-distance trains have been extended to Mysuru. Since Mysuru station does not have the adequate facilities for maintenance for trains, a new coaching terminal is being planned at Naganahalli. Railway Ministry should earmark funds in the Budget and fast track the work of this new coaching terminal so that more number of trains can be operated from Mysuru to various parts of the country. This will improve tourism related travel to Mysuru and beyond. Additional platforms should be planned at Mysuru station to cater to this increased demand.

The existing railway line between Mysuru and Arsikere via Hassan should be doubled to increase line capacity and aide running more number of trains. This will improve direct connectivity from Mysuru to various parts of Karnataka and outside the State. Some of the long-distance trains can be directly runs to Mysuru instead of running via Bengaluru city.

The existing connectivity between Mangaluru and Bengaluru is poor due to the limitations of ghat section. Limited number of trains are being operated. Ministry of Railways should conduct feasibility study for doubling this line to improve the connectivity between Mangaluru Port and other cities like Bengaluru, Mysuru and other cities. This will increase line capacity and help running of more passenger and freight trains to the Mangaluru port. HMRDC which developed theHassan-Mangaluru railway line, is now running in profit. This agency can be entrusted the work of feasibility study for doubling the line between Hassan and Mangaluru.

Chitradurga while being a historic district of great economic activity during the early ages have fallen due to its backwardness and lack of proper connectivity. Ministry of Railways should increase the rail penetration in Chitradurga District and operate more train services from Chitradurga to various parts of the State to develop one of the most backward Districts of Karnataka. More trains services should be provided from Chitradurga to Hosapete, Bellary, Shivamogga and Mangaluru.

There is a huge passenger traffic between Bengaluru and Hosapete. However, there is only one direct overnight train from Bengaluru to Hosapete via Bellary. Travelers have to depend on

buses for travelling to Hosapete. Hence, it is urged to immediately start a daytime Intercity Superfast train between Hosepete and Bengaluru via Kottur and Harihara.

After the completion of doubling between Bengaluru-Dharmavaram-Guntakal an exclusive Intercity Superfast train should be run between Bengaluru and Bellary to connect the business hubs. Intercity trains serve the purpose of fast movement for business needs and facilitate return of public to their homes after completion of business transactions.

Work should be started on the rail connectivity from Shivamogga - Mangaluru Port. This will help the speedier movement of industrial and manufactured goods from the industrial areas of Bhadravati and Shivamogga to the port to boost international trade.

As told earlier, Karnataka is one the threshold of entering a new era of development both economically, industrially and as a knowledge and healthcare hub. Railways plays a catalytic role in the speedy development of the State. Presently, Railways in Karntaka is under the administrative control of three Zones (SWR, southern Railways & Central Railways). To bring uniformity in development of rail infrastructure in Karnataka it is imperative to bring the entire

state under the administrative control ofa single Zonal Railway. In this direction , it is urged to create Gulbarga and Mangaluru Divisions under the administrative control of South Western Railway. Gulbarga Division should have the area of northern Karnataka which are under the administrative control of Central Railway (Gulbarga, Wadi) South Central Railway (Bidar, Raichur, Yadgir) to be transferred to the administrative control of Gulbarga Division. Similarly Mangaluru Division should cover the areas of southern parts of Karnataka now under the control of Southern Railway and Konkan Railway. This will give a big push to the dreams of the people of Karnataka for rail infrastructure development.

Vijnayapura, Bidar, Bagalkote and Gulbarga needs to be higher rail infrastructure penetration and more trains to be operated to connect major cities in Karnataka and outside the State. The Golbumbaz Express connecting Mysuru to Solapur via Bengaluru, Hubballi, Gadag, Bagalkote, Vijayapura is a slow runner. Consequent to doubling of lines in these areas this train is running with old timings. This train needs to be speeded up to ensure shorter journey time for passengers for people of northern Karnataka to reach Bengaluru and Mysuru.

More number of commuter train services should be planned between Hubballi - Ballari, Gadag - Solapur, Hubballi - Miraj. Local trains should be operated once in an hour or two in these sections, this will help faster movement of the working-class people and daily wage labourers and aide in the development of industries and manufacturing houses in these areas.

[Translation]

[*]**SHRI P. P. CHAUDHARY (PALI):** This is the second consolidated Budget in which the Railway Budget and the General Budget have been presented together. This is a development-oriented Budget. It does not contain populist promises; rather, it focuses on the development of basic infrastructure. This is a realistic Budget. Works such as laying of railway lines and introduction of new trains should continue throughout the year on a sustained basis. It is not appropriate that projects which are essential at the ground level are merely announced in the Railway Budget.

Nearly 150 years before Independence, when British rule had snatched away our freedom and subjected us to ruthless oppression, Independence was merely a dream, and for an ordinary citizen, travelling by train was also a distant aspiration. Today, I feel a sense of satisfaction that we have emerged from that dark phase, and that in this independent country, people of every section, every religion and every caste have not only the right but also the facility and the freedom to travel by train.

Before Independence, when trains used to operate, there were four classes, First Class, Second Class, Third Class and Fourth

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Class. The first two classes were always reserved exclusively for the British, while the remaining two were left aside with the remark that they were meant for the ‘cattle class’ of this country. For overcoming this mindset as well, I would like to commend all those Governments whose efforts enabled us to free ourselves from the colonial mentality imposed by the British. Today, not only do trains such as the Garib Rath enable people from all sections of society to travel by rail, but they are also able to undertake comfortable journeys in air-conditioned coaches. Air-conditioned travel, which was once merely a dream for the common man, has today become a reality solely due to the efforts of the Government.

I do not wish to shower figures from the Budget, as my able colleagues have already discussed them at length. After reading the Budget, it becomes clear that this is yet another development-oriented Budget which also ensures continuity.

I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister for Railways for making full use of his professional expertise to take the Railways to new heights. Railway projects have been undertaken under the PPP mode for several years now, but ever since Shri Piyush Goyal assumed office as the Minister for Railways, a new momentum has

been imparted to railway development, with due emphasis on safety while carrying out developmental works.

The entire world is facing the adverse effects of pollution and climate change. In such a scenario, the use of green energy by Indian Railways, which has one of the largest railway networks in the world, is in itself an unprecedented step. Railway electrification has progressed at a pace six times faster compared to 2013. By 2021-22, the Railways will be fully electrified. To generate electrical energy, solar panels are now being installed on the roofs of railway coaches.

With regard to the beautification of stations, unprecedented work has been carried out in the Railways over the last five years. It would not be incorrect to say that the impact of the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan has been most visibly reflected in trains and railway stations. Today, stations appear illuminated with LED lights, and walls adorned with local art are captivating tourists and passengers alike. Recently, an agreement has been entered into with France for the beautification of stations, under which work is underway to develop both Habibganj (Madhya Pradesh) and Gandhinagar (Gujarat) as world-class stations. Jaipur city has recently been accorded the status of a UNESCO World Heritage City. I would like to request the Hon.

Minister for Railways that the work of developing Jaipur railway station as a world-class station may also be undertaken.

Prior to the Hon. Minister for Railways assuming office, railway accidents had almost become frequent occurrences. During his tenure, there has been a significant decline not only in railway accidents but also in fatalities resulting from such accidents. Over the last five years, a reduction of 81 per cent has been observed in the death rate due to railway accidents. Across the country, accidents at railway crossings have been reduced to almost zero, as either over-bridges or under-bridges have been constructed at level crossings throughout India. This achievement has been made possible solely due to the able leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Bhai Modi.

With the new vision of the Hon. Minister for Railways for a New India, the National Railway Safety Fund has been established, which will enable prompt financial assistance to the families of victims in the event of accidents. Taking this new thinking forward, for the first time in the country, rail-cum-road bridges have been introduced. Under this initiative, the longest rail-road bridge, measuring 4.94 km, has been constructed over the Brahmaputra river. In the same spirit, to impart greater speed to India, trains such

as Vande Bharat have been introduced. I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways, under whose leadership India has become the third country in the world to establish a National Rail Transport University. At present, 103 students are pursuing their studies in this University. I am hopeful that the dream of a bullet train in India will also be realised in the near future.

Freight movement has a vital role in the development of the country, and the Railways is planning to make further investments in this sector. An additional investment of Rs. 1.43 lakh crore is being planned for this purpose. I commend the foresight of the Hon. Minister for Railways in this regard. For the seamless movement of freight trains, the Delhi-Mumbai Industrial Corridor is being developed between Mumbai and Delhi. I am pleased that one phase of this important project has already been completed, and the second phase will also be completed shortly. A major portion of the second phase passes through my parliamentary constituency of Pali, covering nearly 100 km. This will certainly lead to development in the Pali Lok Sabha constituency.

The manner in which railway catering services have been strengthened and systematised is commendable. By making it

mandatory to print the MRP on every food item sold inside trains, the Government has set an excellent example of transparency. The introduction of the online catering system has made journeys more convenient for passengers. Monitoring the quality and cleanliness of food prepared in onboard kitchens through the use of artificial intelligence is not only a reflection of the foresight of the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways, but also an example of the possibilities made achievable through science and its effective application.

Under the Digital India initiative, the launch of online platforms such as Rail Drishti is a laudable step taken to ensure better dissemination of information.

Old and discarded coaches should also be utilised for the benefit of homeless people or those compelled to spend their lives in night shelters and endure the hardships of weather. In addition, their use as bridges over small rivers and streams in rural areas is a praiseworthy initiative. The initiative taken by the Ministry of Railways to reuse old coaches is not only commendable, but through this medium, the Government can also generate resources for investment in new coaches.

To promote tourism, trains such as the Ramayan Express, Panj Takht Express and the Buddhist Circuit Train have been introduced. I request that train services also be introduced from other parts of the country to Ranakpur, a प्रमुख pilgrimage centre of the Jain community.

I would like to draw the attention of the Government to the oldest and most essential demand of my Lok Sabha constituency. In 1997, the then Minister for Railways, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, had announced a new railway line from Bilara to Bar in Jodhpur district. The foundation stone for this project has already been laid, but the work has not commenced till date. The distance between Bilara and Bar is only 40 km. If these two places are connected by a railway line, thousands of people will be able to avail themselves of railway facilities. Moreover, the distance between Jodhpur, Jaipur and Delhi will be substantially reduced, and Jodhpur will get better connectivity with Ajmer. In this regard, a survey has already been conducted by the Ministry of Railways. With the concurrence of the Railway Board, the proposal was forwarded to the Planning Commission, but the Planning Commission dropped the project by terming it as “commercially not viable”. At present, limestone and cement industries have developed in this area. If a fresh survey is conducted, I am confident that the Bilara-Bar railway line will be

found to be commercially viable as well as socially viable. I request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly implement the announcement made in 1997, so that thousands of people of my Lok Sabha constituency of Pali may benefit through this short rail link.

While drawing attention to the Dedicated Freight Corridor passing through my Lok Sabha constituency of Pali (Rajasthan), I would like to state that near Bagdi Nagar station in Pali, an under-bridge is proposed for the North Western Railway track at Gate No. 50-C, with dimensions of 2 x 4.5 x 5 in width and height.

Bagdi Nagar is the largest revenue- and agriculture-based area of Pali district. It has a Sub-Tehsil Office, District Institute of Education and Training, Patwari Training Centre, several educational institutions, a Community Health Centre, a Veterinary Hospital, a Police Station, a Post Office, banks and other facilities.

In this area, crops such as henna, wheat, maize, bajra and senna leaves are mainly cultivated. Farmers and cultivators transport their agricultural produce to the Sojat Agricultural Market located in Pali district through large trucks, and the route passes through the proposed under-bridge. In addition, around 800 to 1,000 vehicles use this route daily. It will be difficult for heavy vehicles to pass through

the proposed under-bridge, and traffic congestion is also likely to persist.

Therefore, I request that a fresh survey be conducted and steps be taken to construct an over-bridge instead of an under-bridge, so that local residents, particularly farmers, do not face hardship.

Suggestions for the convenience of railway passengers are as follows:

(1) Due to revolutionary changes in the field of telecommunications, mobile phones are now used by almost every railway passenger. Therefore, I request that facilities for charging mobile phones be provided in every train and in every coach.

(2) A water stand should be installed between every two coaches of each train, with at least four taps. It is often observed at stations that, due to collusion by vendors selling packaged drinking water, most of the Railway drinking water taps are kept closed.

(3) Under the PPP mode, water coolers should be installed in every coach of each train so that passengers may have access to cold drinking water.

(4) At junction stations, where four or five trains are often stationed simultaneously, there is confusion due to the sounding of horns by

drivers, as it becomes difficult to identify which train is sounding the horn. Therefore, I suggest that each train should be equipped with more than one horn so that passengers can be alerted immediately.

(5) Prior to arrival at a station, information regarding the station should be announced to passengers through a public announcement system on the lines of the Delhi Metro.

(6) A portion of each coach of every train should be developed as a cloak room so as to ensure the safety of passengers' luggage. Charges may be levied from passengers for keeping their belongings safely, through which the Railways can earn revenue towards the remuneration of the staff responsible for safeguarding the luggage as well as the rental of the cabin.

(7) Ramps should be constructed on both sides of the staircases provided for movement from one platform to another, so that passengers can conveniently move their trolleys while crossing platforms.

Keeping in view the limited resources, the Ministry of Railways has sought to mobilise funds on the one hand by improving its functioning and efficiency, and on the other hand, has opened avenues for private investment under the PPP model. While making it clear that the Railways will not be privatised, involving the private

sector for the expansion of rail services and improvement in quality is an extremely important step. I congratulate the Hon. Minister for Railways on this initiative as well. I am fully confident that if private sector participation is ensured in the development of old railway stations, expansion of new lines and in the freight sector, along with rail facilities, the slow pace of progress in these areas can be significantly accelerated.

Prior to the Railway Budget, I personally met the Hon. Minister for Railways and submitted the following suggestions relating to my Lok Sabha constituency. I had hoped that the Ministry of Railways would pay due attention to rail facilities in remote areas such as Pali, but action could not be taken on them. These are as follows:

1. MEMU/DEMU train services should be operated between Jodhpur and Marwar Junction via Luni and Pali.

2. Weekly trains operating from Jodhpur-Marwar Junction to Bengaluru and Chennai (South) should be made daily..

3. A large part of Pali district remains deprived of railway facilities, including areas such as Bilara, Jaitaran and Bar, which have been assured railway connectivity for several years. The distance between

Bilara and Bar is only 40 km. If these two places are connected by a railway line, thousands of people will be able to avail themselves of railway facilities, and the distance between Jodhpur, Jaipur and Delhi will be considerably reduced. In this regard, a survey has already been conducted by the Ministry of Railways. Therefore, I would like to request that the proposal to connect Bilara with Bar by a railway line be approved and included in the Budget announcement during the Budget Session. A new railway line from Bilara to Bar may be laid, for which the survey had earlier been conducted by the BJP Government.

In conclusion, I congratulate the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting this transformative Budget and hope that prompt action will be ensured on the suggestions put forward by me. I strongly support the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways for the year 2019-20.

SHRI MANOJ KOTAK (MUMBAI NORTH-EAST): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants relating to the Railways.

I come from the region where the first train in the history of India was operated. I represent that very region. That train ran from Mumbai to Thane. I am a Member of Parliament from the area falling under Central Railway. As several Members have mentioned, Mumbai Suburban Railway carries about 80 lakh passengers every day, which is the highest in the country. In this Budget, over the past several years, whenever the NDA and the Bharatiya Janata Party have been in Government at the Centre, different Ministers for Railways, whether Hon. Madhu Dandavate Ji, Hon. Rambhau Naik Ji, Shri Suresh Prabhu Ji or Shri Piyush Goyal Ji, have always taken a positive approach towards Mumbai Suburban Railway. Mumbai Suburban Railway has functioned efficiently because they had an understanding of the subject and were aware of the problems faced by the people of Mumbai.

For the first time in this country, a provision of Rs. 33,000 crore has been made under MUTP Phase III-A. Under the leadership of Hon. Modi Ji, the Government that has been formed, which is a Government of the common people, listened to the concerns of

Mumbaikars and accorded due importance to them. With a provision of Rs. 33,000 crore, all the projects are now set to be completed within the stipulated time. While facilities have been provided at railway stations, the biggest demand of suburban railway commuters has been that 12-coach rakes be converted into 15-coach rakes, and thereafter, the length of all platforms be increased so that 15-coach trains can halt at every station.

In this area, the longest route extends up to 121 kilometres, running from Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus towards Kasara. This is the longest route. I feel that when a person leaves home in the morning and returns at night, he is able to spend only four to five hours at home. If someone works in Mumbai city or comes here for business, the maximum part of his time is spent travelling in local trains, where he has to travel for at least six hours, three hours while going and three hours while returning. The facilities which had been lacking for several years were addressed after the Government led by Hon. Modi Ji came to power. Shri Suresh Prabhu Ji and Hon. Piyush Goyal Ji extended substantial concessions and initiatives for the suburban railway. However, there are still a few smaller issues, which, if addressed, can further energise the Mumbai Suburban Railway and help resolve its problems.

At three locations, Road Over Bridges are yet to be constructed, due to which the speed of trains is affected. These three locations are Kalwa, Ambivli and Diva. If level crossings at these three places are eliminated, the suburban railway will be able to operate at its full speed.

The Hon. Minister has introduced the cab signalling system. With this system, the distance between two trains will be reduced, enabling more trains to be operated. This initiative will further enhance the efficiency of the suburban railway, provide greater facilities to the people, and allow a larger number of train services to be provided.

18.54 hrs (Dr. Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar *in the Chair*)

Wherever such works have been undertaken, a network of Metro Rail is being laid across the entire Mumbai-MMR region at various locations. In Mumbai city, work on seven Metro Rail lines is underway, and work on other lines has also commenced in the MMR region. There should be an integrated ticketing facility for all these lines, so that people can travel using a single ticket across the Railways, Metro Rail and buses.

Passengers should be able to use all these services through one ticket or one pass. Such a scheme has been envisaged by the

Railways. I congratulate the Railway Department for conceiving such a plan. I feel that long-distance goods trains, which run from north to south, cross the suburban railway network at several places. Along with this demand, I would also like to submit that these long-route goods trains pass through the Mumbai-Pune rail line. During the monsoon, incidents such as derailments in the ghat sections or landslides sometimes occur. As a result, the entire suburban railway timetable gets disrupted, causing hardship to the entire suburban railway system. Therefore, these goods trains should be diverted via Dahanu-Nashik or Nandana-Dhule. In this manner, a bypass should be created for the Mumbai section, so that the load presently falling on the Mumbai Suburban Railway is reduced.

Madam, Mumbai is the financial capital of the country. On Central Railway and Western Railway, such trains operate in which we provide various facilities. There is an extensive network of railway stations within this system. The Railways has decided to undertake the development of railway stations under the PPP model, and I commend the Government for this initiative. Along with this, the Railways should conduct a survey of all railway stations in Mumbai city through an asset management company, so that it can be ascertained how these assets may be commercially utilised. Such

commercial utilisation will not only generate revenue but will also enable the provision of better facilities to passengers. This will make travel easier for the people of Mumbai. Mumbai city has a vast suburban railway network.

Madam, I am concluding my remarks in just one minute. A large number of people from our area travel towards Konkan. For the convenience of passengers travelling to Konkan, Bhandup is one such railway station on the down side where the suburban railway traffic load is relatively low during morning hours. Therefore, I request, through you, that stoppage be provided for down side trains at Bhandup station. I thank you for permitting me to place all these matters before the House.

***SHRI OM PAVAN RAJENIMBALKAR (OSMANABAD):** I thank the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, for the Demands for Grants relating to the Railway Budget for the year 2019-2020. He has made sustained efforts to make the Railways and rail travel smoother and more convenient, with special emphasis on passenger amenities.

In Budget 2019, approval was accorded to the new railway line project between Solapur-Tuljapur-Osmanabad, covering a length of 84.44 kilometres, at an estimated cost of Rs. 904.92 crore. Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi had assured the construction of this railway line during an election rally held in Solapur, and the project was inaugurated by him. Tuljabhavani Temple, a major pilgrimage centre, lies on this route, and devotees visit the shrine throughout the year. During the Dussehra festival, approximately 17 to 18 lakh devotees travel to this place.

I request the Government to take necessary action to commence the work of laying the railway line between Solapur and Osmanabad at the earliest and to make adequate budgetary provision for the timely completion of this route.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

I would also like to place another important demand before the Government. There is an urgent need to construct a new railway line between Latur and Nanded. The construction of this line will significantly reduce the distance between Mumbai and Vidarbha and will also enhance connectivity. This will, in turn, contribute to an increase in railway revenue.

I further request the Hon. Minister for Railways that there is a need for a new Intercity train between Pune and Latur. Keeping this in view, I urge that this new train service be introduced at the earliest.

The Latur Express operating between Latur and Mumbai does not provide any space at Osmanabad station for passengers boarding the train, and due to heavy crowding, their travel becomes extremely inconvenient. Therefore, I request that additional general coaches be attached to this train so that passengers may be provided adequate facilities.

Kalamb Road and Dhoki railway stations come under my parliamentary constituency Osmanabad.Almost thousands of passengers travel daily from these stations to Mumbai and other places by train, while train numbers 22144, 22143, 17613, 17614, 11012, 11011, 11415, 11416 run between Mumbai and Latur and

these trains are halted at Kalamb and Osmanabad. (Dhoki) Due to the lack of stoppage at the station falling under the taluka, local passengers have to face many problems. I demand from the Hon. Railway Minister to give stoppage of the above trains running between Latur to Mumbai at one of the above stations.

In my parliamentary constituency, Train No. 11415, which runs from Kolhapur to Bidar via Osmanabad and Latur, proceeds up to Bidar district in Karnataka. There were reports at one point that this train might be discontinued on this route. This would cause considerable hardship to the general public, traders, devotees, and students. Instead of discontinuing the Kolhapur-Bidar train, if this train is extended further from Bidar up to Hyderabad, passenger traffic will increase. More people will be able to travel by this train, and this will also result in an increase in railway revenue.

At Osmanabad railway station, fertilisers and foodgrains are transported during the monsoon season. Due to the absence of sheds during the rainy season, fertilisers and foodgrains suffer substantial damage. Therefore, it is absolutely essential that proper shed and flooring arrangements be provided at the rake point.

Accordingly, I urge that sheds and flooring facilities at the rake point be provided at the earliest. I place this important demand

before the Government and I support the Demands for Grants relating to the Railway Budget for the year 2019-20.

[English]

SHRI SYED IMTIAZ JALEEL (AURANGABAD): Madam, undoubtedly, Railways is the lifeline of lakhs and lakhs of passengers who travel the length and breadth of this country every day.

For the past so many Budgets now, what we have been witnessing is that new announcements of new projects are made involving crores of rupees whereas what we see are the pending projects which need to be completed. There are ‘n’ number of projects that have been languishing for years together because of lack of funds. We feel that those incomplete projects need to be taken up on priority.

I have a perfect case for this. There is a 165 km railway line from Jalna to Khamgaon which has been pending for over twenty-five years due to lack of funds. This route is of great importance for improving the connectivity of the entire region of Marathwada. We also need funds for completion of the three-phased model railway station project at Aurangabad. So far, only one phase of the project has been completed and this is running over ten years late; it is running ten years late of its set deadline because of lack of funds.

We have always demanded a pit line at Aurangabad which is a must for connecting the city to all important cities across the country. Due to absence of pit line, long route trains are not being given to Aurangabad which is home to the historical monuments of Ajanta and Ellora Caves besides being a major industrial city.

Hon. Minister, I would like to draw your attention to the long pending demand for shifting the Nanded Division from the South-Central Railway to the Central Railway Division in Mumbai. We feel that we are being subjected to injustice because our long pending demands are not being fulfilled by our South-Central Railway. The railways in Marathwada, particularly, in Aurangabad has changed little in the past few decades. Apart from converting the meter gauge into broad gauge and renovating some of the railway stations, nothing much has happened. My concern is that the city is losing a lot of revenue from the tourism and industrial point of view because we do not have proper connectivity as far as the railways is concerned.

19.00 hrs

[Translation]

I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly give due consideration to four to five demands that I wish to place

before him. I would like to submit that Marathwada in Maharashtra is a region that is regarded as backward. If the Government does not pay attention to this region, the situation that we have witnessed over the last seventy years, namely the continued neglect of this area, will persist. The people of this region are hopeful that, in keeping with the slogan of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas”, justice will be done to Marathwada this time. Our first demand is that the work of doubling the railway line between Manmad and Parbhani should be commenced at the earliest. Along with this, electrification of this section has already been approved, and the work on electrification should also be started without delay. The proposal to lay a new railway line between Daulatabad and Chalisgaon has been approved, and the survey for this new line has been completed. The new railway line between Daulatabad and Chalisgaon, which is merely 80 kilometres in length, should be constructed at the earliest so that the entire region may benefit from it. Aurangabad railway station, if viewed from the tourism perspective, is extremely important. Not a single train originates from Aurangabad; trains merely pass through the station. Our demand is that train services should be started from Aurangabad to Ajmer-Jaipur, Bengaluru, Udaipur, Goa, Delhi and Pune. Wherever railway lines do not exist, new lines should be laid

so that tourists as well as industries may derive full benefit from improved railway connectivity.

One final issue relates to the city of Aurangabad. Near Aurangabad, there is a Mukundwadi railway station, which is located right in the heart of the city. This station has been categorised as a D-class railway station. A large number of migrant passengers commute from this station on a regular basis. At suburban railway stations in cities such as Mumbai and Secunderabad, express trains are permitted to halt at several locations. We request that Mukundwadi railway station of Aurangabad be considered as a special case, and that trains such as the Tapovan Express, Jan Shatabdi Express and other trains also be provided stoppages there. This will certainly benefit the local residents. We hope that this time justice will be done to this backward region of Maharashtra. Thank you very much.

***SHRI MITESH PATEL (BAKABHAI) (ANAND):** In my parliamentary constituency, work on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad Bullet Train Project is in progress. I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways for presenting this bullet train project as a major development for the people of the region. Such projects are a strong step towards realising the vision of a New India.

Two industries in my constituency are being affected by this project. The owners of these industries are willingly prepared for the acquisition of their entire industrial units. However, the acquisition is not being carried out in accordance with the prescribed rules. If the owner is willing, the entire industry should be acquired and full compensation should be paid. Instead, under this project, while the industry is being completely rendered unviable, only half of the industry is being acquired and compensation is being paid only for that portion, which is not justifiable.

I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways to kindly issue necessary directions to ensure that, in accordance with the rules, the entire industry is acquired and full compensation for the total loss is paid as per the prescribed norms.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

Thank you.

SHRI KAMLESH PASWAN (BANSGAON): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you. I express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this important Budget. Earlier also, the Railway Budget was presented in the year 2009, and many of my colleagues were present in this House at that time. You have given me the opportunity to place my views in support of the Railway Budget laid on the Table of the House by the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal. Since 2014, a welfare-oriented Government has been formed under the leadership of the dynamic Hon. Shri Narendra Modi Ji. The railway system, which is regarded as the lifeline of the people of India, had reached a stage where it was faltering and on the verge of collapse. That railway system has now been given a new lease of life. Under the leadership of Hon. Modi Ji, the Hon. Minister for Railways has taken several steps to improve the condition and direction of the Railways in public interest, and as a result, the Railways will attain a leading position in the times to come.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, it is evident from the Hon. Minister's address while presenting the Railway Budget that over the next ten years, the Government is going to spend Rs. 50 lakh crore to make the Railways accessible, convenient and reliable. This, in itself,

reflects the Government's commitment towards schemes being implemented in the interest of railway passengers and railway employees. It appears to us that for the first time since Independence, a Government is showing such determination to bring about large-scale improvements in the railway system. India occupies a leading position in the world in terms of railway travel. People from all sections of society, from the affluent to the middle class and those living in poverty, travel by train. Among them, the poor and the middle class rely on trains the most. By enhancing train services, ensuring their proper operation and giving special attention to safety, it is clear that the Government is mindful of the convenience, safety and time of the middle class and the poor. I express my gratitude to the Modi Government for this.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, while the Railways are useful for passenger movement, they also serve as the backbone of the business community. Our Government is focusing on ensuring that traders also receive adequate facilities for the transportation of goods across the country through trains. Through you, I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, for making a budgetary allocation of Rs. 65,837 crore in the Railway Budget for the year 2019-20, as a result of which passenger amenities have

increased by 200 per cent. This includes Rs. 7,255 crore for new lines, Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, and Rs. 700 crore for doubling.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister for Railways to my parliamentary constituency of Bansgaon. I recall that in the year 2009, when Hon. Mamata Banerjee was the Minister for Railways, an announcement was made to connect the Bansgaon parliamentary constituency with a railway line. I come from a constituency which, if all 545 Lok Sabha constituencies are considered, may be the only one without a railway line. From the year 2000 till date, I can say that I have raised this issue in every Railway Budget. I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, not only for making announcements but also for ensuring that a survey was conducted. After the survey, time was also allotted for laying the foundation stone during the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. In this very House, it was also assured that the Bansgaon parliamentary constituency would be connected by a railway line. At that time, Hon. Shri Manoj Sinha Ji was also present. He had visited Gorakhpur during the elections and devoted his valuable time, assuring that the foundation stone for this railway

line would be laid before the elections. I would like to request the Hon. Minister that the project for my parliamentary constituency, for which an amount of Rs. 700 crore has already been approved, may be provided for in the Budget of the current financial year. Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI RAMULU POTHUGANTI (NAGARKURNOOL): Respected Chairperson, Madam, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak on the discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways for 2019-20 in the House today. For the first time, I am speaking with the blessings of our Nagarkurnool parliamentary constituency people and our hon. Chief Minister of Telangana, Shri K. Chandrashekar Rao.

I would like to draw the kind attention of the House regarding the need to sanction a new railway line from Gadwal to Macherla which belongs to my Nagarkurnool parliamentary constituency for which a survey was conducted in the year 2007-08. In this regard, I would like to request the Railway Ministry to put this new rail line project between Gadwal and Macherla having 151 kms. on the fast track and complete it as early as possible as a joint venture with adequate financial support of an estimated amount of Rs. 1160.47 crore.

This new railway line will take off from Gadwal and run via Wanaparthy, Nagarkurnool, Kalwakurthy, Achampet, Vanguru, Devarakonda Assembly segments and joins Thirumalagiri on the already sanctioned Nalgonda-Macherla line. This railway line is

important as it is the dream of about 20 lakh people to travel on this route. This railway line will have a huge floating of passengers and will also help in generating considerable revenue. But this is pending for more than three decades.

During recent Lok Sabha elections, Shri Amit Shah, who is now the Union Home Minister, promised to get a new rail line between Gadwala to Macherla sanctioned in a public meeting at Mahabubnagar in Telangana. The Bhadrachalam-Sattupally-Kuruvi rail line project should be completed at the earliest by providing sufficient funds as this rail line connects both Telangana and Andhra Pradesh and the backward tribal area of Khammam district of Telangana.

I request the hon. Minister of Railways to sanction a new rail line from Gadwal to Macherla for which the people of my constituency will be grateful to him. I request him to sanction all the projects of Telangana. Thank you.

*SHRI ASIT KUMAR MAL (BOLPUR): Indian Railways is our pride. But Government of India has planned to privatise Railways step by step. The Finance Minister announced that within 2030 - Rs.50 lakh crore will be invested from outsourcing. The safety and security of the passengers have not been ensured. The Railways tracks are not maintained properly. Our State is totally deprived by the Central Government. No new projects, no new train and no new Railway line extension are declared in this Budget. Metro Rail of Kolkata is the oldest in India. The functioning of Metro Rail has reached the bottom level. There is no replacement of old coaches. No new coach as are added properly. Everyday there is apprehension in the minds of the passengers of the Kolkata Metro, whether the Metro Rail will operate or not. This Government is in a mood to sale out the entire Railway to the private sector.

* Speech was laid on the Table.

[Translation]

SHRI HANUMAN BENIWAL (NAGAUR): Hon. Chairperson, Madam, first of all, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants relating to the Railways.

Madam, the speakers who spoke before me have placed a range of views and have also spoken about the history of the Railways. Undoubtedly, the Railways is a means of transport for everyone, from the rich to the poor. Indian Railways is a unique railway service in the world. It is a vast system. There are five countries in the world whose railway services are considered to be of a high standard, and Indian Railways is also regarded as one among them. Certainly, efforts have been made from time to time to improve railway services. We have seen that during the period from 2000 to 2013, trains used to collide with each other, derailments occurred due to cracks in the tracks, and numerous accidents took place. I am not saying that no accidents occurred in 2019, but there has been a significant reduction in accidents. For this, I would like to thank the NDA Government and Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji.

If one visits any railway station today, the level of cleanliness and the arrangements in place clearly indicate that a major change

and improvement have taken place. The Government has also taken care of railway employees, the filling up of vacant posts in the Railways, and the issues relating to railway workers and porters. I congratulate the Government for this. I would also like to congratulate the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, the former Minister for Railways, Shri Suresh Prabhu, who made efforts to take the Railways forward despite many challenges, and Shri Suresh C. Angadi, our young Minister. I thank him as well. He has been sitting firmly and has also withstood a great deal, and for this too, I express my thanks.

Madam, on 16 April, 1857, the first train in the country was run. James Watt invented the steam engine. The first train operated between Mumbai and Thane. Thereafter, railway services commenced in the country and, gradually, the railway network expanded. However, it is unfortunate that even after seventy years of Independence, without attributing blame to anyone, there are still several district headquarters and many densely populated areas which remain unconnected by rail. The responsibility for this certainly lies with those who governed the country for fifty-five to sixty years.

I would also like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister for the decision whereby earlier the General Budget was presented on one day and the Railway Budget on another, but now both have been merged and presented together. This is a very significant step and has sent a positive message. Earlier, the General Budget and the Railway Budget used to be presented separately.

Madam, about 22,000 trains operate daily and carry around 15 lakh people from one place to another. Indian Railways has historically played a very significant role in the socio-economic development of the country. Indian Railways was facing serious challenges. For a major part of the period, there were Congress Governments, and the deficiencies created during that time are now being addressed by the Government led by Hon. Modi Ji. An edifice of development has begun to be built in this country, and new dimensions of growth have been imparted to the Railways.

Today the common man’s trust in railway services has increased. One no longer sees those crowds where people had to stand in long queues and endure pushing and jostling. There is no longer any need to stand in long queues even for tickets. Today, sitting anywhere, we can find out at what time our train will arrive, from where it will depart, and where it is currently located. The GPS system in trains

has also been introduced by this very Government. For the benefit of 130 crore citizens of the country, a very substantial allocation has been made for the Railways, and for this I thank the Hon. Minister. In this Budget, an amount of Rs. 7,255 crore has been provided for the expansion of new railway lines, Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs. 700 crore for doubling, and Rs. 6,114 crore for rolling stock. In addition, Rs. 1,750 crore has been allocated for telecommunications, which will certainly help in realising the railway-related aspirations of the people of the country. For the first time, a proposal has been made to utilise the PPP model in the private sector for rapid development of the Railways and for passenger and freight transport services, so that connectivity can be enhanced. This will bring about a major transformation in railway services. In this Budget, it has also been proposed to launch an integrated skill development scheme, under which 13 lakh railway employees will be provided basic training.

Compared to previous Governments, there has been a 59 per cent increase in the expansion of railway lines over the last five years. During the tenure of the UPA Government between 2009 and 2014, an average of 4.1 kilometres of new railway lines were laid per day. In contrast, during the period from 2014 to 2019, under the

leadership of Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, new railway lines have been laid at a daily average of 6.53 kilometres. This clearly indicates the kind of political will with which the NDA Government is functioning. The Bullet Train is an initiative that one could hardly have imagined earlier. Leading countries across the world have been contemplating bullet train projects. It has now been announced that by the year 2022-23, Bullet Train services will be operational. The first Bullet Train will commence on the Ahmedabad-Mumbai corridor. It will initially be seen as a model to assess the impact and outcomes of operating a Bullet Train. Thereafter, if further need arises, more Bullet Train services will be introduced in the country.

I am happy to state today that under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the manner in which railway investment has been encouraged and enhanced will certainly lead to an improvement in existing facilities. ... *(Interruptions)* During the financial year 2018-19, electrification of 5,276 kilometres of railway lines was carried out, which is eight times higher than the level achieved in 2013-14. Capital expenditure has doubled during the period 2014-19. With the introduction of the Vande Bharat Express, the country has been given a new momentum. This train has a maximum speed of 180

kilometres per hour, and its trials have been successful. The world's first diesel locomotive works is being established at Varanasi, under which, as part of the electrification mission, diesel engines will be converted into electric engines. This will increase the speed of trains, reduce harm to the environment, and also lower diesel consumption.

The Hon. Finance Minister has stated in the Budget that the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail Project, namely the Bullet Train project, is scheduled to be completed by the year 2023. We are all undoubtedly concerned about railway safety. There have been major railway accidents in the past, including the incident of 26 May 2014 in which 25 people lost their lives, the Gorakhdham Express accident on 10 July 2011 in which 70 people lost their lives, incidents on the Delhi-Kolkata route on 28 May 2010, and terrorist attacks on 20 October 2008, 1 August 2008, 7 August 2007 and 18 February, when the Samjhauta Express was attacked. The question is how such incidents can be prevented and how the safety of the common man can be ensured. For this purpose, a Railway Safety Protection Fund should be created. I would also like to make a demand that the privacy of passengers travelling in First Class AC, Second Class and Third Tier AC coaches should be safeguarded. ... *(Interruptions)* Cameras should be installed outside these cabins. For

the safety of women, just as there is a GRP system in Rajasthan, the Railway Protection Force should undertake fresh recruitment so that adequate personnel are deployed. Railway security should be strengthened to the maximum extent so that public confidence in the Railways increases. ... *(Interruptions)* On both sides of railway lines in crowded areas, boundary walls should be constructed to prevent accidents and encroachment. The work on the Dedicated Freight Corridor should be expedited so that passenger trains can operate on time. An advanced railway coach factory should be established in Rajasthan. ... *(Interruptions)*

Madam, just one minute. As you are seated there, I request you to kindly also pay a little attention to us. ... *(Interruptions)* An advanced railway coach factory should be established in Rajasthan. The new railway lines announced for Rajasthan in the previous Budget, such as the Jaisalmer-Kandla railway project, should be commenced. More ROBs should be constructed in place of RUBs, because when RUBs are built, they get completely flooded during the rainy season.

The water does not drain out, and it takes as long as six months. Either pumps should be installed or some alternative drainage arrangement should be made, so that people do not face

inconvenience. Madam, I also have a few demands relating specifically to Rajasthan and my parliamentary constituency. The Merta-Pushkar-Nagaur railway line project, which falls within my constituency, should be given concrete shape by taking expeditious steps. Efforts in this regard are already underway. Earlier, under the North Western Railway Zone, approval should be accorded for a new railway line from Pipar in Jodhpur district via Bhopalgarh and Sankhwas to Mundwa, for which the survey has already been completed. This will provide direct connectivity from Jodhpur to Bikaner-Nagaur and will benefit the people of Jodhpur and Nagaur parliamentary constituencies, including in terms of water availability and overall development.

Madam, Rajasthan is still considerably behind in terms of railway services. Therefore, I would like to demand that new train services be introduced from Bikaner via Nagaur towards Pune and also towards southern India, including Madras, where a large number of migrants from Rajasthan reside. These people enhance the prestige of Rajasthan across the country and contribute significantly to the national economy, thereby strengthening the economic system. New trains should be operated towards southern India, particularly Madras and Hyderabad. Further, weekly trains

such as 22475/76, 16587/88, 12495/96, 12789/90 and 17037/38, which pass through Nagaur, should have their frequency increased, or alternatively, the Hon. Minister for Railways may consider making them regular services, which would greatly benefit the public.

The railway stations at Nagaur, as well as Mundwa, Gotan and Merta Road stations in Nagaur district, should be modernised.

Strict control should be exercised at railway stations to prevent overcharging beyond fixed prices for food items and other goods, and stringent action should be taken against the sale of substandard food items. This will help prevent incidents of food adulteration and poisoning, which frequently occur at railway stations.

In the Nagaur parliamentary constituency, a new railway line from Didwana to Kuchaman should be announced. Jaitaran should be connected by a railway line. A regular train service from Bikaner via Nagaur to the national capital Delhi should be introduced, and a new Intercity train should be started between Bikaner and Jodhpur.

The Rajasthan Sampark Kranti Express Train Nos. 12463/64 and 22464/65 should be made regular, so that the people of Bikaner and Nagaur may have daily connectivity with the national capital.

Madam, all vacant posts in the Railway Protection Force should also be filled. I would like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister for Railways and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways for the fact that from the North-East to Jammu and Kashmir, where earlier there were only discussions and no execution, concrete work has now been carried out. I would also like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister for this, as on this occasion work has been undertaken in every corner of the country with a spirit of nationalism. The Bharatiya Janata Party and its NDA allies have gone to the people with this very resolve. Just as the wheel of development has moved forward in other sectors, the wheel of railway development has also moved forward in the same manner.

SHRI ARJUN SINGH (BARRACKPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on an important subject such as the Railway Budget. First of all, I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister, under whose guidance this Budget, in the interest of the 125 crore people of the country, has been presented for the first time in the world's largest democratic temple by a woman. On this occasion, a Sanskrit verse comes to my mind: *Janani Janmabhumishcha Swargadapi Gariyasi*, which means that the mother and the motherland are greater even than heaven. Its implication is that today, when the responsibility of nurturing this motherland has been entrusted to a mother, it is clear that every citizen of this country will grow and flourish under the care and nurturing of Hon. Nirmala Ji. Just as a child grows from infancy to old age under the care of a mother, in the same manner, during her earlier tenure, by ensuring the security of the nation, Pakistan was compelled to face severe consequences. Likewise, today, by assuming responsibility for safeguarding the nation's wealth, she has conveyed that every section of the country will be cared for in the same manner as a mother looks after her child.

I bow to the Hon. Prime Minister. I bow to the Hon. Amit Shah Ji, under whose guidance this Budget has been presented keeping in

mind the interests of the poor, farmers, small and medium traders and all sections of the people of the country.

Madam, in the Demands for Grants for the Railways for the financial year 2019-20, a budgetary allocation of Rs. 65,837 crore has been made. The most significant aspect of this is that, for the period between 2018 and 2030, an investment requirement of Rs. 50 lakh crore has been envisaged. To meet this requirement, a proposal has been made to utilise Public Private Partnership (PPP) for rapid development and for passenger and freight transport services, so that connectivity may be enhanced. Shri Goyal Ji has also laid strong emphasis on the need for modernisation of stations and for the creation of passenger amenities such as toilets, waiting rooms and improved station facilities.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I would like to inform the people of the country, along with all my colleagues present here, about the public-oriented improvements that have taken place in the Railways over the last five years. The Railways is the oldest source of revenue in the country and has historically been subjected to misuse. If I were to begin detailing all the projects undertaken under the guidance of the Hon. Prime Minister for improving the Railways, it

would take an entire week. Therefore, I will briefly place before you some of the important improvements that have been carried out.

Capital expenditure during the period 2009-14 stood at Rs. 2.3 lakh crore, whereas during 2014-18 it increased to Rs. 5.29 lakh crore, reflecting a growth of 130 per cent. There was a growth of 25 per cent in the laying of broad gauge lines. Track renewal witnessed an increase of 51 per cent. The average pace of commissioning projects relating to new lines, doubling, and third and fourth lines rose by 59 per cent. In electrification, during the period 2009-14, the average achievement was 608 route kilometres per year, whereas during 2014-18 it increased to 2,103 route kilometres per year, registering a growth of 246 per cent. In the construction of Foot Over Bridges, which are treated as safety-related works, the number increased from 23 during 2009-14 to 74 during 2014-18, reflecting a growth of about 222 per cent. Road Over Bridges, Under Bridges and subways were constructed at the fastest pace ever, with a growth of 194 per cent. Freight loading reached an all-time high. During 2009-14, freight loading stood at 1,052 million tonnes, while during 2014-18 it increased to 1,162 million tonnes, registering a growth of 10.50 per cent. In the matter of station beautification, the figure was nil during 2009-14, whereas during 2014-18, 60 stations were

beautified. Complete installation of LED lighting at railway stations stood at zero during 2009-14, while during 2014-18 it reached 100 per cent. The highest-ever electrification in a single year was achieved, with a growth of 85 per cent. Over the last four years, the maximum number of unmanned level crossings were eliminated, showing a growth of about 18 per cent. On the lines of Public Private Partnership, the first phase of the Western and Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridors, covering 2,822 kilometres, will be completed in the year 2019-20. Due to the Dedicated Freight Corridors, thousands of youth will get employment. Upgradation of passenger coaches is underway, and during this year, the process of manufacturing 5,000 coaches, including Mail and Passenger trains, has already commenced. Over the last four years, services of a total of 407 new trains have been introduced. During the last four years, to meet festive rush, 1.37 lakh additional train services were operated for the convenience of passengers.

Recruitment of railway safety personnel has crossed nearly one lakh. The National Railway Safety Fund… ... *(Interruptions)* Madam, there are many such matters. Numerous developmental works have been undertaken over these five years. There was a time during the UPA Government when Mamata Banerjee was the

Minister for Railways. After assuming office, several projects were announced by her in West Bengal, but till date, nothing has materialised on the ground. Projects such as the Singur railway factory, Siliguri railway factory, Purulia Railway University, laying of a new railway line at Nandigram, laying of a new railway line at Firozganj, construction of a Metro rail line from Kavi Subhash to the Airport, construction of a new Metro rail line from Joka to BBD Bagh, the Dankuni loco parts factory, the Haldia EMU project costing more than Rs. 200 crore, none of these works have commenced so far. Projects such as the Arambagh line and the Barrackpore Metro Railway were also announced. Numerous such projects were announced, budgetary provisions were made, and foundation stones were laid. However, these announcements were made solely for political and personal gains, and no substantive work was carried out on these projects at the ground level. Even her successor, Dinesh Trivedi, stated in this very House that the Railways had gone into the ICU. I am not saying this. Shri Dinesh Trivedi himself said that the Railways had gone into the ICU.

Hon. Chairperson, Madam, I would like to submit that at Kanchrapara, despite Cabinet approval in the year 2010, even the foundation stone for the railway factory has not been laid. There

have been allegations of irregularities amounting to more than Rs. 30 crore in earth-filling works. I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways that an inquiry into this matter may also be conducted. Arrangements should be made on vacant railway land under the PPP model. Local strongmen are encroaching upon ponds and land. If warehouses are constructed under the PPP model, it will generate employment for a large number of people.

Madam, please give me just one second. Naihati station, which falls in our area, should be renamed after Rishi Bankim Chandra, who composed *Vande Mataram*. Shyamnagar station, where Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was imprisoned for one day, should be renamed after him. Kanchrapara railway station, where Mahatma Gandhi held a meeting, should be renamed as Gandhi Dham. Palta railway station should be renamed after Bhagwan Harichand and Guru Chand of the Matua community.

Madam, once again, I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and I support the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR (KANNIYAKUMARI): Respected Madam, I represent Kanniyakumari. Millions of people are visiting Kanniyakumari but in Nagercoil and Kanniyakumari railway stations, basic amenities are not there. Even toilets are not there. People are visiting Kanniyakumari from all over India but there are no toilets at railway stations. There are no street lights. In such a situation, how can people visit Kanniyakumari and see that beautiful place?

My brothers and sisters are working in railways. Nearly 13 lakh people are working in the railways. But they are living in fear due to foreign investment and privatisation of railway routes. Out of 13 lakh people, every tenth family is depending upon the employees working in the railways. People are living in fear on whether the Government intends to privatise the railways. The hon. Railway Minister may please clarify this point. Our hon. Prime Minister should give an assurance to those 13 lakh people, who are our brothers and sisters, that the Government will not privatise railways without consultation and that they will safeguard the interests of those 13 lakh people. This is more important in India as there are no job opportunities nowadays. Families are living in fear and feeling

insecure about their survival. So, the Government should give an assurance in this regard to our people.

People visit Kanniyakumari from all over the world. Even the railway stations do not have any infrastructure. Basic amenities are not there. In this condition, we want to develop tourism in India. It may be that all the 543 MPs would like to visit Kanniyakumari and enjoy its beauty but infrastructure is not there. How can they come there? They may come there, enjoy the sun rise and leave. But if we want to develop tourism there, we should make them stay there for four to five days. Only then the Government will earn revenue through tourism sector.

We need more trains for Kanniyakumari. Train No. 22657/58 TBM-NCJ SF Express runs weekly thrice. People are facing a lot of difficulties to travel on weekends, Fridays and Saturdays from Chennai to Southern districts like Madurai, Tirunelveli, Nagercoil due to the unavailability of 2265/58 TBM-NCJ SF Express. Kanniyakumari Express and Ananthapuri Express always run with full capacity and it is not easy to get the tickets during the entire year. So, I would request the hon. Minister to consider this weekend additional service with five days per week as previously proposed.

In addition, I would also request you to operate a single trip from Nagercoil to Velankanni - to worship Velankanni Matha - using the incoming rake from Chennai on Friday to serve our long pending demand. There should be a change in the terminal to Egmore for Train No. 22657. It is in Tambaram which is far away from the town.

We also need separate coaches for women so that women can safely reach their destination. Keeping the safety of women in view, the Government must give separate coaches for women.

It is safe for women, their family members and also for the entire people. Kanyakumari should be created as a new railway division. Late night train should run from Chennai-Egmore via Nagercoil to Trivandrum. Basic amenities should be provided. Level crossing at 15-B in Vilavancode via Marthandam Railway Overbridge is required. We also want you to speed up the doubling of railway track between Madurai to Kanyakumari and from Tuticorin to Kanyakumari. The Madurai Sampark Kranti Express may be extended up to Nagercoil and Tejas Express train may be extended up to Nagercoil. Unreserved women coaches, as I told, must be provided in all the trains. The world’s largest form of mass religious tourism takes place in India at Kanyakumari, which attracts

over 100 million pilgrims every year. It is most important to connect all religious places through railways.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Okay, please conclude now.

SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR: Madam, please give me one minute.

The increase in frequency of trains from Mumbai-Nagercoil, Kanyakumari-Tirunelveli and Thoothukudi should be done.…*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member - Shrimati Anupriya Patel.

... (Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI H. VASANTHAKUMAR: Madam, please give me one minute.…*(Interruptions)* The frequency of train from Mumbai-Nagercoil should be increased to seven days and also the frequency of trains running from Nagercoil to Velankanni, Nagercoil to Thiruchendur, Nagercoil to Puducherry and Puducherry to Chennai should also be increased.…*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

***SHRIMATI RAMA DEVI (SHEOHAR):** Indian Railways is the world's third largest railway network. Under its vast network of 63 thousand kilometres, 22 thousand trains are operated, carrying 15 lakh passengers every day from one place to another. This requires the efficient upkeep of various systems such as railway tracks, bridges, signalling and telecommunications. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the Union Government has substantially increased investment in the Railways so that, while maintaining the existing facilities, the growing requirements can also be met. Over the past five years, the allocation for the Railways has been enhanced to Rs. 5.30 lakh crore. It is owing to the commitment of the Modi Government that whereas during the period 2009-14, new railway lines were laid at an average rate of 4.1 kilometres per day, during the period 2014-18 railway lines have been constructed at an average daily rate of 6.53 kilometres.

I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the pending railway projects and submit that 34 new railway line projects in Bihar have been pending for several years. These include the Sitamarhi via Sheohar to Bapudham Motihari railway line

* Speech was laid on the Table.

project falling within my constituency. On the one hand is Sitamarhi, the birthplace of Mata Janaki, and on the other is Motihari, the karmabhoomi of Bapu, whose 150th birth anniversary the country is going to commemorate. It is unfortunate that the 77 kilometre railway line connecting these two historic stations via Sheohar has not yet been constructed, particularly when Sheohar district remains untouched by a railway line and Sitamarhi district is Naxal affected. It had become extremely necessary for Indian Railways to enhance its capacity and, for this purpose, the Railways have initiated two Dedicated Freight Corridor projects, which are progressing at a rapid pace. Once these projects become operational, the Railways will earn substantial profits in the freight transportation sector. The work of electrification of 33,658 km of railway lines at a cost of Rs. 29,486 crore is presently in progress, which includes the Narkatiaganj-Sitamarhi railway section passing through my parliamentary constituency. For this, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Railways.

The 200 per cent increase made by the Government in the Budget for passenger amenities in the Railways sector is welcome. I urge the Hon. Minister of Railways to ensure that passenger amenities such as waiting halls, toilets, drinking water facilities, foot

overbridges and ramps for station access are developed at Gurhanwa, Kundwa Chainpur, Dhang, Riga, Ghorasahan and Bairgania railway stations situated on the Narkatiaganj-Sitamarhi railway section falling within my parliamentary constituency. At Ghorasahan Adarsh Railway Station, the eastern level crossing No. 12 C, which is located in the main market area, should, in public interest, be provided with either an overbridge or an underpass. I have raised this demand earlier as well. In view of the number of passengers, the number of coaches in the daily passenger trains should be increased. Further, stoppage of the Sagauli-Patliputra Intercity trains (75215/75216) should be ensured at Riga and Dhang stations. Riga Railway Station is an industrial area where a sugar mill is also located. On the widespread demand of the people, stoppage of express trains at Riga station should be ensured.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member - Shrimati Anupriya Patel.

SHRIMATI ANUPRIYA PATEL (MIRZAPUR): Hon. Chairperson Madam, thank you. Under this discussion on the Demands for Grants for Railways, 2019-20, I would like to raise some important railway-related demands concerning my parliamentary constituency, Mirzapur. My parliamentary constituency, Mirzapur district, is one of the most backward districts of Uttar Pradesh and is situated between two highly developed districts. On one side is Varanasi, which is the parliamentary constituency of our Hon. Prime Minister, and on the other side is Prayagraj (Allahabad). Being located between these two developed districts, Mirzapur has always suffered neglect. However, from the perspective of the Railways, there are immense possibilities for development there.

First of all, I would like to place before you a very serious grievance of the people of my parliamentary constituency. The Hon. Minister is present here and I would like to draw his attention to this issue. I come from Uttar Pradesh. The residents of Mirzapur district do not have the facility of even a single train to travel to Lucknow, the capital of Uttar Pradesh. I have made several efforts in this regard earlier as well. Today, I have this opportunity and you are also present. I am demanding that a train be provided to connect the

people of Mirzapur with Lucknow, the State capital. If we are not connected with our capital, the development of our district is adversely affected.

I would also like to mention another railway line, which the people of Mirzapur have been demanding for several years. This line from Robertsganj to Madhupur via Ahraura has been sanctioned and extends up to Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Junction, which was earlier known as Mughalsarai Station. The construction of this railway line will connect Maa Bhandari Devi Dham, Maa Vindhyachal Dham and Maa Maihar Devi Dham. These are religious places where lakhs of devotees visit throughout the year.

I would like to inform the Hon. Minister that in the year 2017-18, an amount of Rs. 1,260 crore was also sanctioned for the construction of this railway line, but it is unfortunate that the construction work of this railway line has not commenced so far. I would like to urge that the construction work of this railway line be started immediately. There is another railway line which is extremely important, running from Mirzapur to Rewa in Madhya Pradesh via Lalganj. The boundaries of our district and Rewa touch each other, meaning thereby that Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh are connected. I would like to make a request to you for this railway

line as well, as there is an urgent need for its laying. Earlier, the survey work for this line had been sanctioned and the survey has already been completed. The people of the district are now awaiting approval for its construction.

I request you to accord approval for its construction at the earliest.

There are two major railway stations in my district, namely Mirzapur and Vindhyachal. Mirzapur is a very important district from the tourism and religious point of view. On the one hand, there is the historic Chunar Fort as a cultural heritage site, and on the other, there is the Dham of Maa Vindhyavasini Devi. The entire district abounds in hills and waterfalls. People from all corners of the country visit this beautiful district. Therefore, I would like to urge that Mirzapur and Vindhyachal railway stations be developed as model stations.

Over the past five years, several passenger amenities have been developed at Mirzapur and Vindhyachal railway stations. However, much more still needs to be done. There is a need to develop them as model stations. There are many smaller stations in my parliamentary constituency, including Chunar, Gaipura, Jigna, Ahraura Road and Lusa. These stations also suffer from a complete lack of passenger

amenities. At some places, even proper platforms have not been developed. I would urge that development works at these stations also be undertaken.

I would also like to mention that an Industrial Corridor is being developed from Amritsar to Kolkata via Delhi. Passing through twenty cities, it is set to become a major axis of development in States such as Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Bihar, Jharkhand and West Bengal. Eight districts of Uttar Pradesh have been included in this Industrial Corridor. Even the districts of Allahabad, now Prayagraj, and Varanasi, located on either side of Mirzapur, have been included among these eight districts and are being benefited by this Industrial Corridor. However, once again, Mirzapur has been neglected.

I would urge the Hon. Minister that Mirzapur is an industry-less district. All the traditional industries that once existed there have been destroyed. There are no means of employment available. Therefore, I request that Mirzapur also be included in this Industrial Corridor, on the lines of Allahabad and Varanasi.

Finally, while placing a demand for only three trains, I conclude my remarks. There is no stoppage of any Rajdhani train in our district. Even on the previous occasion, I had requested the Hon.

Minister for a stoppage of the Rajdhani train. Once again, I request that the Patna-New Delhi Rajdhani Express be provided with a stoppage at Mirzapur. Along with this, stoppages of the Guwahati-New Delhi North East Express and the Howrah-New Delhi Poorva Express may also be provided for Mirzapur district. With these words, I conclude my submission.

[English]

[*]**SHRI ABU TAHER KHAN (MURSHIDABAD):** I would like to put forth the following demands which should be taken care of:

(i) From Sealdah to Lalgola distance is 250 km (approx.) and takes 5 hours to reach. There is no toilet facility in Sealdah-Lalgola local train service. This is a long pending demand for toilet facility and it should be taken care of.

(ii) Nasipur Rail bridge which falls under Murshidabad District has already been constructed more than 10 years ago but it is unfortunate to say that it has not started functioning yet. Your immediate intervention is required to make it functional.

(iii) To take initiative for construction of a new railway line from Krishnanagar to Baharampur via Karimpur.

(iv) Murshidabad is known as a historical place and my earnest request is to take appropriate action for making Murshidabad railway station as a modern station with all available facilities.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE (BARAMATI): Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. There are just a few questions. I will not repeat any point which was taken up earlier.

19.43 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

SHRIMATI SUPRIYA SADANAND SULE: I would like to actually thank the Railway Ministry and especially all the DRMs, the GMs and the Chairman of Railway Board, who have been exceptionally helpful whenever we have reached out to them. A lot of new Members have spoken today. So, I just like to make one intervention to all my fellow Members. Several of our senior Members, all of us who have been re-elected for the second or third term, every quarter, we take a review of all our works which are done in the Railway with the help of DRMs and GMs. So, I take this opportunity and I would request the hon. Minister if he could kindly send a circular to all our new colleagues, because a lot of questions which came across here today are related to what our DRMs and GMs are very helpful at local level. We actually sometimes do not even need to come up to the Ministry. They are so helpful there. So, I would like to start by thanking the Railway Ministry, which is one

of the finest Ministries. It does not matter whether you are sitting on that side or this side. This is one Ministry, which is exceptionally helpful to most of us. So, I would like to start with gratitude.

We are today discussing the Demands for Grants. Now, there is a whole idea of making the General Budget and merging the Railway Budget. After all, it is the spendings and the earnings. I want to know by merging both these Budgets, what is the increase that you have got or what is the benefit of merging this. Some one year, you have done 2 per cent, 5 per cent, 10 per cent. So, what was the logic? If there was a logic, is it really implemented, because in the budgetary allocations over the last 4-5 years that you have been in power, I do not see any drastic improvement or I do not see drastic change in great improvement of infrastructure of pending projects like most of my earlier colleagues have spoken about. Could you clarify to us what exactly is the plan and what the roadmap would be?

I have three-four pointed questions. One is about the rate of return. What exactly is the rate of return of 2018-19? What is the basis on which they calculated it? They may kindly explain to the House what it is. What we understand from this Budget is that freight is in profit. But even today, I think, on passenger side, there

still seem to be a challenge. So, how are they going to balance this Budget if they are taking from one side and giving it to the other side? This morning, we were talking about privatisation of 'Air India'. There was a huge uproar in the House. So, there is always some miscommunication if something comes up.

This Government has talked about Rs. 50 lakh crore. Please correct the number, if I am wrong. The budgetary provisions required to improve the railways, is Rs. 50 lakh crore. The Budget allocation is Rs. 1,00,060 crore. So, this will take 30 years to do it. At one level, they are saying that they are going to bring the bullet train. On one side, they say that they are increasing infrastructure. Then, they are talking about SPV matters. They have also talked about PPP model. So, people like me get very confused. I remember, when Suresh Prabhuji was the Minister of Railways, he had committed to the nation that they were not going to privatise Railways, which hon. Piyush Goyalji has also said. But I want a reassurance on it.

Then, there is a PPP model. What is this PPP model? It is a Public-Private Partnership. So, there is a word of 'private' in it. Then, there is a SPV model with the States, which they have done. But it has also failed. No State, unfortunately or fortunately, has

been able to complete their project because of issues like land acquisition. For example, the bullet train. The bullet train was something we were all very excited about. *[Translation]* We had felt that by sitting in Mumbai, we would be able to reach Gujarat within one and a half to two hours. We had welcomed the bullet train. It was stated that the bullet train would become operational by 2020-22. Now, the Hon. Minister is saying that there is a delay in the bullet train project. In Maharashtra, the Shiv Sena is part of the Government and it has also opposed land acquisition. It should not happen that, like 'good days', the bullet train also does not materialise, there is no allocation and the PPP model also does not take shape. Just as there is a fear regarding Air India that it may be sold, it should not happen that, due to miscommunication, the Railways is also sold. The SPV model is involved, but there is a difference between the statement of the Ministry of Finance and that of the Ministry of Railways. This creates some difficulty in understanding the matter clearly. *[English]* We are not Accountants. The hon. Railway Minister knows this better since he is a Chartered Accountant. So, if he could clarify that there will be no privatisation at any cost, it would be appreciated. But at the same time, what is

this PPP model and SPV model, which seem to have failed in several States? This is what the essence of the House is.

Sir, one very big problem is of land. Today, there is a lot of land. I would like to bring it to the notice of the House that in my own Constituency, a lot of poor people for decades have been staying on railway lines. This Government has committed to give free houses for poor people. Is there some project whereby we can bring some land for these people? *[Translation]* Poor people have been living there for the past fifty years. Sometimes they are told that bulldozers will be used within six months or two years. When we raise this issue, the Ministry of Railways also explains the matter properly. They are poor people. Today or tomorrow, land will be required, and this situation has been continuing in the same manner for the last fifty years. I would like to ask whether there can be a single policy under which a small portion of land is earmarked for providing houses to the poor, keeping in view the target for 2020-22. In my constituency also, many people are poor. It would be very appropriate if they are provided with houses and are not served notices, but are instead given proper rehabilitation. *[English]* So, what is the plan of this optimal land that this Government is doing?

Second thing is about the advertising revenue. *[Translation]* There was a report of a PSU regarding advertising and what should be done in this regard. *[English]* Are they going to increase it? How are they going to balance this whole thing? *[Translation]* I am aware of the last point. Whether it is the safety of women or the safety of trains, *[English]* it should be for every passenger. Why should we only talk about security of women? It is security of every passenger. It is something basic. *[Translation]* For the past five years, I have observed that whenever the issue of safety is discussed, one hundred per cent utilisation of the budget does not take place. Many a time, Rs. 5,000 crore is allocated, but only Rs. 3,000 crore, Rs. 4,000 crore or Rs. 4,500 crore is utilised. Why, then, is safety not being treated as a priority? There are many questions from my constituency, but time is limited. *[English]* So, I would put them ahead with the Ministry of Railways. I thank the officials of the Ministry of Railways. They do exceptionally good work. They are very helpful.

Sir, even though we are sitting on this side, your support for all our constituencies, is admirable. *[Translation]* Today, you have encouraged many new people. I met a young man outside who was watching the proceedings from the Gallery. He asked that since everyone was speaking about RUBs and ROBs, whether these would

also be sanctioned for the constituency. *[English]* I hope that all the speeches are welcome. It should just not be in thin air. I hope that the Ministry of Railways convert all our dreams and aspirations into a reality to make life more comfortable for the common man, who genuinely uses the railway.

With these words, I conclude. Thank you, Sir

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I would like to urge you that several Hon. Members have already spoken on the Railway Budget and have left. I am observing everything here. Discussion on four more Demands is yet to take place. Only those Hon. Members who remain present in the House will be given an opportunity.

Hon. Member, Shrimati Mala Rajya Laxmi Shah. Perhaps she is speaking for the first time in this Session of the House?

SHRIMATI MALA RAJYALAKSHMI SHAH (TEHRI GARHWAL): Yes, Sir.

Sir, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I stand in support of the Demands for Grants for the Railways. I congratulate the Government on the Budget. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the Government has done commendable work in the Railways sector. Many new trains have been introduced. Bullet trains, Vande Bharat and Tejas services have been planned, and Vande Bharat trains have already become operational. Railway factories have been established in our country where railway coaches are being manufactured. I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister that attention should also be paid to senior citizens and to those who face difficulty while boarding and alighting from trains. There should be appropriate steps or arrangements in trains across the

country so that such passengers can board and alight with ease. Uttarakhand has received special attention from our Hon. Prime Minister. I would also like to thank him for initiating the Char Dham Railway project. This was started by our former Minister of Railways, Shri Suresh Prabhu, and the work has now commenced. I would like to make a few requests to the Hon. Minister concerning my parliamentary constituency, Tehri Garhwal, which is also a major tourism hub. If a toy train could be introduced from Dehradun to Mussoorie, it would be extremely beneficial. The tourism route experiences such heavy traffic that people are often forced to wait for hours. A toy train, as exists in places like Darjeeling, Himachal and other regions, between Dehradun and Mussoorie would be highly welcome in Uttarakhand. I would also like to submit to the Hon. Minister that the travel time of trains running from Delhi to Dehradun is quite long. If trains are routed to Dehradun via Bihari Garh and Chhutmalpur, the distance would be reduced by approximately 80 to 90 kilometres. This would result in a saving of nearly two hours and would also provide greater convenience to passengers.

I had proposed this earlier as well and had conveyed it to Shri Suresh Prabhu. I would also like to thank the former Minister of Railways, Shri Suresh Prabhu, who had initiated the Char Dham Railway project. I would like to place a small request that arrangements similar to those available in buses be provided in railway coaches for senior citizens and for those who have difficulty with their legs, so that boarding and alighting becomes easier for them.

I have full confidence that you will extend your cooperation in this regard and ensure that this work is completed. I would like to thank our Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman. I would also like to thank Shri Piyush Goyal and Shri Suresh Prabhu as well. Thank you.

... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Member Shri Thol Thirumavalavan, please wait for a while. I will give you an opportunity again in five or ten minutes.

[English]

***SHRI KHALILUR RAHAMAN (JANGIPUR):** I would like to request the Government to kindly consider the following proposals:

(i) To take action for construction of railway underpass at Dhulian Pakur Road under Samsherganj Block for the greater interest of the patient, aged person and children.

(ii) To increase coach in Intercity Express running between Malda Town to Howrah via Katowa Junction which will help local people a lot.

(iii) Modernisation of Jangipur Road Station.

(iv) To provide security facility in all the trains specially at night times to stop illegal activities.

* Speech was laid on the Table.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR (ARAMBAG): Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you. Please allow me to speak properly for just five minutes and kindly do not ring the bell before that.

HON. SPEAKER: I never ring the bell for you.

SHRIMATI APARUPA PODDAR: Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak here. *[English]* I thank the Leader of my Party who has given me an opportunity to speak in this august House. Indian Railways play a significant role in development and growth of industry. In Indian Railways, we have faced many problems about which I would like to speak here.

The frequency of train accidents is increasing very fast. This has raised serious doubts in public mind about safety in railways. The reason for increasing number of railway accidents is this. There are overaged tracks, wagons, coaches, and an overaged signalling system. The Khanna Railway Safety Review Committee reports that nearly 32 per cent of the total railway track in India is overaged and is due for replacement. The Khanna Committee has further reported that 76 per cent of the railway accidents are due to derailments, seven per cent due to collisions, and 16 per cent take place at level

crossings. Many social commitments are also there in the Railways which are to be noticed in this august House.

[Translation]

Hon. Speaker, Sir, all superfast trains originating from West Bengal, whether from Howrah or Sealdah, reach Delhi via Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Even thirty years ago, these superfast trains used to have one general coach for women at the front and one at the rear. The manner in which people travel such long distances in these trains is extremely distressing. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of both the Hon. Minister of Railways and the Hon. Minister of State present here to the fact that passengers are compelled to travel long distances in conditions worse than those faced by animals. When this Government has come to power with the mandate of 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas', I would like to ask whether, with this mandate, the Government would be willing to make a basic arrangement, even at a cost of twenty rupees per mile, for these ordinary passengers. I would urge the Hon. Minister to take note of this matter.

[English]

There are many other problems like lack of passenger facilities including cleanliness at the railway stations, lack of security

arrangement in all the railway stations and late running of trains. The food served by IRCTC is the main problem which common people are facing. The quality is also very low.

[English]

There are many problems in West Bengal regarding the Metro Rail which is maintained by the Railways. So, new coaches need to be added up and basic amenities for the common passengers need to be included. *[Translation]* Hon. Speaker, Sir, unemployment is presently the biggest issue in India, and I am sure you will also acknowledge this fact.

20.00 hrs

[English]

At present, there are 16,464 loco pilot posts which are vacant. in the safety category, there are 1,22,736 vacancies. the railways are functioning with the 16 per cent vacant posts. so, kindly take a serious note of it. *[Translation]* This is also a matter of very serious concern. Both the Hon. Ministers are present here. I am aware that I had once requested Shri Piyush Goyal to pay attention to Bolorani Railway Station in my constituency. In 2018, he had conveyed this matter to the Ministry of Railways, but even after that, the work has

not been carried out. Another major problem is that there are 7,000 vacant posts in the Railway Protection Force. Attention should also be paid to this issue. ... *(Interruptions)* I will take just two more minutes. In my parliamentary constituency of Arambagh in West Bengal, the present Chief Minister, when she was the Minister of Railways, had taken the Railways to the common people there. Some of the newly elected Members from Bengal have earlier given incorrect information in this House by stating that railway services had not yet reached Arambagh. I would like to inform them that not only has the railway reached Arambagh, it has gone up to Goghat. We would invite them to visit Goghat and proceed further to Kamarpukur, the birthplace of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, and see for themselves the extent of development that has taken place there. I would also like to urge that Tarakeswar and Kamarkundu railway stations be developed as modern railway stations. *[English]* Please allocate funds for the halt at Bolondi station. There is a need for construction of new railway line between Arambag-Baichandi in Burdwan which is already a sanctioned project.

I want that speedy work has to be done in Tarakeshwar - Bishnupur project. There is a need to have a halt in Purshua station. *[Translation]* People who approach us from BPL families are not

being provided with Izzat Monthly Passes. I would like to once again urge the new Government to restore the Izzat Monthly Pass for them and thereby restore their dignity. *[English]* There is a need to construct railway line from Bargechia to Chapadanga which is a long pending demand. There is a holy place namely Tarakeshwar. There is a need to construct a level crossing or underpass at Chandanpur Railway station in my Constituency. There is a need for extra coaches for all incoming and outgoing trains in West Bengal. For Joka and BBD Bag metro rail project, fund has not been allocated. I want to know from the Hon. Minister as to why this kind of discrimination has been done.

There is a need to have a special recruitment drive for filling up of the vacancies for SCs, STs and OBCs. I urge the Minister to act proactively and take all possible measures to ensure that financial and fiscal targets are achieved.

With these words, I conclude my speech.

[Translation]

***SHRIMATI ANNPURNA DEVI (KODARMA):** I would like to express my views on the Demands for Grants for the Railways. In the General Budget for the year 2019-20, due attention has been paid to the creation of railway infrastructure and related works. In the General Budget, an allocation of Rs. 65,837 crore has been made for the Railways, which will prove helpful for the development of the Railways. Continuous development of the Railways is being undertaken across the country and efforts are being made to connect even the remotest corners with the railway network. With the increased accessibility of the Railways for the common people, it has become extremely convenient. In my parliamentary constituency of Kodarma in Jharkhand, trains belonging to two railway zones are operated. There are several places where roads cross the railway lines and, at such locations, the construction of Road Over Bridges (ROBs) is essential. The construction of an ROB at Hazaribagh Road Gate No. 20B/3J at Sariya under the East Central Railway is extremely necessary. There is also a requirement for the construction of an ROB at Pachrukhi, before Rajdhanwar Railway Station, and there has been a persistent demand for the construction of an ROB at

* Speech was laid on the Table.

Chichaki Gate No. 18. I had personally raised the demand for the construction of ROBs at all these locations by meeting the Hon. Minister of Railways. I hope that the Hon. Minister of Railways will take steps to fulfil these demands.

At several places, particularly at Kodarma Station, there has been a long-pending demand for the stoppage of the Rajdhani Express. Daily stoppage of the Rajdhani Express at this station should be ensured. Further, I request that stoppages of the Sealdah Rajdhani Express Nos. 12313/12322 be provided, and that stoppages of Train Nos. 12351/12352 at Sharmatand Station and Train Nos. 12801/12802 at Parsabad Station be ensured.

There are several rural areas which do not have direct connectivity to railway stations. People have to walk several kilometres to board passenger trains. At such places, there is a need for the construction of railway halts. On the Kodarma-Giridih railway section, halts should be constructed at Remba Sijua and in the areas around Jharkhand Dham to provide rail facilities to the people. On the Kodarma-Mahesh Munda railway line, there are several locations where the construction of railway halts is necessary. A Railway Under Bridge (RUB) should also be constructed at Moriyama in Kodarma.

Kodarma Railway Station should be developed as a modern station and special attention should be paid to its beautification. There is also a need to conduct surveys for the construction of new railway lines in the State of Jharkhand. There are many places where passengers have to undertake rail journeys via extremely circuitous routes. In order to provide direct connectivity from all such places to the stations of major towns, new railway lines should be constructed. The Madhupur-Giridih-Kodarma railway line, which is presently only a single line, needs to be doubled.

Due to the existence of a single railway line, there are considerable difficulties in rail operations. In order to ensure the timely running of trains, I demand that approval be granted for the doubling of the Madhupur-Giridih- Kodarma railway section, which is in public interest.

The Railways receive approximately Rs. 25,000 crore in revenue annually from the State of Jharkhand. In view of this, the zonal office of the South Eastern Railway should be shifted from Kolkata and established at Ranchi.

With these words, I conclude my remarks while supporting the Demands for Grants for the Railways. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRIMATI LOCKET CHATTERJEE (HOOGHLY)**: I would like to express my views on demand for grants on Railways for 2019-20.

Railway is the backbone for social and economic life of the Indians.

In the diverse country like India railways have very crucial role in uniting our nation.

In budget 2019, a lot of provisions have been made for the development of railways.

For this I would like to thank Hon. Finance Minister.

Railways received a budgetary allocation of Rs. 65,837 crore and highest ever outlay for capital expenditure amounting to Rs. 1.60 lakh core in the Budget for the year 2019-20.

There is 200 per cent increase in funds for passenger amenities.

In the 2019-20 Budget, funds of Rs. 7,255 crore have been allocated for construction of new lines.

Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

Rs. 700 crore for doubling railways lines.

Rs. 6,114.82 crore for rolling stock and Rs. 1,750 crore for signaling and telecom.

The allocation for rail passenger comfort this fiscal has gone up to Rs. 3,422.57 crore from Rs. 1,657 crore in the Budget presented last year.

Finance Minister, while presenting the Budget, said the railway infrastructure would need an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crores between 2018 and 2030 and proposed that a pubic private partnership (PPP) be used to unleash faster development and delivery of passenger freight services for railway projects to boost connectivity.

Railways will be encouraged to invest in suburban railways through special purpose vehicles (SPVs) and enhance metro rail network through PPPs. The Budget estimates also allocated Rs. 267.64 crore for Nirbhaya Fund, including provision of Rs. 250 crore for Integrated Emergency Response Management System (IERM) (Video Surveillance System).

I am also very thankful to Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji who make many promises to strengthen the Indian Railways.

Works on all of these have already started and you can expect them to be completed by 2022.

The Government will complete conversion of all viable tracks to broad guage by 2022.

Government will ensure electricification of all the railway tracks by 2022. Government start developing smart railway stations across the country.

Wi-Fi facility to be made available at all Railway stations. The Indian Railways has already made Wi-Fi services available at many stations.

The Rail Wire Wi-Fi service has been rolled out at 831 railway stations, which is one of the world's largest public Wi-Fi networks.

Railway Minister Shri Piyush Goyal earlier said that the national transporter has plans to make free Wi-Fi available at 4,000 more railway stations across the country.

The national transporter will complete the freight corridor project by 2022.

The project will make the movement of goods much easier and cheaper.

The Vision of our Prime Minister to strengthen railways and efforts made by minister of railways will surely develop Indian railways at par with international standards.

KUMARI AGATHA K. SANGMA (TURA): Thank you Speaker Sir for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railway.

Sir, I understand that in India one of the main ways of connecting people is through the Railways and I would like to congratulate the Railway Department for doing such a wonderful job in ensuring the mobility of the people of our country.

Sir, in the whole process of development, there has been one thing that really disturbs me. Since 1987 to July, 2019, it has been reported that over 370 elephants have been killed in train accidents. Apparently, there are about 18 elephant corridors through which railway track passes and there are six new proposals in these elephant corridors. In some of the places, the proposals are going on. In some places, the work has already been started.

Sir, elephants are nomads. They cannot live in one area because they are very large animals. It is very important for them to have mobility and move from one ecosystem to another. If they stick to one ecosystem, they end up by over-consuming the resources of that ecosystem. Therefore, elephant corridors have been established. My request to the hon. Minister through you is that, first of all, these elephant corridors have to be protected and no new railway line

should be put up in areas wherever elephant corridors are there. In case, there are areas where elephant corridors exist and proposals have been made, I request the Government to ensure that under and overpass are constructed so that there is a safe passage for these animals.

Last year, there was a directive by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change asking that in all projects where there is linear infrastructure and wildlife habitats exist, there must be an inbuilt process of doing mitigations. One of the suggestions of the MoEF&CC was that these safe passages be made. So, I urge the hon. Minister, through you, Sir, to ensure that these safe passages be created and a budget allocation be made for these passages.

Secondly, Swachh Bharat Abhiyan is one of the most important and the flagship programmes of our Government under the leadership of our Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, and this programme has been extremely successful. Sir, 9.6 crore toilets have been built in this country since 2014 and 5.6 lakh villages have been declared open defecation free. But my concern is that most of the railway tracks are passing through the rural areas. There, they have trains where the toilets are still in a very sorry state because most of these trains have open sewage toilets and the sewage goes straight to

the tracks. I feel that all the progress that has been made under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan--all the reports say that the quality of water, the hygiene, the health of people, has drastically improved because of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan-- will be derailed if all these tracks that go through the rural areas have to bear the brunt of the very, very sorry state of toilets in our railway bogies. So, I request our hon. Minister, through you, that when we are talking about upgrading and modernising our railway stations and our railways in general, kindly consider improving the toilets and making sure that the disposal is not done on the railway tracks.

Thirdly, since it is a discussion on the Demands for Grants, my constituency also has a railway station. I request the hon. Minister to kindly consider upgrading the railway station in North Garo Hills which comes within my constituency.

My State of Meghalaya is also going to host the National Games in 2022, and the means of communication to my State is, thankfully to our hon. Prime Minister, through the UDAAN Scheme. Through this scheme, we are getting our new airport functional in this short span of time. We use the Guwahati airport and we use the Guwahati railway station. Since it is extremely a short time for the new tracks to be set in my State and it would not be possible in a

short span of two years, I request you to ensure that the facilities are provided in Guwahati airport, which will also be beneficial to my neighbouring friends. Also, upgrade the railway station in Guwahati and improve connectivity so that it becomes possible for us to host the National Games successfully in Meghalaya in 2022.

Thank you so much for giving me this opportunity. I congratulate the Minister for this wonderful Budget.

DR. THOL THIRUMAAVALAVAN (CHIDAMBARAM): Hon. Speaker, Sir, before I speak on the Demands for Grants, I would like to express my sincere thanks to your goodself for sending us the circular on Swachhta Abhiyan in English. Really, I got shocked in the early morning when I received the circulars only in Hindi. After our demand, you have directed your subordinates to issue the circulars in English also. Thank you very much for that.

I have a request. I am single Member of my Party. When I rise up to speak, I am always in tension because you are always giving me only two or three minutes' time. Really, I am very sorry for this. How can I express the demands of my constituency and my people within this short time? I need five minutes' time. Now, I will speak in Tamil.

*Hon. Speaker Sir, I thank you wholeheartedly for this opportunity. Indian Railways is the third largest employer of the world. I wish to bring to your notice some of the issues pertaining to Southern Railway. Apprenticeship Act says 80 percent of the job appointments as well Apprenticeship selection should from Tamil Nadu as in the case of Southern Railway or the States concerned in case of other Railways. During the last 14 years approximately

* English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Tamil.

15000 persons after being trained under Apprenticeship training programme are waiting for employment. Recently in Golden Rock Railway Workshop, an exam was conducted for selection of candidates for Apprenticeship training. As many as 1765 persons were selected to undergo that training. Out of which 1600 persons belonged to North Indian States. Only 165 persons thus selected were from Tamil Nadu. Why there is such a discrimination? Hon. Minister for Railways should look into this matter and order for an enquiry. In this connection the members of the Union concerned have filed a case in the Hon. High Court and the case is pending. They have demanded for a CBI enquiry into the irregularities. They have proved that there were irregularities and corrupt practices followed even in the examination conducted by RRB. I wish to bring to the notice of Hon. Speaker some information released in this regard. Justice Dhandapani has observed about the case that is pending in the Hon. High Court. I quote:

> “There is something serious in this. Such type of discrimination cannot be done against a particular State alone. If such things are done by authorities from Tamil Nadu, it would have been made a national issue. They would have been called anti-national.”

Justice Dhandapani observed. Why he is making such a statement. Justice Dhandapani after adjourning the hearing of the case has quoted the views mentioned in the case. Postal Recruitment Scam in which candidates from Punjab, Haryana and Maharashtra have scored higher marks in Tamil when compared to Tamil candidates. Hon. Speaker should understand how shocking it is to know that the candidates from other States who don't know Tamil have scored good marks in Tamil paper than the Tamil knowing candidates from Tamil Nadu. ...* Those who belong to Tamil Nadu are deprived of such employment opportunities. I wish to register in this august House that this is grave injustice. Hon. Minister of Railways should take note of this issue. Not only for Tamil Nadu, persons belonging to every State concerned should be given importance and priority in the employment opportunities available in that particular State. Such irregularities take place particularly in Group D posts like peon, trackman, gang man and sanitary workers, I want to share one recent news item with you. Recently in Chennai Railway station, a circular was issued stating that the Station Officials should converse with the Higher Officials only in Hindi. As per law, it has been made mandatory one that only the locals and the

* Expunged as ordered by the Chair

people knowing the local language should be appointed. Since persons from Other States who do not know the local or regional language or English are appointed in place of persons knowing the local language, accidents occur frequently Sir, I therefore request the Hon. Minister through you that as per the Apprenticeship Act, the locals concerned should be given priority and importance at the time of selection for Apprenticeship training as well as for job appointments. My Chidambaram constituency is a tourist centre. It is a place where the world famous Shiva temple is located. Tourists in large number visit this place very often. In my Chidambaram constituency, Rameswaram is also a famous pilgrim centre. Tirupati is another pilgrim centre. At present the train service between Rameswaram and Tirupati is operated thrice in a week. I request Hon. Railway Minister through you Speaker Sir, that this train service between Rameswaran and Tirupati should be operated on a daily basis. Thank you for this opportunity. Vanakkam*.

[Translation]

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, in her speech, words such as ‘North Indian’ and similar expressions have been used. I submit that the same may be expunged.

HON. SPEAKER: I will have it checked. The entire country is one.

[English]

***SHRIMATI PRATIMA MONDAL (JAYNAGAR):** Railways have played a significant role not only by providing a mode of transportation for the people of India but also promoted development and growth of industries. 16th April 1853 witnessed the first passenger train in our country, 166 years have passed by but the progress and development is not at all up to the desired level. Whereas countries like Japan that had introduction of railway systems after India have surpassed us long back. Our system is still plagued with innumerable problems.

The year 1925 marked the first railway budget and witnessed merger in 2016, today we stand in a position where just a small paragraph was dedicated to the sector which stands at 8th position in the world for providing employment. The system is incapable of functioning in extreme conditions, evident in the current situation of Mumbai which has become a yearly phenomenon. This recurrent problem did not attract the respected Finance Minister's attention, why?

Year after year of promises are not reflected on the ground. It is common to hear from our people that after all its Indian railway,

* Speech was laid on the Table.

how can it be punctual? It will obviously be delayed. Whereas in other countries a delay of mere 10 seconds is apologized upon.

Coming to cleanliness, everyone present here are well aware of the actual condition. The Government cannot claim falsely that each and every platform across the country is provided with safe drinking water. Neither are the trains as clean as they should be. Cleanliness standards set for railway employees to follow are very low. People should be more aware and responsible as well. Bio toilets installed in the trains do not function properly. Again this issue did not seem as important as to be addressed. Simple allocation of funds does not reflect efficiency of a budget and for that matter the government as well. Proper system to discharge functions is required.

The much talked about Vande Bharat express cannot be declared as successful. Very recently it has been found violative of certain specifications. Investigation is also on into allegations that one company was favored in making of Rs. 97 crore trains set. Nothing new in this thought, it is the most common trait of the government, promoting favoritism. It also reflected the efficiency of Make in India programme by a break down caused in the train just after a day of its launch. My question here is what are the steps that the

government intends to take in these matters? Because the actions speak that everything is running smoothly.

The list is endless; we cannot claim that Indian railway is the safest form of transport. The train travel became riskier as the crime rate jumped by 34% in 2017. Incidence of IPC crimes committed in railways includes murder, rape, rioting, kidnapping, robbery, theft etc. Did the government indicate any proposed solution for these trivial matters? A big no.

The proposed bullet train will be made functional in the coming years at the cost of 53,467 mangrove trees in the state of Maharashtra. I will not deny the importance of a bullet train, yes it will benefit a small group of people but thousands and thousands of others are deprived of basic infrastructural progress.

Instead the most important matter for the government reflected in the budget is an aggressive pace to rapid corporatization and privatization of railways. The NFIR has directed all its affiliates for a massive protest from 10th to 13th July of all over Indian Railway. Does the government have any intention to address the issue? Or will it just play the role of a silent viewer and display its obdurate behavior.

The motive of a budget is to bring relief to people's life instead it caused unrest. It has provided nothing for the betterment of the sector. Technologies in today's time are capable enough to connect the rugged and high mountains to other parts. When will Indian achieve that? Where are the proposed plans to achieve that?

I would like to end by putting forth certain requirements of my constituency because even after innumerable pleas and letters demands have not been fulfilled:

To complete long pending work of one side platform of Chandkhali Halt Station on Sealdah Canning Line at the earliest as opposite side platform has already been completed more than 8 years ago which falls under my Parliamentary constituency Joynagar and I had raised this issue in 16th Lok Sabha several times.

To take initiative for construction of new Railway Line from Joynagar to Moipith via. Jamtala under Joynagar Parliamentary constituency and I had raised the matter in 16th Lok Sabha several times.

To take action for operating local train service from Sealdah to Joynagar at the earliest for the greater interest of the local people.

Various Stations across India and even in my constituency, either the level of platforms are low or the gap between the platform and the train is very wide. This causes problem and accidents specially relating to children and senior citizens while boarding the train. Reconstruction of platform is also an essential task that is to be looked into.

***SHRI HASMUKHBHAI SOMABHAI PATEL (AHMEDABAD EAST)**: In my constituency Ahmedabad-East, Railway Under-pass work is under progress near Dahegam since last two years.

It is requested that this under-pass work may kindly be completed at the earliest, so that people could move in a short way between Dahegam and Gandhinagar. Presently people have to travel by a very long route.

In my constituency Ahmedabad-East, Vatva Railway Station (the suburban Railway Station of Ahmedabad City), there is no proper building and shed, No foot over Bridge across the platforms, so the Passengers are forced to cross the Railway Tracks putting their life at risk.

I request the Hon. Railway Minister to give instructions to construct the Building of the Railway Station and shed and also to build foot over Bridge between the platforms.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

***DR. AMAR SINGH (FATEHGARH SAHIB):** The current railway budget sets some very tall goals. What I worry is that these goals may remain on paper only. eg : Finance Minister has mentioned that the railways needs about 50 lakh crores investment from 2018 to 2030. And said that it would be done through PPP model. I have serious doubts. Indian Banks are reeling under NPAs. Save few corporate, everyone else is busy selling off unprofitable divisons and assets while the economy may be heading to a systemic slowdown as evident in the falling investment rate. In this scenario who will be willing to invest in a long term capital intensive sector like railways remains to be seen.

At the same time railways is a sensitive national asset. Can we afford to have disputes with investors including foreign investors over payments and charges. What happens if the disputes are not settled in a time bound pattern and start affecting the operations of railways.

Special purpose vehicles are proposed for sub urban railways. My mind goes to UK where the entire rail network was privatized and now 3 decades later there is a national movement for renationalization because noting has improved on infrastructure and

* Speech was laid on the Table.

service quality, only the fares have gone up generating resentment in travelers. As a poor country we must guard against this as the railways are the main source of transport for majority of our citizens.

60-70% of fruits and vegetables are getting wasted between farm and the customer. Railway can provide special rail carriages to transport them across the country which will benefit millions of farmers and consumers.

With respect to my home state Punjab sir I want to make a demand. Sikh community all over the world has immense faith and intend to visit Shri Darbar Sahib Gurudwara in Kartarpur, Pakistan. Governments of both countries have agreed for creation of border corridor between the neighboring nations of India and Pakistan, connecting the Sikh Shrines of Dera Baba Nanak Sahib (located in Punjab, India) and Gurudwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur (in Punjab, Pakistan) for the facilitation of visitors during upcoming 550th birth anniversary of 1st Sikh Guru Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji.

I want to request that in addition to road network a railway facility may also be provided to all devotees visiting Shri Darbar Sahib Gurudwara in Kartarpur. It will be really nice if railway minister could announce the creation of rail network in his reply tomorrow.

Another critical issue is that while Rajpura Bhatinda line has been electrified it's not been doubled hence congestion hasn't reduced neither has travel times. I demand that double lines along with electrification on this road may be taken up on priority.

All the food godowns in Punjab are overflowing and about 100 lacs tones of wheat is lying the open ie: CAP (Cover and Plinth) which is very vulnerable for damage causing national loss. Punjab state is not getting adequate number of rakes for evacuation of food grains. If it continues then it may be difficult for procuring paddy and rice in next upcoming months hence I request that the number of rakes may be increased many times for evacuation of food grains.

Now I am making a demand for my parliamentary constituency Raikot sub division is the last sub division of Ludhiana district towards Sangrur. It has great historical importance with Tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh ji having come here from Machiwara Sahib. I have spoken during Zero Hour about the martyrdom of Guru Gobind Singh ji's two younger Sahibzadas, Santa Baba Zorawar Singh and Sant Baba Fateh Singh ji. Two young children aged 7 and 9 were bricked alive by Aurangzeb and his Governor Wazir Khan and need to commemorate their sacrifice by developing Shri Fatehgarh Sahib as an international pilgrimage circuit.

It was at Raikot that Guru Gobind Singh ji got information about the martyrdom of his sons as they had refused to embarace Islam. On hearing the news, Guru Gobind Singh dug out the root of Kaahi's plant with the help of his arrow and declared that Mughal rule roots have been dug. Within 5 years of this proclamation of the Tenth Guru, Mughals had been defeated in Punjab, Sikh Raj was established and their Governor Wazir Khan killed by Band Singh Bahadur at the battle of Chappar Chirri.

Gurudwara Shri Tahliana Sahib Raikot along with Shri Machiwara Sahib and Shri Fatehgarh Sahib are all connected historically and part of Shri Fatehgarh Sahib Lok Sabha. Raikot has remained backward till date simply because rail lines cross the sub division's boundaries but have never connected Raikot town to the main rail network. Industry cannot flourish without freight services and the lack of railway connectivity has meant that no substantial industry could be set up till now. It's even sadder that passengers from poor families end up paying more than their eventual rail fare sometimes simply to get to the nearby stations.

Luckily, Raikot lies between major rail lines, its roughly 20 Kms from the Mullanpur station and less than 30 Kms from the Barnala station. I have already mentioned the historical and

economic reasons why it should be connected to the railway network. I had raised the same issue in my meeting with the Hon. Railway Minister on 3rd July. The Indian railways are the lifeline of our nation. It’s the preferred mode of transport for the poorest and weakest citizens of this country. Wherever and whenever a poor person can find a train he chooses to travel by it because of the safety and affordability offered by the Indian railways. Hence I would like to requestthe Government to sanction the laying of rail track form Mullanpur to Barnala via Raikot sub division.

[Translation]

***SHRI GIRISH CHANDRA (NAGINA):** I would like to place my views on the Railway Budget. I also express my gratitude to the esteemed people of the Nagina Lok Sabha constituency. Primarily, the stoppage of certain trains passing through my parliamentary constituency had earlier been ensured, but such stoppages have since been withdrawn. For instance, the Howrah-Amritsar Express (Duplicate), Train Nos. 13049/13050, earlier had a stoppage at Dhampur Nagina, which is no longer provided. This has not only resulted in a loss of railway revenue but has also caused inconvenience to the public. Similarly, the Haridwar-Ramnagar train, Train Nos. 15033/15034, earlier had a stoppage at Dhampur Nagina, but this stoppage has also been withdrawn. The Jan Sewa Express, Train Nos. 14617/14618, which runs from Moradabad towards Punjab and operates at 5.00 a.m. and 10.00 p.m., should also be provided with stoppages at Nagina and Dhampur stations as was the case earlier. Arrangements for sanitation staff should be made at Dhampur Railway Station. There is no VIP room for distinguished persons at this station. The reservation centre at Nagina-Dhampur-Sheohara stations functions from 8.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m. If it is kept

* Speech was laid on the Table.

open from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m., it would not only alleviate the difficulties faced by the public but would also lead to an increase in railway revenue. A direct train service from Delhi to Bijnor should be introduced. Proper arrangements for cleanliness and related facilities should also be ensured at Bijnor Railway Station.

SHRI LALLU SINGH (FAIZABAD): There can be nothing better than the economy of the world's largest democracy being in consonance with its dignity. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, the Union Finance Minister has, while presenting the General Budget, made a provision of Rs. 1,60,000 crore for the Railways. This has conveyed a sense of assurance to the country's 135 crore people. In addition to this, a provision of Rs. 65,000 crore has also been made for the Railways as Gross Budgetary Support. The roadmap that the Government has drawn for the Railways and the targets that have been set make it evident that, by moving along these dimensions, the goals will certainly be achieved.

Sir, the emphasis laid by the Government in the Budget on clean, safe and time-bound rail travel reflects its commitment towards the citizens of the country. The approval granted in the Budget for a new 300 kilometre metro rail line project is a commendable step. Similarly, the proposal to formulate a model fare law for railway tariffs is also a welcome initiative. The Government has approved the PPP model for railway tracks, which will accelerate the development of the Railways. Special attention has also been given in the Budget to the modernisation of tracks and signalling. The

decision taken in this Budget to adopt European signalling infrastructure will not only increase the speed of rail travel but will also make it safer.

Sir, considering the manner in which the Budget has been framed to bring about rapid improvements in the Railways, and the way in which the Hon. Cabinet Minister and the Hon. Minister of State are working to ensure speedy development of the Railways, I am confident that in the times to come, Indian Railways will also be counted among the fastest rail systems in the world.

Faizabad Lok Sabha constituency, which is my parliamentary constituency and includes Ayodhya, has received approval from Hon. Shri Narendra Modi for the construction of Ayodhya Railway Station, which is set to become the most beautiful railway station in the country. For this, on behalf of the people of my Lok Sabha constituency, I express my gratitude to him.

Approval has been granted for the doubling of the Barabanki-Akbarpur and Akbarpur-Jafraabad railway lines, and approval has also been accorded for the electrification of these railway lines. Approval has likewise been given for the electrification of the Prayag-Faizabad and Ayodhya-Mankapur railway sections.

I would like to urge the Hon. Minister to ensure that these works are carried out expeditiously. Ayodhya and Chitrakoot share a very deep spiritual relationship. The identity of Ayodhya is linked with Chitrakoot, and the identity of Chitrakoot is linked with Ayodhya. Those who visit Ayodhya wish to go to Chitrakoot, and those who come to Chitrakoot wish to visit Ayodhya. Due to the absence of a direct railway connection on this route, passengers face considerable inconvenience. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister that an Intercity train be introduced from Ayodhya to Chitrakoot. A new train should also be introduced on the railway line from Ayodhya to Janakpur and Sitamarhi. The Saket Express, which runs from Faizabad to Mumbai, should be made a daily service. The Faizabad goods shed is to be transferred to Salarpur station and the foundation stone for the same has already been laid. The Ayodhya coal depot is also to be shifted to another location. I would request that both the goods sheds and the coal depot be transferred at the earliest.

I would also like to make one more request to the Hon. Minister. Since Faizabad Railway Station is a junction, all trains pass through Faizabad. Therefore, Faizabad Railway Station should be developed as a model railway station and arrangements should be made to provide stoppages there for all trains passing through Ayodhya.

Surveys of the Faizabad-Basti and Faizabad-Rae Bareli-Akbar Ganj railway lines have already been completed. I would urge the Hon. Minister to accord approval to these railway lines and ensure that their construction is undertaken. Thank you.

[*]**SHRI MALOOK NAGAR (BIJNOR):** The main points on the Railway Budget are as follows.

The train running from Delhi to Garhwal via Bijnor has only one AC coach. Two additional AC coaches should be attached to this train. A direct train service from my Lok Sabha constituency of Bijnor to Delhi should be introduced. There is no proper cleaning of washrooms and related facilities at Bijnor Railway Station. Necessary arrangements for sanitation staff should be made there.

Unused land near railway stations in all four metro cities, namely Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata, as well as in all B-grade cities, should either be sold or leased out. Beautification of all railway stations should be undertaken. The revenue generated from the sale or lease of such land should be utilised to run new trains across the country. This will increase the earnings of the Railways. Railway lines should be renewed. This will significantly reduce railway accidents in the coming times. Such measures will not only enhance railway revenue but will also result in gains amounting to thousands of crores of rupees in the future. Through this benefit, national assets will remain with the country itself. If the Railways do not earn profits, there is an apprehension that the Government may

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

move towards privatisation of the Railways as well. At present, the Government is contemplating privatisation in other sectors, such as the Ministry of Civil Aviation. Taking appropriate steps in this regard will enhance the global standing of the Ministry of Railways.

[English]

SHRI P. RAVEENDRANATH KUMAR (THENI): Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you for the opportunity. Sir, today is *Guru Purnima.* I am really blessed and happy to speak before you and hon. Home Minister, Shri Amit Shah Ji.

Sir, I support the Demand for Grants under the Ministry of Railways for the year 2019-20 on behalf of my AIADMK party, our hon. Chief Minister and Deputy Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu.

First of all, I would like to express my heart-felt thanks to our hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji for honouring our party founder and former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu by renaming the century-old Chennai Central Railway Station as 'Puratchi Thalaivar Dr. M.G. Ramachandran Railway Station'.

I also congratulate our hon. Railway Minister Shri Piyush Goel Ji for having assumed the office of India's largest passenger and cargo transport network. I am very much impressed and excited on his speedy dedication towards his work. I thank him for timely approval of transportation of water through rail from Jolarpettai to Chennai to address the water scarcity immediately.

During the last few decades, there was a sense of disorder experienced in Indian Railways and planning was done in bits and pieces manner as far as railway projects are concerned. Now, our Indian Railways have done extremely well over the last five years effectively in all the sectors whether it is speed, cleanliness, security, modernisation, comfort and expansion.

Sir, our hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji has already tweeted that our Indian railways is not just a mode of transport but a growth engine. Accordingly, I am confident that this year Railway Budget will prove that it is meant for the common people as it aspires for better service, speed and safety with focus on development of the country.

I also welcome the announcement of the Government to enhance the gross budgetary support of Rs.66,105 crore which is 25 per cent increase from the revised estimates of 2018-19. I appreciate the hon. Minister of Railways for estimated income of Rs.2,16,935 crore and this is also 10 per cent increase from the revised budget.

However, I am concerned about the investment to be increased in the Indian Railways to expand its network across the country.

It is estimated that an amount of Rs. 50 Iakh crore is required for development of Railway infrastructure by the end of the year

2030. I hope that the strong leadership of our hon. Prime Minster and deep knowledge of our hon. Railway Minister would be playing a major role to achieve this target.

As far as my State of Tamil Nadu is concerned, it is one of the main States in the country providing bounty of income to the Indian Railways. The Government has decided to electrify 7,000 km. across the country with an outlay of Rs. 6,960 crore. Out of this, 1,166 km. is going to be electrified in Tamil Nadu alone. I express my special thanks to hon. Finance Minister and hon. Railway Minister, and I request the Government to expedite the process and to complete the same within the prescribed time.

I would also like to bring to your kind notice about Dhanushkodi. Dhanushkodi is one of the *Rama Bhoomi*, which is the ancient pilgrim town in the South-eastern tip of Tamil Nadu having strong Hindu mythological connection with the epic *Ramayana* as Lord Rama lived at this place; worshipped 'the *linga*' at this place; and built the *Rama-Sethu* Bridge with the help of Hanuman from Dhanushkodi to Sri Lanka. The pilgrims around the world usually bathe in the ocean here before completing the pilgrimage to Rameshwaram. The spot is considered a sacred confluence of the Bay of Bengal and the Indian Ocean. The Railway line between

Rameshwaram and Dhanushkodi got vanished during the 1964 cyclone. Our hon. Prime Minister had laid the foundation stone for this Railway line. So, I would request the Government to take necessary steps to complete the project.

Now, I would like to mention about my Constituency issues. There is a need for expediting the gauge conversion project of 90.41 km. from Madurai to Bodinayakkanur, which comes under the Theni Parliamentary Constituency. I would urge the Government to expedite this gauge conversion project.

There is need for another new line from Dindigal to Sabarimala *via* Bodinayakkanur. The survey, which was done, covers 201 km. This line would cater to a large number of people from both Tamil Nadu and Kerala States who will be very much benefitted from it. This project will also boost the revenues for the Railways. This project is still at its initial stage. I would request the Government to take necessary action to start work on this line.

I understand that the Government has established the National Rail and Transportation Institute recently with the aim of creating a resource pool of best-in-class professionals for the Railway and transportation sector. I would request the Government to open a new

campus in Tamil Nadu. I am sure that it will produce very talented professionals from my State of Tamil Nadu.

With this, I conclude and support the Demand for Grants of the Ministry of Railways. I once again convey my best wishes to the Government for the successful completion of all projects and accomplish the challenge of accruing adequate investment for expanding the network of the Indian Railways. Thank you, Sir.

[Translation]

***SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHOUHAN (GANGANAGAR):** The railway network is like the backbone of any country, as it plays a major role in the commercial, industrial and economic development of the nation. At present, our Government is working towards establishing a high-speed rail network. At the same time, our commitment is towards the overall development of all sectors of the Railways. The Hon. Finance Minister has announced the development of the railway sector on the basis of the PPP (Public Private Partnership) model.

Our Government has stated that an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore would be required between the years 2018 and 2030 to improve railway infrastructure and strengthen its basic framework. In view of this, the capital expenditure of the Railways stands at Rs. 1.5 to 1.6 lakh crore per year. Significant investment will be made in suburban railways. Suburban railway systems have been extremely successful in metropolitan cities such as Mumbai and Delhi.

In the Budget for the year 2019-20, approval has been granted for a 300 kilometre metro rail project, and operations on a new 657 kilometre metro rail network will commence during this year. A

* Speech was laid on the Table.

proposal has also been presented to formulate a model fare law to reform railway fares. Through this, fares will be determined keeping in view the needs and facilities of railway passengers as well as the requirements of the Department.

We are not only working towards running high-speed trains, but special attention is also being paid to the modernisation of tracks and signalling. Indian Railways is also considering the early adoption of European signalling infrastructure. With this objective of making rail travel a comfortable and pleasant experience, we will commence a large-scale programme this year to modernise railway stations.

In order to make railway stations world-class, the Railways have entered into an agreement with France. Under this agreement with France, the Government will spend seven lakh euros on infrastructure development. Our Government has already begun working in the direction of making stations world-class and, under this initiative, railway stations will now be developed as multi-modal transport hubs. Under this arrangement, people will have access to multiple modes of transport directly from the railway station. At present, the Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation (IRSDC) is developing Habibganj Station in Madhya Pradesh and Gandhinagar Station in Gujarat to international standards.

To reduce the increasing burden on the railway network, emphasis is being laid on the rapid development of waterways. In addition, the construction of Dedicated Freight Corridors (DFCs) for freight trains is also being undertaken at a fast pace. This time as well, our focus will remain on safe rail travel. For the safety of passengers, CCTV cameras will be installed at stations and inside trains.

Under the Make in India project, the Vande Bharat Express, manufactured in the country at a cost of less than Rs. 100 crore, has been included among the flagship trains of Indian Railways, and we will continue to work further in this direction.

Providing major relief to rail passengers, no increase in passenger fares has been announced. This year, the Railways will launch a special drive for the renovation of railway stations. Our Government is focusing on green energy under the Indian Railways' pollution-free campaign. Under this initiative, old diesel engines are being modernised and converted into electric engines. Under the Make in India campaign, the work of modernising engines is being carried out within the country itself, and recently, a diesel engine has been converted into an electric engine as part of this initiative.

For taking the country forward on the path of progress, the development of Indian Railways is also extremely important. Along with modernisation, there is a need to ensure a well-organised safety system, and in this direction our Government has undertaken commendable work and continues to make sustained efforts. Without imposing any additional burden of fares on passengers, we are still taking Indian Railways towards development. For this important work, the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways deserve congratulations.

Major demands relating to railway facilities for Shri Ganganagar Parliamentary Constituency (Rajasthan):

• An Intercity train should be introduced from Shri Ganganagar Junction to Amritsar via Bathinda, Dhuri, Ludhiana, Jalandhar and Beas, so that this Sikh-dominated region gets direct rail connectivity to holy places such as the Golden Temple and Dera Beas.

• Train No. 14520, Kisan Express, which is operated between Bathinda and Delhi, should be extended beyond Bathinda via Mandi Dabwali, Sangaria, Hanumangarh Junction and Sadulshahar up to Shri Ganganagar.

• Under the North Western Railway, the people of the areas falling on the Canal Loop from Suratgarh, namely Jaitsar, Raisinghnagar,

Gajsinghpur, Srikaranpur and Kesrisinghpur, have been demanding and waiting for a rail service to Jaipur for a long time. Rail services to Jaipur should be introduced on this route at the earliest.

• Train Nos. 14085/14086 (Haryana Express), which operate as passenger services between Tilak Bridge (Delhi) and Hisar, should be extended beyond Sirsa via Bathinda, Mandi Dabwali, Hanumangarh Junction, Sangaria, Suratgarh, Swaroopsar, Raisinghnagar and Srikaranpur up to Shri Ganganagar.

• The construction of a washing line in Hanumangarh district is extremely necessary. Bathinda Junction, which is located at a distance of about 80 km from Hanumangarh Junction, is neither feasible for a washing line nor does it have adequate space available. On the other hand, sufficient land is available at Hanumangarh for a washing line and its feasibility also exists.

• The Gajsinghpur-Padampur-Beenzhwala-Goluwala-Hanumangarh-Rawatsar-Nohar railway line was announced in the year 1998 by the former Prime Minister, late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee. However, no progress has been made in this regard so far. Special attention should be paid to this matter.

• Under the North Western Railway, the Keshavnagar Halt Station situated between Shriramsinghpur and Shreevijaynagar stations in

the Bikaner Division (Rajasthan), which has remained closed for nearly twenty years, should be reopened.

[*]SHRI BHAGIRATH CHAUDHARY (AJMER): Indian Railways has made a significant contribution in connecting the culture and civilisation of different parts of the country.

Just as blood in the human body connects every part through arteries, in the same manner, the Railways, through its railway lines, connects the civilisation, culture, heritage and legacy of the entire nation.

The Railways, which serve to connect the very heart of the country, have made an unparalleled contribution to the economic and social development of the nation.

Since the formation of our Government, there has been substantial development in the Railways in the fields of electrification, doubling of lines, safety, security and cleanliness.

At the same time, continuous efforts towards improvement are underway, which will establish new milestones for the Railways in our country.

In this Budget, I would like to thank the visionary Prime Minister of the country, the Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman, the Hon. Minister of Railways Shri Piyush Goyal and

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Shri Suresh Angadi, who have announced important schemes to give practical shape to our Prime Minister's key slogan that the country will receive both speed and progress through the Railways. Major initiatives such as the development of smart railway stations, provision of Wi-Fi facilities and the Rapid Regional Transport System form part of these efforts. Trains like Vande Bharat and Rapid Rail, which symbolise civilisation, culture and development, are among the flagship initiatives. Compared to the previous Government, our Government is moving far ahead in the fields of safety and development.

I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways to make efforts, through this Budget, to fulfil some of the following important demands of my parliamentary constituency.

On the Ajmer-Jaipur railway route lies the world-famous marble city and industrial area of Kishangarh, where an inter-State airport is also operational. However, due to the non-provision of stoppages of certain superfast and express trains at Kishangarh (Ajmer) Railway Station, foreign tourists, traders, workers, students and daily rail passengers are compelled to alight either at Ajmer or Jaipur Railway Stations. This results in unnecessary loss of time, labour and money for travelling to and from Kishangarh.

01 . Train Nos. 12915-12916 Ashram Express (New Delhi-Ahmedabad) - Daily

02. Train Nos. 12547-12548 (Agra Fort-Ahmedabad) - Daily

03. Train Nos. 12215-12216 Garib Rath (New Delhi-Bandra) - 04 days a week

04. Train Nos. 12715-12716 Garib Nawaz Express (Ajmer-Kishanganj) - 03 days a week

05. Train Nos. 12451-12452 (Chandigarh-Bandra) - 03 days a week

06. Train Nos. 19269- 19270 Motihari Express (Porbandar-Muzaffarpur) - 03 days a week

07. Train Nos. 12395-12396 (Ajmer-Rajendra Nagar-Patna Express)- Weekly

08. Train Nos. 19403-19404 (Ahmedabad-Sultanpur) - Weekly

09. Train Nos. 12315-12316 Ananya Express (Udaipur-Sealdah)-Weekly

10. Train Nos. 22987-22988 Ajmer-Agra Fort Superfast-Daily

11. Train Nos. 12719-12720 Jaipur-Hyderabad Express- 02 days a week

12. Train Nos. 18214-18215 Ajmer-Jaipur-Durg Express-Weekly

13. Train Nos. 19709-19710 Kavi Guru Express (Udaipur-Jaipur-Kamakhya) weekly

Therefore, I would like to make a humble request to the Hon. Minister of Railways to ensure stoppages of some of the above-mentioned superfast and express trains at Kishangarh Railway Station situated on the Ajmer-Jaipur railway route and to announce the necessary departmental approvals in this regard.

At present, the Udaipur-Ajmer-Haridwar Superfast Train Nos. 19609-19610 should be operated on a daily basis. At present, this train runs from Udaipur to Haridwar on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and from Haridwar to Udaipur on Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays. As a result, thousands of pilgrims and devotees from the Ajmer and Udaipur divisions, as well as members of the general public who travel for religious rituals such as immersion of ashes in the holy Ganga after the demise of their relatives, get the benefit of travel only on three days a week, while they face inconvenience on the remaining four days. Therefore, I would request that necessary action be taken to operate this train on a daily basis.

The demand for a new railway line of approximately 180 kilometres from Ajmer to Kota via Nasirabad, Kekri and Deoli has been raised for the last 20 to 25 years. Although the survey of this

route has been completed, no official announcement regarding the establishment of the railway line has been made so far. As a result, there is dissatisfaction among the residents, traders and entrepreneurs of the Assembly constituencies of Nasirabad, Kekri, Deoli, Bundi, Hindoli and surrounding areas. Therefore, I would request that the announcement granting approval for the establishment of the new Ajmer-Kota railway line be given concrete shape.

In the Railway Budget for the year 2016-17, approval was announced for a proposed new railway line of 45 kilometres from Kishangarh (Ajmer) to Parbat Nagar (Nagaur). However, even after the lapse of three years since this announcement, it has not been given concrete shape due to the apathy of the departmental officials. Therefore, I would request that appropriate departmental directions be issued on this announcement and that the necessary budgetary approval be accorded.

Pushkar, which falls under my parliamentary constituency of Ajmer, is a very important and world-famous religious and pilgrimage town, where thousands of people from across the country and abroad visit every day. About three to four years ago, in the Railway Budget, the Union Government had included the project for

connecting Pushkar (Ajmer) to Merta (Nagaur) by a railway line among the railway projects. However, no significant progress has been made in this railway line project so far.

Therefore, I would like to request that, for the Pushkar (Ajmer) to Merta (Nagaur) railway line project, the necessary budgetary approval be accorded in the current financial year 2019-20 by the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) and that efforts be made to complete this railway line work at the earliest.

Approval should also be accorded for the construction of a new underpass at the old railway station located at Kishangarh (Ajmer), so that the people of the Sawantsar and Gandhinagar areas may get a convenient route for movement.

Further, approval should be granted for the construction of a new underpass at the level crossing situated near Vijay Nagar Railway Station on the Gulabpura Road side in Ajmer, so that the local residents may get permanent relief from traffic congestion during the closure of the railway gate and the frequent traffic jams.

At Kishangarh (Ajmer) Railway Station, provision for escalators and lifts has been made by the Ministry of Railways, but the said works have not commenced so far. As a result, elderly persons, patients, women passengers and even ordinary passengers are facing

extreme difficulty in moving between Platforms No. 1 and 2 due to the heavy and steep staircases of the foot overbridge at the station. Therefore, I would request that necessary action be taken to install escalators and lifts at the earliest.

At present, the rail reservation booking hours at Kishangarh (Ajmer) Railway Station are from 8.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m., and the reservation office remains closed on Sundays. Due to this, local residents are not able to avail themselves fully of the rail reservation facility and are compelled to get their tickets booked through private agents. Therefore, I would request that rail reservation booking facilities be made available at Kishangarh (Ajmer) Railway Station on all seven days of the week and that the booking hours be extended from 8.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m.

Wi-Fi facilities should also be started at Kishangarh, Nasirabad and Vijay Nagar railway stations so that passengers may derive maximum benefit from internet connectivity.

Under the Freight Corridor scheme, all underpasses constructed and under construction within the Ajmer parliamentary constituency should be covered from both sides of the railway line, and a permanent solution for the drainage of rainwater in these underpasses should also be ensured.

The Railway Loco Workshop, Ajmer, is one of the oldest workshops in the country, having been established in the year 1886. It was here that India's first steam locomotive was manufactured in 1886. Prior to this, engine parts used to come from the Jamalpur Workshop in Bihar and were assembled to build locomotives. The country's first steel foundry was also established at this Loco Workshop in Ajmer in the year 1906. Before and after Independence, until the establishment of the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, steam locomotives of metre gauge were manufactured at the Ajmer Loco Workshop. Thereafter, with the passage of time, the manufacturing of railway coaches and wagons also commenced here, followed by repair and maintenance activities. At present, all kinds of works such as maintenance of broad gauge coaches, wagon repairs, diesel locomotive repairs, and maintenance of DEMU trains are being carried out here. At present, around 5,000 employees are working in this workshop. Even today, the quality standards of this Loco Workshop are considered superior across the entire western region of the country. Moreover, over the last two years, repair work of the latest LHB coaches has also been undertaken at this workshop.

About ten to eleven years ago, in the year 2008, a budget of approximately Rs. 130 crore was sanctioned for modernisation works at the Ajmer Loco Workshop, and these works have since been completed. However, in the present context, with the continuous introduction of new technologies, there will be a greater requirement of funds in this workshop for new-technology locomotives, wagons and coaches in the future. Therefore, I would request that a budget of approximately Rs. 100 crore be sanctioned for the Ajmer Railway Workshop in the current financial year 2019-20 and that necessary departmental action be taken to develop and modernise this oldest Loco Workshop of the country on the lines of the Rae Bareli Railway Factory. Further, at present, nearly 35 per cent of the posts in this workshop are lying vacant. Necessary departmental action should be taken to fill these vacancies at the earliest. I shall be highly obliged. Thank you.

[English]

***SHRIMATI RAKSHA NIKHIL KHADSE (RAVER):** I would like to express my views on important issue of infrastructure, the life line of the country, Demands of Grants related to Railways.

I congratulate the Hon. Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitaraman Ji for the historic budget presented under the dynamic and visionary Prime Minister of our country respected Shri. Narendra Ji Modi and also congratulate Railway Minister Shri Piyush Ji Goyal and his colleague Minister of State in the Ministry Shri Suresh Ji Angadi under whom the country's life line is taking significant improvement in achievements of the physical targets. A safety First Policy, we the people of the country must forward their sincere thanks to Hon. Finance Minister for providing adequate funds through Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh. As proposed to strengthen this safety first policy the total 4267 unmanned level crossings proposed and eliminated. Redevelopment of 600 major stations in the country has been taken up by India Railway Station Development Co. Limited, all of these railways stations are provided with Wi-Fi. CCTVs installations work on stations has started and the allocations have been provided to further extend this facility on

* Speech was laid on the Table.

some trains in first stage. Under the Safety First Policy, my Government has increasing the use of technology for fog safe and train protection and warning systems to avoid delays in the fog affected northern region of the country to avoid major accidents. To augment this safety first policy and for the women safety my Government has taken up a drive to recruit more RPF Women force for deputation on board for safety of women on board trains travelling alone.

Railway authority has proposed to set up POH workshop for LHB Coaches on Central Railway and proposed this to be set up at Nagpur through Indian Railways Projects Sanctions and Management (IRPSM) with an estimated cost of Rs 507.64 crore which has been approved by the General Manager. I request the Hon. Railway Minister Shri Piyush Ji Goyal to establish this POH workshop for LHB.

Coaches at Bhusawal as at Nagpur where it has been proposed required the land to be procured which might cost more and the project let delayed further thereby escalating the other prices/values of the project. As at Bhusawal the Railway's own land is available where the project work can be immediately started so that there will not be any delay in project implementations, hence saving of the

country's money and the precise time and the project cost will also be reduced from 507.64 Crore, the proposed budgetary cost project at Nagpur, to 472.14 crore. The proposal has already been forwarded to the Railway Board by the zonal authority at Central Railway, Mumbai for their consideration and shifting the project from Nagpur to Bhusawal in Central Railway.

As there are large funds needed to be inducted for infrastructural development of railway in the coming years upto 2030 to the tune of Rs. 50 lakh crore and the railway own network can only spend around Rs. 1.5 to 1.6 lakh crore to develop the infrastructure needed will take years together, hence to speed up the work at the early years the Government welcome the Public Private Partnership mode for carrying out this developmental work. I think these steps of Government should be welcome by all for the faster development and to move higher in the world's ranking for country's economy for which our respected Prime Minister has thought of taking the country's economy to 5 trillion dollars in the coming years as we are approaching to 3 trillion dollar very soon.

Track renewal the important steps taken by Hon. Railway Minister Shri Piyush Ji Goyal and has achieved 3600 kms of track renewal in last year. Hon. Railway Minister Shri Piyush ji Goyal has

also targeted the conversion and 100% electrification of broad gauge line by 2022 for which most of the work has been completed. In my Raver Constituency under Central Railway Bhusawal Division in Maharashtra State, one very old and ancient Pachora-Jamner NG line presently in working condition and preferred by the local communities had been started since long by British Government in the 1918 required immediate attention for getting conversion from NG to Board gauge with extension up to Bodwad. This conversion and extension up to Bodwad will save 18kms (Pachora-Bhusawal-Bodwad having 102 kms while Pachora-Bhusawal-Bodwad through NG conversion route is 84 kms) operational cost especially the goods traffic coming from Mumbai to Nagpur/Howrah can be diverted through this route which not only save the cost of running but also by-pass the heavily congested Goods shed yard at Bhusawal on route of Central Railway and even some passenger trains can be diverted from this route avoiding conjunctions at Bhusawal stations. I also request Hon. Minister to sanction the branch connection at Pahur railway station which can directly connect the world famous Ajanta caves and this heavily observing tourist place can further develop after getting direct train approach. Also this conversion with a small portion additional branch extension up to Ajanta will adding

to the tourism development in this region. The survey for all work of conversion and extension up Bodwad has completed. I once again request Hon. Railway Minister to review the RoR for this project proposal as acquisition of land is not required as it is available for this conversion throughout the route. Thus not only save the operational cost but also time saving and can lead to socio-economic advancement of this underdeveloped region. If the conversion of this railway is not viable, I prospose to develop this route by keeping it as the narrow gauge route with extension to Bodwad and a branch connection to Ajanta Caves and upgrade this as a "Heritage Ajanta Line". And also to provide and maintain the Coaches and the locomotive of this rack.

There is a long standing demand of the people of my constituency for having separate train from Bhusawal to Mumbai, I and the citizen of my Constituency are thankful to Hon. Railway Minister Shri Piyush Ji Goyal for starting a train suggested to run from Bhusawal to Mumbai Khandesh Express (19003/19004) via Amalner-Nandurbar-Surat and the premium train Rajdhani Express (22221/22222) from Central Mumbai to Delhi via Bhusawal running twice in a week. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to accord the permission for running this Rajdhani Express on daily basis with

providing a stoppage at Bhusawal as the staff joining at Jalgaon has all the way travel from Bhusawal to Jalgaon and vice versa thereby incurring cost for the Railways so also more of the travellers are the Banana growing farmers and for them joining the train at Bhusawal is preferable & cost saving on many issues. As lot of trains are moving in the direction towards Central Mumbai but all are long distance trains and getting reservations is a big issue. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to operate a special train from Bhusawal to Mumbai. Similarly many private buses are running from Jalgaon/Bhusawal to Pune, hence I also request for providing a train from Bhusawal to Pune via Manmad. As there are no premium train operation on the route from Mumbai to Delhi via Bhusawal like Rajdhani or Shatabdi, I request the Hon. Railway Minister to sanction at least one premium train on this route from Bhusawal going towards New Delhi.

As Hon. Railway Minister is looking for generation of the non-revenue earnings of railways by utilizing the surplus land which is not immediately required for any expansion of railways such lands to be given on Built operate and transfer basis by constructing restaurants, hotels and commercial complexes to earn and make use of such land which is lying idle since long with Raiways. There are

many lands in Bhusawal Division which can generate the amount to Railways without any investments I have forwarded the proposal for consideration of such land from Bhusawal Division which has certified by the concerned authority for surplus lands can be immediately converted for this season.

I once again congratulate the Hon. Railway Minister working under the vision and guidance of respected Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji and the Finance Minister Smt Nirmala Sitaraman ji and the Minister of State Shri Anurag Ji Thakur for strengthening the railway network and infrastructure with enhancing railways carrying capacity both for goods as well as passenger trains with developing Rapid Regional Transport Systems (RRTS), Safety First Policy enhancing Women Safety and proposing all railway stations to be develop with multi-storied commercial buildings on PPP mode thereby fetching more revenue generation for railways and utilization of land. I support the Demands for Grants for railways .

[Translation]

SHRIMATI RANJEETA KOLI (BHARATPUR): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak in the House. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting a Budget that reflects the vision of the Hon. Prime Minister for the country's golden path of development. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards the problems relating to rail transportation in my Lok Sabha constituency, Bharatpur.

Sir, Bharatpur is a world-famous place, where the Keoladeo National Park is located and where major pilgrimage centres of the Braj region are also situated. A large number of tourists visit this area. I would like to request that a stoppage of the Jammu Tawi-Mumbai train be provided at Bharatpur Junction and that a passenger train be operated from morning to evening on the Alwar-Mathura railway line. In addition to this, an overbridge at the Hinnon level crossing at Kherli town on the Agra-Bandikui line, the demand for which has been pending for a long time, should be completed. Earlier, the Union Government had conducted a survey for a railway line from Kosi Kalan to Kamadeck from the point of view of

religious tourism. This plan is very important. Therefore, I request that, on the basis of the survey, approval be accorded to this project, which will provide considerable convenience to the general public. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, those Hon. Members who wish to lay their speeches on the Table may do so. Such written speeches also form part of the proceedings of this House, just as speeches delivered orally.

[English]

[*]**DR. D. RAVIKUMAR (VILUPPURAM):** I would like to place my following views:

1. The Government should take steps to revive the 13 Railway projects shelved by the Board of Railways in 2017.

2. The Railway Ministry has conducted field survey for Chennai-Cuddalore rail link project. Railway Board has spent Rs. 25 crore in 2007 for the preliminary work. Due to some hitch in deciding the alignment, now the project has been dropped. I earnestly request the Railway Ministry to revive the project.

3. Tejas, the superfast train which runs between Chennai and Madurai stops at Tiruchirappalli only. Viluppuram is a junction and an important connecting point to Puducherry. I request a stoppage at Viluppuram.

4. All express trains run between Chennai and Madurai via Vilupuram should be stopped at Ulundurpet an important town.

5. Centre has renamed Central Station at Chennai as Puratchi Thalaivar M.G. Ramachandran railway station. I request the

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Government to rename Erode Railway station as “Thanthai Periyar E.V.R. Railway Station.

HON. SPEAKER: Shrimati Rekha Verma.

SHRIMATI REKHA ARUN VERMA (DHAURAHRA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways for the year 2019-20. I would also like to thank our Hon. Prime Minister, our National President and our Hon. Minister for presenting a good Budget.

Sir, for the year 2019-20, total revenue from traffic has been estimated at Rs. 2,16,675 crore, which is ten per cent higher than the Revised Estimates for 2018-19. It is expected that in 2019-20, freight and passenger traffic will increase by eight per cent and ten per cent respectively. The Demands for Grants state that railway infrastructure will require an estimated investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore during the period 2018-2030. The PPP model will be utilised to help achieve faster development and completion of tracks, rolling stock manufacturing and delivery of passenger and freight services. The Railways is struggling to meet its expenditure due to a decline in internal revenue. It is not clear how the Railways will sustain the Rail Safety Fund. The Standing Committee on Railways noted in 2018 that by the end of January 2018, expenditure from the Rail Safety Fund was about 50 per cent of the allocation of Rs. 10,709

crore. It has been observed that if funds are not utilised effectively, the very objective of having a dedicated safety fund becomes meaningless. Over the past decade, the Railways has struggled to generate high surpluses. The operating ratio has remained consistently above 90 per cent for more than a decade. In the year 2019-20, the Railways is expected to earn a surplus of Rs. 9,035 crore.

HON. SPEAKER: You have read half of it. You may lay the remaining portion on the Table. We will treat it as read in full.

SHRIMATI REKHA VERMA: Sir, in one minute, I would like to place the problems of my area and conclude.

Sir, through you, I would like to submit that I come from Lakhimpur Kheri, Dhaurahra Lok Sabha constituency. The Assembly segments of Sitapur and Lakhimpur districts fall within my constituency. I would like to submit that carpet weaving is being carried out very well in Sitapur, and these carpets are supplied to Delhi. However, till date, no train has been introduced from Sitapur to Delhi, due to which people are unable to avail themselves of direct rail connectivity for travelling to and from Delhi. I would request that a train service be introduced from Sitapur to Delhi at the earliest. I would also like to submit that the new railway line from

Gola, Majhpur, Mohammadi, Machhecha, Mohammadpur-Tajpur, Sahjanpur Katra to Farrukhabad had been sanctioned long ago. The survey of this route has been completed, but due to a change in Government, the work was stalled. I request that this project be completed at the earliest. If the railway line to Farrukhabad is constructed, the people of my area will be able to conveniently cover a distance of about 200 to 250 kilometres.

Under these Demands for Grants, there are several trains such as Train No. 12491, Moharrabad Express, running from Barauni to Jammu Tawi; Train No. 14517, running from Saharsa to Amritsar; Train No. 15655, running from Kamakhya to Katra; and Train No. 14521, running from Kamakhya to Anand Vihar, Delhi. There are many such trains. If efforts are made by the Government to provide stoppages of these trains at Mauli Assembly segment or at Sitapur, this issue will also be resolved and the people of our area will get much-needed convenience in travelling to and fro.

[English]

***SHRI DILIP SAIKIA (MANGALDOI):** I would like to express my views on Demands for Grants on Railway Budget.

My Constituency Mangaldoi (Assam) HQ. Mangaldoi till date is not connected with Railway Map. People of my constituency repeatedly requested Ministry of Railway to give a sincere look into the urgent need of the hour. 18 lakhs of voter of my Constituency facing trouble due to poor Road connectivity. My Constituency is producing a sizable number of products on Agriculture. Transportation of Agricultural products to the nearby State HQ and other parts of the State is a big question for the farmers.

We need a Railway Line from Rangia (Railway Division) via Sipajhar, Mangaldoi, Dalgaon to Rowta Railway Station. Approximately 100 km. of my Constituency are out of this Railway network. So, this is my kind request to you to Hon. Railway Minister, through you, that necessary steps to be undertaken immediately to connect my Constituency, Mangaldoi on Railway network of the country.

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* Speech was laid on the Table.

I like to draw the kind attention to give proper recognition to the man who put the train on ‘brake’. He was no other than “GURU PRASAD DAS” of Barpeta, Assam.

During the training period, ‘Guruprasad’ made significant improvement in his technical skill when he was taking training in Institute of Mechanical Engineering, England. He, after that, invented “Vacuum Brake” for trains.

This later had the nomenclature as “Seamless Coil Brake”. His two other important inventions are “Cut off control gauge and Boiler Safety Valve”. So, I earnestly request the Government to kindly give recognition to Guruprasad Das by giving his contribution to Railways by naming a Building or a Railway Station in his good name.

[Translation]

***SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SINGH (AURANGABAD):** While supporting the development-oriented Budget presented in the Lok Sabha, and acknowledging the commendable role of Indian Railways in the development of the nation and in providing quality rail services to the people of the country, I would like to request the Hon. Minister of Railways to ensure that the construction of the proposed Bihta-Aurangabad railway line under the East Central Railway, Hajipur, Bihar, is completed at the earliest.

I would also like to place my demand regarding the reconstruction of the Anugrah Narayan Road Railway Station building under the Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya Division, which is several decades old and presently in a dilapidated condition. I request that the Anugrah Narayan Road station building be reconstructed as a replica based on the architectural design of the Deo Surya Temple, Aurangabad, Bihar, which is a major centre of faith for crores of people in North India.

* Speech was laid on the Table.

SHRI DULAL CHANDRA GOSWAMI (KATIHAR): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants for the Railway Budget for the year 2019-20. I represent my Lok Sabha constituency of Katihar, which is situated in Bihar, and Katihar also has a Railway Division. This Division handles trains connecting Delhi with the North Eastern region. Within this Division, there are a total of 106 railway crossings, and the level crossings are located within the Katihar parliamentary constituency.

Hon. Minister, kindly pay some attention to this issue. Out of these crossings, 11 underpasses have been constructed. However, in 10 out of these 11 underpasses, water and slush ranging from three to four feet remain accumulated, as this is a flood-prone and high rainfall area. All these underpasses remain closed even before the onset of floods. People are facing severe hardship and protests are taking place.

Further, on the Katihar-Kumedpur railway section, waterlogging and slush persist at Shahjahan and Kuretha. You may verify this from your railway officials. My humble submission is that since this is a flood-affected area, the only effective solution here would be the construction of flyovers. This is my earnest request.

Thirdly, Shahjahan and Kuretha in Katihar-Kumaidpur railway section are filled with water and mud. You can find out from your railway authorities.My only request in this is that this is a flood affected area, if anything will be effective in this, then only a flyover will be effective.That was my request.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to place an important matter before the House. Katihar is a very important zone of the North East Railways. There is the Katihar-Manihari railway section, which was proposed to be extended up to Tejnarayanpur-Bhaluka. This project was taken up during the tenure of the former Prime Minister, late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, and the then Minister of Railways, Shri Nitish Kumar, who is presently the Chief Minister of Bihar and a leader of our party. It is a matter of satisfaction that the Katihar-Manihari-Tejnarayanpur railway line has now become operational. If only another 13 kilometres of railway line is constructed, we will be connected from Bhaluka to West Bengal, and Kolkata will come much closer. Therefore, I request that the construction of this remaining 13 kilometre stretch up to Bhaluka be taken up on priority.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, there was also a proposal for a railway line from Kursela to Bihariganj, which may also be considered. I have

another demand that railway flyovers be constructed at Katihar, Bhagwan Chowk, Barsoi, Raghunathpur, Jhaua and Minapur in Katihar district. Finally, I have only two more requests. Barsoi is a railway junction which connects Kolkata with the North Eastern region and also connects Delhi with the North Eastern region. The station building constructed in the year 1947 remains in the same condition even today. Therefore, I request that, under the ongoing programme for model stations and beautification, if this station is developed and modernised, it would be a great relief and would also bring credit to the Government.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to mention one more important matter. The Union Government and the Government of Bihar accord great respect to places of strategic importance and religious sites. In Katihar district, there is a Kadhagola Railway Station, which has also been the karmabhoomi of the Ninth Guru, Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji, and is a Sikh pilgrimage site. Sikhs from across the country and abroad have deep reverence associated with this place. If the word ‘Saheb’ is added to the name of Kadhagola Railway Station, its significance will be enhanced. If this is done, it will bring appreciation to the Government and will also enhance my standing in Katihar.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I thank you from the bottom of my heart for giving me time to speak. The Government is doing commendable work and, in this Budget, I would like to thank the Hon. Finance Minister of the Union Government, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman. I also thank Shri Piyush Goyal, the Union Minister, and Shri Suresh C. Angadi, the Minister of State for Railways. The work they have done in the Railways has compelled even the Opposition to appreciate them. Therefore, I express my sincere thanks to all of you.

SHRI SANJAY SETH (RANCHI): Hon. Speaker, Sir, first of all, I would like to thank Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji for breaking the tradition of the briefcase and presenting the Budget wrapped in a red cloth with a sacred thread, reflecting Indian culture. This is a matter of pride for the entire country. Sir, with regard to this Railway Budget, I would first like to welcome the decision to develop Ranchi Railway Station at the national level. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister of Railways for this. You are visiting Ranchi the day after tomorrow, and I extend my warm welcome to you. Thirdly, Sir, this year the country is celebrating the 150th birth anniversary of Bapu. Bapu always travelled in third class, but the Congress Party abolished third class altogether. Therefore, I propose that in this 150th birth anniversary year, a 'Bapu coach' should also be introduced so that we may honour him on this occasion.

Sir, I would also like to congratulate Shri Piyush Goyal and Shri Suresh Prabhu. They have made arrangements whereby, from October onwards, passengers will be able to get seats in trains with greater ease. A plan has been prepared to add four lakh additional seats to the reservation capacity of trains, so that passengers may get confirmed reservations. This will be made possible by adopting new technology. Through this new technology, electricity will be

supplied to trains through overhead wires and sleeper coaches will be introduced in place of general coaches. This is an unprecedented achievement. I extend my heartfelt appreciation to the Railways and to the Hon. Minister of Railways.

Sir, in a democracy, public representatives are custodians and the people are the masters. When the people of Jharkhand appointed me as their custodian, it was with the expectation that smiles would appear on their faces, their difficulties would be resolved and they would receive greater facilities. In that capacity, on behalf of those very people, I would like to place my demands. Jharkhand contributes revenue of about Rs. 25,000 crore every year, yet we do not have a zonal office. We remain dependent on Kolkata, Garden Reach. Through you, Sir, my first request to the Government, which has been a long-pending demand, is that a zonal office be established in Jharkhand at the earliest. With the blessings of Atal Ji, a separate State was created, and after the formation of separate States, zonal offices were set up in both States, but not in Jharkhand. Therefore, a zonal office should be established without delay.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would also like to submit that in the year 2000, Atal Ji had laid the foundation stone of the Lohardaga-Tori railway line via Ranchi-Lohardaga-Tori. Work progressed initially,

but after the UPA Government came to power, not even an inch of work was done for ten years. However, under the Government led by Shri Narendra Modi, the Lohardaga-Tori line has been completed, electrification has been carried out and the Rajdhani has started running. Now, the need of the hour is that the Rajdhani Express to Delhi should be operated via Ranchi-Lohardaga-Tori, which would save at least three to four hours of travel time. I request that the Rajdhani Express be introduced on this route at the earliest.

Sir, I would like to bring one more point to your notice. An important initiative has been taken with regard to coal mining. Due to mining activities of Coal India, large pits are formed, in which rainwater gets accumulated during the monsoon. From this rainwater, about 2,036 lakh cusecs of mineral water can be generated. This work should be commenced at the earliest so that the vision of the Hon. Prime Minister, who has often stated that only about eight per cent of rainwater is presently harvested, can be realised. If this rainwater is properly utilised, such a large stock of mineral water can be made available to the people of the country. I would also like to mention another contribution of Atal Ji. There was a train service from Ranchi to Sakhhi via Namkum and Tatisilwai. There is an engineering college in that area. If this train service is

operated from Ranchi to Tatisilwai, engineering students and the rural population will be connected to Ranchi much more quickly. The railway line has already been completed and trial runs have also been conducted. I request that this train service be started at the earliest.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I have one more demand. A shuttle train should be introduced between Ranchi, the State capital, and the industrial city of Jamshedpur. This shuttle train may be named the 'Johar Express'. Thousands of people commute daily between Ranchi and Jamshedpur, and such a service would be of great benefit to them.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to make one more request. There are two railway stations in Ranchi and Hatia, but the total number of porters is only 28. We wish to generate employment, but the number of porters is extremely limited. I request that the number of porters be increased as much as possible. Further, just as trolleys are provided at airports, the Railway Department should also provide trolleys to porters, so that they get employment and passengers do not face inconvenience.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, the Government led by Shri Raghubar Das had placed several demands before the Railway Department. My

request is that the Purushottam Express running from Puri to New Delhi be extended up to Jodhpur. This train should be operated from Ranchi to Dehradun via Lucknow. Direct rail connectivity should be started from eastern Uttar Pradesh to Deoghar. In the Santhal Pargana region, which is inhabited by our remote tribal Santhali population, public announcements at railway stations should be made in the Santhali language along with Hindi, and the names and information at railway stations should also be displayed in the Ol Chiki script. This will ensure that the local people do not face any difficulty.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would also like to submit that the Ranchi-Mumbai LTT Super Express should be operated on a daily basis so that passengers travelling to Mumbai are facilitated. A Metro train should also be introduced in Ranchi so that modernisation takes place in Jharkhand, a separate State created with the blessings of Atal Ji.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Kanakmal Katara. Hon. Member, please speak briefly.

SHRI KANAKMAL KATARA (BANSWARA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak. I express my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting an inclusive and all-encompassing Budget.

20.48 hrs (Shri Kodikunnil Suresh *in the Chair*)

I would also like to express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister of Railways. Under the leadership of our Hon. Prime Minister, multi-dimensional development is taking place in the country and a New India is being built. Keeping the time constraint in mind, I would like to draw the attention of the House to my parliamentary constituency of Banswara, where efforts have been underway for a long time for the Dungarpur-Banswara-Ratlam railway line. Many States of the country have been connected by rail, but our TSP area has still not been connected with the railway network.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, with regard to the Banswara-Ratlam-Dungarpur railway project, I had also raised a question with the Hon. Minister of Railways as to why work on this railway line has not yet commenced. Under this project, the new Ratlam-Dungarpur railway line via Banswara, covering a length of 188.85 kilometres, was approved in the year 2011-12 with the provision that 50 per cent of the final construction cost would be borne by the Government of

Rajasthan and land would be provided free of cost. At the price level of 2015-16, the estimated cost of this project was Rs. 2,562 crore, which is likely to increase further. As on 31.03.2019, an amount of Rs. 184.28 crore has been expended on this project.

For this project, a total of 1,736 hectares of land is required, out of which 646 hectares has been handed over. An amount of Rs. 62.5 crore has also been paid by the Government of Rajasthan to landowners as compensation for land acquisition. However, as per the Memorandum of Understanding between the Railways and the Government of Rajasthan, the requisite land and funds for this project have not yet been made available by the State Government. As a result, the work has been inordinately delayed. The people of the region are deeply distressed over this issue. While all States and regions across the country have been connected, this railway line linking Dungarpur, Banswara and Ratlam has still not been connected. Through you, Sir, I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister that this is a Scheduled Area. Within this Scheduled Area, there is a lack of coordination between the Government of Rajasthan and the Union Government, due to which we have not been able to complete this work. This is a matter of great anguish for us. We are suffering on both sides. On one side, the people of Ratlam and

Dungarpur are affected, and on the other, we seek connectivity from Udaipur towards Ahmedabad, where the work is also progressing at a very slow pace. The 2.5 kilometre tunnel at Zawar Mines has also been pending for a long time and work there has not yet commenced. The pace of work is extremely slow. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister that, despite such substantial expenditure having already been incurred, if this railway line is not commissioned, it would be a matter of deep disappointment for this entire region.

Sir, at this juncture, I would like to submit that the new Banswara railway project will provide direct connectivity for my parliamentary constituency of Dungarpur and Banswara with all other parts of the country. This will directly benefit the poor, labourers, traders, entrepreneurs and tourists of the region. The land of Rajasthan is known as the land of valiant warriors. It is renowned for sacrifice, penance and valour.

Sir, I have been making sustained efforts for the backward regions of Rajasthan. Banswara and Dungarpur are regarded as economically backward areas of the State. In Banswara, Maa Tripura Sundari, Ghotiya Amba and Mangarh Dham are important centres of religious faith. In Dungarpur, there are sacred places such as Beneshwar Dham, the Dargah at Galiakot and the temple of Sheetla

Mata. Thousands of people regularly visit these places. With the availability of railway facilities, people will get significant convenience. Rail connectivity will greatly benefit the common poor, labourers, traders, entrepreneurs and tourists for travel to and fro. I humbly request your consideration in this regard. There is also a long-standing demand to accord national status to Mangarh Dham. Thousands of devotees visit these religious places, and rail connectivity will facilitate their movement. I would like to submit to the Hon. Minister that we are your neighbouring region and are closely connected to this area. The workforce here is linked with Bombay, Maharashtra and Gujarat, and labourers travel there for work. The people of this region are facing severe hardship. Therefore, I urge the Union Government that, under any circumstances, even on a no-profit no-loss basis, the Dungarpur-Ratlam-Banswara railway project should be commenced. This is the sole demand I place before you on behalf of this region. Thank you very much.

[*]SHRI PANKAJ CHAUDHARY (MAHARAJGANJ): The reforms carried out in the Railways over the last five years under the NDA Government are commendable. For this, I would certainly like to extend my thanks and congratulations to the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Minister of State, Shri Suresh Angadi. Over the past five years, unprecedented work has been undertaken to make railway crossings safer, to maintain cleanliness at stations, to introduce advanced technology and private investment in the Railways, to ensure punctual running of trains, and to provide better facilities to passengers. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways for having taken the entire responsibility upon the Government and, even this year, not increasing passenger fares. The Government has provided Rs. 1.60 lakh crore to the Ministry of Railways for railway development, enhanced safety, improvement of tracks and doubling of lines, which represents an overall increase of about 20 per cent in the Railway Budget. A 20 per cent increase in the budget clearly indicates a strong emphasis on railway development. When one travels by train, visible changes can be seen at the grassroots level. In this context, Rs. 3,423 crore has been provided for the

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

development of passenger amenities, which is Rs. 1,000 crore more than the previous Budget, and I would like to appreciate this step. Laying of new lines and doubling of tracks is a major challenge for the Railways. To address this challenge, over the past five years, the Government has focused on improving existing tracks and has refrained from making unnecessary announcements of new trains.

In the present Budget, the Hon. Finance Minister has provided Rs. 7,255 crore for laying new railway lines to address this challenge. A substantial amount of Rs. 700 crore has been allocated for the doubling of tracks. Further, Rs. 1,750 crore has been provided for improving signalling and strengthening telecommunications, for which I thank the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways. The problem of poisoning incidents and the safety of women in the Railways is well known. As a woman, the Hon. Finance Minister has shown sensitivity by allocating approximately Rs. 270 crore under the Nirbhaya Fund in the Budget for women's safety. Out of this, Rs. 250 crore has been earmarked for emergency response systems linked to video surveillance, which deserves the highest appreciation. When women are safe, Mother India is safe and the nation is secure. In my view, criticism of resorting to private participation is unfounded. The

challenge of expansion, development and modernisation of the Railways is extremely serious and requires about Rs. 5 lakh crore annually, whereas at present we are able to spend only around Rs. 1.5 lakh crore. From where will the remaining Rs. 3.5 lakh crore per year come? Therefore, taking recourse to private sector participation is appropriate; otherwise, it will take several decades to complete the approved projects. Our Government has also provided Rs. 1,000 crore for the modernisation of the Railways. In terms of facilities and cleanliness, our stations are now competing with those of developed countries, which is a result of the Hon. Prime Minister's Swachh Bharat, Swasth Bharat Mission.

In my parliamentary constituency, the Anandnagar-Maharajganj-Ghughuli (50 km) new railway line project was included in the Budget for 2013-14. Gorakhpur Railway Station under the North Eastern Railway is an extremely busy station, with a large number of freight and passenger trains operating daily, resulting in excessive pressure on Gorakhpur station and trains getting delayed for hours. With the construction of this railway line, a parallel route will be available from Ghughuli via Anandnagar, which will reduce traffic pressure on the Gorakhpur-Lucknow railway route. Along with the Detailed Project Report, detailed

estimates have also been received from the North Eastern Railway. As per the DPR, the cost of the project is Rs. 1,339.09 crore. This project has been approved by NITI Aayog and has reached the Ministry of Railways for Cabinet approval. Stoppage of the Gorakhpur-Gomtinagar Express should be provided at Brijmanganj Railway Station. Direct trains should be introduced from Nautanwa Railway Station (North Eastern Railway) to Mumbai and Delhi. At Gorakhpur Railway Station, there is inadequate space for stabling of trains, due to which platforms remain occupied and trains get delayed for hours. Therefore, a washing pit should be constructed at Nautanwa Railway Station so that some trains can be operated from there. In the Purvanchal region, Gorakhpur is a very old zone of the North Eastern Railway, yet it has not been provided with Rajdhani or Shatabdi services. The shortest and most convenient route to Assam, the North Eastern region and Nepal's capital Kathmandu passes through Gorakhpur. Therefore, I would request the Hon. Minister of Railways to intervene at the highest level and ensure that this is addressed at the earliest. There is a special need to provide Rajdhani and Shatabdi services on this route, which will facilitate passengers and tourists travelling to and from the eastern region. Finally, I would like to raise an important issue regarding India-

Nepal rail connectivity. We are situated close to the international border with Nepal. There has been a relationship of shared livelihoods and matrimonial ties across the border since time immemorial. However, there is no rail connectivity between India and Nepal. Serious consideration should be given to the project of connecting Nautanwa Station of the North Eastern Railway to Bhairahawa in Nepal. The manner in which China is increasing its influence over Nepal is a matter of concern for India. Maintaining good relations with neighbouring countries is a priority of the Hon. Prime Minister. Therefore, I once again urge that the rail connectivity project with Nepal be completed. With these words, while once again supporting this people-centric Railway Budget, I conclude my remarks by congratulating the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways.

Thank you.

SHRI M. BADRUDDIN AJMAL (DHUBRI): Sir, I am very grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this important subject. I see that there is very little time available. ... *(Interruptions)* Very well, if there is no shortage of time, then I would like to extend my speech. When you curtail the time, you may stop me.

I come from the North-Eastern region, from the State of Assam. I believe it would be appropriate if I confine my remarks to issues concerning the North-East. I say this with deep regret that even after seventy years of Independence, the North-Eastern region of this country has still not been fully connected by the railway network.

Sir, several projects that were initiated there have remained incomplete even after the passage of many years. Many of their deadlines have elapsed. The costs of these projects have increased manifold, yet a large number of projects remain unfinished. This clearly indicates that the Railways has not paid the level of attention to this region that it ought to have.

Sir, people from Assam and the North-Eastern region, in lakhs, migrate to various cities of the country, particularly Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Bengaluru, in search of livelihood. When these people return to their homes during festivals, the difficulties they face are

truly distressing. From these cities, there are only a handful of trains to Guwahati through which people from the North-East can travel. For instance, there are only four trains from Delhi to Guwahati and only three daily trains from Kolkata to Guwahati. How, then, can the problems of the people be resolved? This is our question.

Sir, on every occasion of the Budget, we have drawn the attention of the Hon. Minister towards these issues, but so far no serious attention has been paid in this regard. I once again appeal that new trains be introduced from major cities to Guwahati, so that the people of the region may get relief and are able to reach their respective destinations with ease.

Sir, my constituency, Dhubri, used to be a centre of international trade before Independence, but after Independence it has been completely cut off. We have repeatedly appealed, both to previous Governments and to the present Government, that new railway lines be constructed there and new train services be started so that the region may develop. However, till date, no such step has been taken by the Government which could provide relief to the people of that area.

Sir, in conclusion, I would like to place some demands of the people of Assam and the North-Eastern region. *[English]* We have the following demands:

1. New survey for construction of rail line from Jogighopa to Silchar via Mankachar and Mahendragarh International port.
2. Construction of new railway line from Bongaigaon to Guwahati via Langting, Kalgachia, and Barpeta.
3. Introduction of new train between Dhubri to Guwahati, including intercity and Jan Shatabdi Express.
4. Introduction of a daily intercity chair car train between Dhubri and Guwahati.
5. Introduction of new express trains from Dhubri to Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai.
6. Introduction of train service, both passenger and goods, between Golakganj station of Dhubri district in Assam and Kolkata in West Bengal.

[Translation]

Sir, I would also like to say this to the Hon. Minister of Railways. A very apt couplet has been written about rail travel.

People often recite couplets in this House. I will not speak of anything else, but I would like to recite this couplet:

“If the journey is by train, one is left utterly exhausted,
As though pots of sweat burst upon one’s head.”

Sir, the moment a train journey begins, a person has to face immense hardship.

“Buying a ticket itself is the first task and an extremely difficult one;
One may consider it the very first destination of the journey.

If one has to get a reservation, one must first find a porter,
Persuade him politely, and deal with a police constable if he becomes obstinate.

The booking office clerk will make things easier for you,
He will solve your problem, but will take his own fee.

He will arrange the reservation and take ten rupees,
Even if it is someone else’s seat, he will get it for you and only then rest.”

With these words, Sir, I conclude my remarks. Thank you very much.

جناب بدرالدین اجمل (دھبری): جناب، میں آپ کا شکر گزار ہوں کہ آپ نے مجھے اتنے اہم موضوع پر بولنے کا موقع دیا۔ میں دیکھ رہا ہوں کہ وقت کی بہت کمی ہے۔ (مداخلت)۔۔ بہت اچھا وقت کی کمی نہیں ہےتو میں اپنی تقریر کو آگے بڑھا دیتا ہوں۔ جب مہودے ٹائم کم کریں گے تو آپ روک لینا۔

میں نارتھ ایسٹ کے آسام سے آتا ہوں۔ میں شاید اپنے نارتھ ایسٹ کی بات کروں تو اسی میں بھلائی ہے۔ میں بہت افسوس کے ساتھ کہنا چاہتا ہوں کہ آزادی کے 70 سال گزرنے کے بعد بھی اس ملک کا نارتھ ایسٹ کا علاقہ آج بھی پورے طور سے ریلوے سے کنیکٹڈ نہیں ہو پایا ہے۔

سر، وہاں جو بھی پروجیکٹ شروع کئے گئے ہیں سالوں گزرنے کے بعد بھی وہ مکمل نہیں ہو پائے ہیں، ان کی کتنی ہی ڈیڈ لائن گزرچکی ہیں۔ اب پروجیکٹس کی کوسٹ بھی کئی گنا بڑھ چکی ہے۔ مگر بہت سے پروجیکٹس ابھی بھی مکمل نہیں ہوئے ہیں۔ اس کا صاف مطلب ہے کہ ریلوے نے ابھی بھی اس طرف اتنا دھیان نہیں دیا ہے جتنا دینا چاہئے تھا۔

سر، آسام اور نارتھ ایسٹ کے لوگ لاکھوں کی تعداد میں ملک کے مختلف شہروں میں خاص کر دلی، ممبئی، کولکتا اور بگلورو وغیرہ میں روزی روٹی کےلئے جاتے رہتے ہیں۔ جب یہ لوگ تیہواروں کے موقع پر اپنے گھر آتے ہیں، تو ان کو جو پریشانی کا سامنا کرنا پڑتا ہے، وہ افسوسناک ہے۔ ان شہروں سے گوہاٹی کے لئے کچھ ٹرینس ہیں جن سے نارتھ ایسٹ کے لوگ جاتے ہیں۔ مثال کے طور پر دلی سے گوہاٹی کے لئے صرف چار ٹرینس ہیں اور کولکتا سے گوہاٹی صرف تین ٹرینس ہیں جو ڈیلی چلتی ہیں ، اس سے بھلا لوگوں کا مسئلہ کیسے حل ہوگا، یہ ہمارا سوال ہے۔

سر، ہم نے ہر بجٹ کے موقع پر منتری جی کا دھیان اس طرف دلایا ہے، مگر ابھی تک اس سلسلے میں کوئی خاص توجہ نہیں دی گئی ہے۔ میں ایک بار پھر اپیل کروں گا کہ بڑے بڑے شہروں سے گوہاٹی کے لئے نئی ٹرینس شروع کی جائیں، تاکہ وہاں کے لوگوں کو آرام ملے اور وہ آرام سے اپنی اپنی ڈیسٹینیشن تک پہنچ سکیں۔

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سر، میرا حلقہ آزادی سے پہلے انٹر نیشنل ٹریڈ کا سینٹر ہوا کرتا تھا، مگر آزادی کے بعد سے وہ بالکل کٹ کر رہ گیا ہے۔ ہم بار بار اپیل کرتے رہتے ہیں، پہلی سرکار سے بھی اپیل کی اور اس سرکار سے بھی اپیل کی کہ وہاں نئی ریلوے لائن بنائی جائیں، نئی ٹرین شروع کی جائیں، تاکہ اس علاقے کی ترقی ہو سکےمگر ابھی تک سرکار کی طرف سے ایسا کوئی قدم نہیں اٹھایا گیا ہے، جس سے وہاں کے لوگوں کو راحت مل سکے۔

سر، آخر میں، میں آسام اور نارتھ ایسٹ کے لوگوں کی کچھ مانگیں رکھ کر اپنی بات ختم کروں گا۔ We have the following demands:

1 New survey for construction of rail line from Jogighopa to Silchar Via Mankachar and Mahendragarh International port.

2 Construction of new railway line from Bongaigaon to Guwahati via Langting, Kalgachia, and Barpeta

3. Introduction of new train between Dhubri to Guhawati, including intercity and Jan Shatabdi Express.

4 Introduction of a daily intercity chair ca train between Dhubri and Guwahati.

5 Introduction of new express trains from Dhubri to Delhi, Kolkata and Mumbai

6 Introduction of train service, both passenger and goods, between Golakganj and station of Dhubri district in Assam and Kolkata in West Bengal

سر، میں ریل منتری جی سے بھی اس بارے میں بات کروں گا۔ ریلوے کے لئے بہت اچھا شعر لکھا گیا تھا: دونوں طرف سے لوگ شعر مارتے ہیں، میں جانور تو نہیں ماروں گا،

لیکن شعر مارنا چاہتا ہوں۔ سر ریل گاڑی کا سفر جیسے ہی شروع ہوتا ہے، آدمی کو اتنی پریشانی ہوتی ہے

ٹکٹ لینا جو پہلا کام ہے اور سخت مشکل ہے

سمجھ لیجئے کہ اپنی سفر کی پہلی منزل ہے

ریزرویشن کرانا ہے تو پہلے قلی پکڑئے

خوش آمد سے منا لیجئےپولس صاحب اگر پکڑے

بُکنگ آفس کا بابو، آپ کی آسان کر دے گا

وہ مشکل حل کرےگا اور اپنی فیس لے لیگا

ریزرویشن کرا دےگا اور وہ دس روپئے لے لیگا

کسی کی سیٹ ہو، وہ آپ کو دلوا کر دم لےگا

انہیں باتوں کے ساتھ میں اپنی بات ختم کرتا ہوں، بہت بہت شکریہ ۔ (ختم شد)

DR. BHARATIBEN D. SHIYAL (BHAVNAGAR): Sir, I would like to thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. At the outset, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to our dynamic Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi Ji, the Hon. Finance Minister Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji, the Hon. Minister of Railways Shri Piyush Goyal Ji and Shri Suresh Angadi Ji.

Sir, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman Ji has become India's first woman Finance Minister. This truly demonstrates the strength of women. Until now, the entire country believed that women only manage household budgets, but today Nirmala Ji has proved that while she manages the household budget, she is equally capable of preparing the Budget of the entire nation. Therefore, as a woman, I feel extremely proud.

21.00 hrs

Sir, Indian Railways, which began in the year 1832, is one of the oldest railway systems in the world. With a vast network of 63,000 kilometres and about 22,000 trains in operation, it provides mobility to nearly 15 lakh people every day and is the third largest railway network in the world. Just as arteries and veins in our body nourish every cell and keep the body functioning, similarly, the railway

network in our country reaches every corner and keeps India connected and moving. From Kashmir to Kanyakumari and from Anjar to Arunachal, significant work has been carried out in the Railways under the leadership of our Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways. Since 2014, remarkable progress has been made in this sector. The entire country is aware that a loss-making Railways was inherited by our Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister of Railways. Today, I can confidently say that, in a short span of time, with the increase in railway revenue, our treasury will be strengthened, and such a robust system has been put in place by our Hon. Minister of Railways.

Sir, if there is any affordable long-distance mode of transportation in our country, it is the Railways. When I went for the Lok Sabha election campaign in the year 2014, the people of my constituency used to tell me that if I could get the long-pending Botad-Sabarmati and Dhassa-Jetalsar broad gauge projects approved, for which they had been demanding action for years, then even if I did no other work for five years, they would still vote for me. It gives me immense satisfaction to state that, although we had been resorting to agitations and protests for years to press for the demands of broad gauge conversion and National Highways,

immediately after 2014, and from the year 2015 onwards, work on the two major broad gauge projects, namely Botad-Sabarmati and Dhassa-Jetalsar, commenced at a rapid pace. There is a strong possibility that this work will be completed by the end of this year.

I feel that my colleagues have already spoken at length on the Budget. Therefore, I would like to confine myself to issues relating to my own constituency. As I have already mentioned, the broad gauge works are in progress. It gives me great satisfaction to inform the people of my constituency that, in this year's Budget as well, an allocation of Rs. 390 crore has been made for these two projects. Over the past five years, eight new trains have been provided to the Bhavnagar Lok Sabha constituency. Modernisation and renovation works are being undertaken at the railway station. The workshop at Bhavnagar has also been upgraded, and repair work of AC coaches has now commenced there.

In this Budget, the Hon. Minister of Railways has given us another valuable gift. Full funds have been allocated for conducting a survey for a new 100 kilometre railway line from Bhavnagar to Bharuch. Sir, I feel that many demands still remain. Bhavnagar and Surat are treated like twin cities. Our people desire that an Intercity train be introduced between Bhavnagar and Surat. There has been a

long-standing demand for a Bhavnagar-Haridwar train, which should be introduced. A Bhavnagar-Shirdi train should also be started. Further, the Ahmedabad Rajdhani Express should be extended up to Bhavnagar. ... *(Interruptions)*

In our area, there are three overbridges, due to which people face considerable hardship and heavy traffic congestion occurs. At Dhangli in Sihor, the railway crossing near the overbridge remains closed every half an hour due to signalling, causing severe inconvenience to the public. The Badtej overbridge is an extremely essential overbridge, and the Dhola overbridge is also an important requirement.

I would like to urge the Hon. Minister of Railways to accord approval for all three overbridges. The Bhavnagar-Mahuva train had been running since the princely era. At that time, one track was provided through public participation by the ruler and the other by the Government. Today, that railway line has been closed. I once again demand that this line be restarted. This will also facilitate freight transportation for the development of Bhavnagar.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You have covered all the important points.

[Translation]

DR. BHARATIBEN D. SHIYAL: Sir, our railway station should be provided with Wi-Fi facilities. A large amount of land encroachment has taken place there. If this land is handed over to the Corporation, we will be able to undertake beautification works.

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (WEST CHAMPARAN): On behalf of the Hon. Minister of Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, and the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi, arrangements have been made for dinner for all Members of Parliament and the entire Lok Sabha staff. I request the Hon. Members to have dinner in groups of eight or ten, and I also request all the staff members to partake of the meal.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: What is the menu? Is it vegetarian or non-vegetarian?

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL: Arrangements have been made in the Central Hall.

[*]**SHRI NARENDRA KUMAR (JHUNJHUNU):** I would like to place my views on behalf of the Shekhawati region and Jhunjhunu district.

"Brave sons are born in Jhunjhunu, carrying the shroud with them;
O beloved son of this land, your life rests in the palm of your hand."

I represent a district which is regarded as the embodiment of Lakshmi, Saraswati and Durga. I take pride in representing a district that has made supreme sacrifices for the nation. In our district, young women and daughters, aged between 20 and 25 years, have offered the vermilion of their marital lives at the feet of Mother India.

"When a single tear would have defeated the seven seas,
When hands adorned with mehndi removed their sacred marital threads."

A living example of this was expressed by our dynamic Hon. Prime Minister when he visited Jhunjhunu on 8 March 2018 under the 'Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao' programme. On that occasion, he said, "I bow my head to the soil of Jhunjhunu. The people here do not bow down."

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

I convey my gratitude to the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting such a transparent and direction-setting Budget.

Jhunjhunu district falls in the Shekhawati region of the State of Rajasthan. Along with being a soldier-dominated area, it is also an important district from the point of view of education. It is also significant in terms of trade and tourism. In the district, the Sainik Express, Train Nos. 14021/14022, which runs from Delhi to Reengus, is presently operated only on three days a week, namely Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. I would like to request that this train be operated on a daily basis. I would also like to request that a survey be conducted for the Jhunjhunu-Bisau railway track. Earlier, during the metre gauge period, trains used to operate daily from Luharu to Jaipur, but after conversion to broad gauge, only one train is now being operated from the Luharu side. Therefore, I would like to request that the number of trains operating during daytime from Luharu and towards Sikar be increased.

I would also request that an underpass be constructed on the railway line route between Luharu and Surajgarh at Slaiyoo Kalan tehsil, Surajgarh, in Jhunjhunu district.

Further, I would like to request that a reservation booking counter be started at Bisau.

[English]

SHRI V. K. SREEKANDAN (PALAKKAD): Respected hon. Chairperson, I thank you very much for allowing me to participate in an important discussion relating to the Demands for Grants in respect of the Ministry of Railways.

I was surprised and grieved that the State of Kerala was not given its due share as far as the Railway Budget is concerned. A coach factory was sanctioned for the State of Kerala at Kanjikode in Palakkad district in the Railway Budget of 2008-09. The foundation stone for the same was laid way back in 2012. The then Kerala Government acquired 439 acres of land for this purpose. Later, a compound wall was built around the acquired land. But thereafter nothing has moved beyond that. However, production has commenced in coach factories which were sanctioned or announced much later. This is total discrimination to the people of Kerala who were expecting much from this project by way of employment to the youths of the State and also other economic development. However, no mention of this much anticipated project at Kanjikode has been made in the Budget. Therefore, the same may please be included in the current year’s Budget.

Sir, secondly, the gauge conversion of Palakkad - Pollachi railway route was completed in 2016 involving a sum of Rs. 450 crore. Prior to this line becoming a broad gauge line, six pairs of trains were running between Palakkad and Pollachi. Now, in this route only one passenger train and two express trains are running. It was assured that all the trains which were running on this route will be restored after the broad-gauge conversion. But nothing has happened so far. It was also assured that new trains will be introduced between Mangaluru and Tuticorin. The main aim of making this Palakkad - Pollachi a broad gauge line was to facilitate port connectivity between Mangaluru and Tuticorin for faster freight movement as well as for transportation of goods from Tamil Nadu to Kerala and *vice versa* and also to increase the volume of passenger traffic as it is an inter-State connectivity route involving the States of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. This section is also very important from the religious point of view as it connects many pilgrim places such as Mookambika, Ervadi, Rameshwaram, Madurai, Palani etc.

Again, I regret to mention here that about this also, nothing has been found in this Budget.

Therefore, I urge upon the hon. Minister through you Sir to establish the Coach Factory at Kanjikode and provide funds for the same to commence the work as well as to restore all the trains which were running between Palakkad and Pollachi prior to gauge conversion and also introduce new trains passing through this route at the earliest, in the current Budget itself.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMCHARAN BOHRA (JAIPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways. With your permission, I would like to express my sincere thanks to the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, the Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and the Minister of State, Shri Suresh ji. The manner in which Jaipur has witnessed development in the Railways from the year 2014 till now makes the progress of the previous 50 years pale in comparison with the achievements of these six years. Therefore, I would like to place on record my deep appreciation to the Hon. Prime Minister and the former Railway Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji.

In the present Budget, the Hon. Finance Minister has announced, under the Railway Budget, the doubling of the Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur line and the setting up of a coach maintenance workshop at Khatipura. For these announcements, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister and the Railway Minister. Further, with regard to the various railway-related problems in our Parliament, the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi ji, is present here. I would like to request him that the Purushottam

Express, which runs from Delhi to Puri, remains halted at Delhi for about 22 hours. If this train is extended up to Jaipur, it would provide a very convenient facility for travel from Jaipur to Puri. I have been continuously requesting this since 2014, earlier to Shri Suresh Prabhu ji, then to Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and now I am making this request to you as well. Our Member of Parliament from Tata has also made a similar request to you.

A shuttle train should be operated from Jaipur to Sawai Madhopur. For those who travel from Jaipur to Sawai Madhopur for daily wage labour, as milk vendors and vegetable sellers, this would prove to be a very useful facility. I would like to thank the Hon. Minister for starting the shuttle express DEMU train from Jaipur to Ajmer. This DEMU train halts at every station and has provided considerable convenience to passengers. Similarly, if a train is operated from Jaipur to Sawai Madhopur, it would greatly facilitate passengers. Ever since I became a Member of Parliament, there has been a very strong demand from the people of Jaipur that a train should be started from Jaipur to Shirdi. Thousands of people travel to Shirdi every year. I would like to make a special request to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister that the Jaipur to Shirdi train may be inaugurated so that passengers, who at present have to

change trains at different places to reach Shirdi, may get a direct rail facility. In the same manner, the Jaipur to Howrah train, which used to run twice a week, has now been discontinued. It should be restarted so that people may once again have a convenient rail connection from Jaipur to Kolkata.

The Hon. Minister has also made arrangements for cleanliness in trains from the point of view of hygiene, both for Jaipur and across the entire country.

I would like to request that, in the manner in which bedsheets and pillow covers are provided in trains, greater attention may be paid to their proper cleanliness, as they are not thoroughly cleaned at present. If some more care is taken in this regard, I believe it would be beneficial for passengers. For those passengers who are unable to obtain reservations and who wish to travel in general coaches, additional general class coaches should be attached to trains. Trains are meant for the common people. Those who do not travel on reserved tickets would also then have better facilities for commuting. On this occasion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister for the manner in which work has been carried out in the Railways. The work undertaken is, in itself, truly remarkable. I

would further like to make a request that a fast train be operated between Jaipur and Delhi, so that passengers who travel daily from Jaipur to Delhi and return in the evening after completing their work may be facilitated. Shri Piyush Goyal ji has also made a statement in this regard. I would like to urge that steps be taken at the earliest to run a fast train from Jaipur. This would be highly beneficial. I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak and, while supporting the Railway Budget, I conclude my remarks. Thank you very much. Jai Hind, Jai Bharat.

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT (RATNAGIRI-SINDHUDURG): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, when I speak on the subject of the Railways… ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Member, please conclude only in three minutes.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT: I would like to speak on the subject of the Konkan Railway.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You have to speak only about your constituency developments.

… *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You have to speak only about your constituency developments within three minutes.

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT: Okay, Sir.

[Translation]

I would like, first of all, to felicitate the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi ji. ... *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: My name is also Suresh.

[Translation]

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT: Since the commencement of this debate till today, to sit at one place, listen to the views of all Members and take note of them seriously is no ordinary task. Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the Konkan Railway falls within my constituency. As you are aware, passing through towering mountains and mighty rivers, the Konkan Railway is a matter of pride for the nation.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Konkan Railways was constructed for Kerala.

… (Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI VINAYAK BHAURAO RAUT: The rail line running from Jammu to Visakhapatnam and from Delhi to Goa is a matter of pride for the country. I have only one request. The Konkan Railway is the busiest track in the country, and in order to run more and more trains on it, there is a need to undertake doubling of the Konkan Railway. For this purpose, Indian Railways or the Finance Department needs

to provide adequate financial assistance for the doubling of the Konkan Railway. In particular, premium trains such as the Konkan Kanya, Mandovi and Tejas run on the Konkan Railway. An ideal coach like the Vistadome operates at only one place in the entire country. Such trains should be promoted further, as a large number of tourists prefer to travel here. I have full faith in you that such trains will be appropriately projected and will receive due justice. With your support, electrification work on the Konkan Railway is underway, but substantial funds are still required for its doubling. I would also like to submit that during the tenure of the former Railway Minister, provisions were made for the construction of two new lines, from Karad to Chiplun and from Kolhapur to Vaibhavwadi, and the foundation stone for these projects had also been laid. My request is that, in order to link western Maharashtra and the hilly Konkan region with the coastal line and to enhance goods transportation, financial assistance should be extended through Indian Railways. There is also a need to construct an overbridge near Vaibhavwadi. For this, I seek an allocation of about Rs. 5 to 6 crore. At present, the gate there remains closed at least 65 times a day, causing several trains to halt. If an overbridge is constructed, traffic on the Konkan Railway can function smoothly. I

am pleased to note that after the Railway Budget was merged with the General Budget, many Members had apprehensions as to whether the Railways would receive due importance. However, today the Hon. Speaker, Sir, has demonstrated in reality that the Railways is an important subject by providing all Members an opportunity to place their views here. For this, I felicitate the Hon. Speaker, Sir, and conclude my remarks. Thank you.

SHRI AKSHAIBAR LAL (BAHRAICH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this subject.

Sir, just as the popular and dynamic Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, has undertaken all-round development of the country, in the same manner the work of rejuvenation and comprehensive transformation of the Railways is being carried out by the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and the Minister of State, Shri Suresh ji. For this, the people of the country are deeply grateful.

Sir, the Opposition is not appreciating the fact that railway fares have not been increased even by a single rupee. The Union Government has undertaken the work of comprehensive transformation of the Railways, expansion of railway lines and initiation of several new projects, for which the people of the country are grateful. I will confine my remarks to my parliamentary constituency, Bahraich, which is situated on the Nepal border. People from Nepal, Shravasti district and Bahraich do not have rail connectivity to travel to Lucknow or beyond, and they are compelled to use buses. The Hon. Prime Minister has visited Bahraich three times, and the Hon. Home Minister and the Hon. Defence Minister

have also visited the area. There is a strong demand from the local people that Bahraich should be connected by direct rail service. In this regard, I would like to request the Hon. Minister, since the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Home Minister have also spoken about this issue. Jarwal Road is about 60 kilometres away from Bahraich. Jarwal falls within Bahraich district itself, but the railway line running from Assam to Delhi passes about 60 kilometres away from Jarwal. If Bahraich is connected to Jarwal, it would provide great convenience to the people of Nepal, Shravasti district and Bahraich. Further, the work of gauge conversion from Gonda to Mailani, from metre gauge to broad gauge, had been started. However, this work has been completed only for a stretch of about 60 kilometres between Gonda and Bahraich. I request that the gauge conversion from Bahraich to Mailani may also be completed on broad gauge. At present, on the metre gauge section from Bahraich to Mailani, no train operates towards Mailani after 1.00 p.m. People who come from distant areas are free from their work at the court only around 5 or 6 p.m. Therefore, I request that a train may be operated from Bahraich to Mailani at 5.00 p.m. Similarly, a train should be started from Bichhiya to Bahraich. On the broad gauge section from Bahraich to Gonda, a DEMU train is operating, and an evening

service should also be introduced on this route. In the same manner, Nepalganj should also be connected by broad gauge rail line. Within Bahraich town, there is a serious problem of traffic congestion. There is no overbridge for buses and vehicles coming from Gonda, Balrampur and Gorakhpur to pass through Bahraich. The public demand is that an overbridge should be constructed on Jail Road, on the Gonda-Bahraich route towards Lucknow, to provide relief to the people. Similarly, an underpass should be constructed near Chungi Naka within Bahraich to facilitate smooth movement of the public. I humbly request the Hon. Minister, particularly for the convenience of people travelling to and from Lucknow, that since the Hon. Prime Minister has also visited Bahraich and spoken on this matter, kindly connect Bahraich to Jarwal through a broad gauge rail line. Thank you.

***SHRI JAGDAMBIKA PAL (DOMARIYAGANJ):** I place my views on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways for the year 2019-20. Indian Railways is the lifeline of the nation. Every day, about three crore passengers are carried by 12,335 trains to their destinations between Kanyakumari and Kashmir. In this manner, the railway coach becomes a home for nearly three crore rail passengers, for whom the Ministry of Railways makes arrangements for food, milk, refreshments and bedding.

In this Budget, our Government has focused on four important areas for the development of the Railways. The first is passenger safety, the second is cleanliness, the third is Capital and Development Works, and the fourth is Financial and Accountancy Reforms. In this direction, for safety, the National Rail Safety Fund amounting to Rs. 1 lakh crore has been earmarked for a period of five years. An MoU has been signed with Japan to prevent railway accidents. A decision has been taken to eliminate all unmanned level crossings by the year 2020.

* Speech was laid on the Table.

[*]**SHRIMATI RITI PATHAK (SIDHI):** I place my views on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways for the year 2019-20. Indian Railways is the lifeline of the nation. Every day, about three crore passengers are carried by 12,335 trains to their destinations between Kanyakumari and Kashmir. In this manner, the railway coach becomes a home for nearly three crore rail passengers, for whom the Ministry of Railways makes arrangements for food, milk, refreshments and bedding. In this Budget, our Government has focused on four important areas for the development of the Railways. The first is passenger safety, the second is cleanliness, the third is Capital and Development Works, and the fourth is Financial and Accountancy Reforms. In this direction, for safety, the National Rail Safety Fund amounting to Rs. 1 lakh crore has been earmarked for a period of five years. An MoU has been signed with Japan to prevent railway accidents. A decision has been taken to eliminate all unmanned level crossings by the year 2020. Today, many Members have stated that earlier the Railway Budget used to be presented separately, but it has now been merged with the General Budget. There is a clear reason behind this. After Independence, the Bibek Debroy Committee was constituted to bring

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

comprehensive reforms in the Railways. In the year 2015, the Bibek Debroy Committee made several recommendations, including the merger of the Railway Budget with the General Budget. The objective of this merger is to move towards Multi-Modal Transport Planning, under which Railways, Highways and Inland Waterways will be developed in an integrated manner. In the future, the Railways will benefit economically. Earlier, the Railways had to pay a dividend of five per cent. In the year 2016-17, the Railways paid Rs. 9,731 crore to the Government. During the British period, the East India Company operated the Railways and therefore a dividend had to be paid to the Crown. Even after Independence, when the Ministry of Railways came under the Union Government, the practice of paying dividend continued, which has now been abolished by our Government. Today, our Railways ranks second in the world. Indian Railways is undertaking a new initiative under which it has decided to provide end-to-end transport facilities for certain products. By the year 2020, all railway coaches will be equipped with bio-toilets. Our Railway Minister has accorded the highest priority to passenger safety and convenience and, keeping this in view, has decided to create a dedicated safety fund. The Union Government has increased the present outlay for the

Railways. The Government has also decided to formulate a new Metro Rail Policy, as metro rail is expanding rapidly in all States of the country. In the face of global competition, Indian Railways is working at a fast pace on the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project, on which an estimated cost of about Rs. 75,000 crore will be incurred. For the Ministry of Railways, an outlay of Rs. 1,60,000 crore has been fixed for this year. Compared to the previous year, Gross Budgetary Support has been increased by Rs. 5,000 crore to Rs. 60,000 crore, which will lead to faster development of the Railways in the coming years. Our Government will provide financial support to Indian Railways and an expenditure of about Rs. 50 lakh crore will be incurred over the next ten years. Indian Railways has decided to increase its expenditure by nine per cent this year compared to the previous year. In the year 2019-20, the estimated expenditure will be Rs. 2,07,900 crore. This time, the estimated revenue is Rs. 2,16,935 crore, which is about ten per cent higher than the previous year. Traffic revenue in 2019-20 is expected to be Rs. 2,16,675 crore, which is also estimated to be ten per cent higher than last year. Under the PPP model, the Railways will incur expenditure of about Rs. 50 lakh crore on infrastructure, including track and rolling stock production, during the period from 2018 to

2030. The Ministry of Railways has decided to undertake large-scale modernisation of stations. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister that after the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, assumed office, the NITI Aayog identified 115 districts of the country as Aspirational Districts in order to eliminate regional imbalance. The Government has not merely identified backward districts, but the Ministry of Railways has undertaken historic work to connect these districts with the national mainstream. Recently, the Hon. Minister, Shri Goyal ji, approved an amount of about Rs. 4,970 crore for connecting Khalilabad-Nandaur Wasi, Dumariaganj, Utraula, Balrampur, Bahraich and Shravasti through new railway lines, providing 240 kilometres of new rail lines. Our Government places the highest emphasis on electrification of railway lines. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to accord priority to the electrification of the existing railway lines of Gorakhpur-Anand Nagar, Naugarh, Shohratgarh, Badhni, Balrampur and Gonda. The Government has resolved to undertake doubling and electrification of all railway lines in the country. I support the Demands for Grants presented.

SHRIMATI RITI PATHAK (SIDHI): Since the formation of the Bharatiya Janata Party's full majority Government at the Centre under the leadership of Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji in 2014, major changes have taken place in the Railways. There was a time when the condition of the Railways was extremely poor, but today the Railways is in a strong position. The operation of trains such as Vande Mataram is a clear example of this transformation. In this Budget, adequate allocation has been provided to the Railways. Whether it is for the construction of new lines, gauge conversion, doubling, traffic facilities, rolling stock, renewal of rail tracks, facilities for employees, facilities for passengers, or electrification, numerous works have been provided for in this Budget. We firmly believe that through this Budget, the Hon. Prime Minister's vision of a New India will be realised.

Railways is an important link in the development of any region, and it is essential that every region is connected by rail. In accordance with the provisions made in this Budget, this dream for our country will also be fulfilled, and all regions will be connected by rail routes. Areas that have so far remained without rail facilities will now be connected, and where rail facilities already exist, arrangements have been made in this Budget to further strengthen

and streamline them. It appears that in this Budget, the vision and efforts of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji, the former Railway Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji, and the present Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, towards the development of Railways across the country, will be fully realised. It also reflects the positive thinking of the Bharatiya Janata Party-led Union Government, the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, and the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, that due attention has been given to passenger safety in this Budget.

Our Government is working, and has worked, to ensure that rail services reach all parts of the country and that the rail system is made organised and user-friendly. It is a result of the sensitivity of our Government that milk reaches a hungry newborn in a train through a single tweet, doctors reach an ailing passenger promptly, and assistance is provided in emergencies. There was a time when the highest incidence of crime occurred in trains. In this Budget, the provision of Rs. 7,677.77 crore for new lines, Rs. 17,601.76 crore for doubling of railway lines, Rs. 10,120.00 crore for renewal of rail tracks, and Rs. 6,960.26 crore for electrification is a commendable initiative of the Union Government.

Our Government is working to connect small and large cities across the country through the rail network, because the overall development of any region that remains deprived of rail services is not possible. I myself am an example of this reality.

My parliamentary constituency, Sidhi district, is even today untouched by rail facilities. The primary reason for this is the long-pending Lalitpur-Singrauli railway project.

I know very well what it means for a region to remain without rail connectivity. My parliamentary constituency is extremely backward solely because there is no rail connection there. I state with great pride that our district, Sidhi, has given the State a Chief Minister, has also given a Governor to a State, and has borne a major responsibility at the Centre such as the Ministry of Human Resource Development. Yet, it is with deep sadness that I must state that despite all this, our region, Sidhi, has still not been connected by rail.

In the year 2014, a full majority Government of the Bharatiya Janata Party was formed at the Centre under the leadership of Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji, and I was elected as a Member of the 16th Lok Sabha. It was my dream that, with the cooperation of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the Union Government, I would rest only after bringing the Railways to Sidhi district. Thus began my journey

of effort. I immediately met the Hon. Prime Minister along with the then Railway Minister, Shri D. V. Sadananda Gowda ji, and apprised them of the problem. With the full cooperation and blessings of the Hon. Prime Minister and the Railway Minister, I committed myself to this goal. My opponents resorted to taunts and verbal attacks, but I neither changed my path nor allowed myself to be deterred. I remained steadfast. Budgetary allocations were made and land acquisition was initiated. During this period, I also received full cooperation from the then Railway Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji, and the present Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji.

Today, I feel extremely happy to share that from 2014 till now, the Lalitpur-Singrauli railway project has received a budgetary allocation of about Rs. 1,790 crore. Land acquisition from Rewa to Sidhi has been almost completed. The bridge over the Son River falling on the route is under construction, the railway station at Sidhi is also under construction, and construction activity is visible on the ground. It appears to me that if the construction work continues at this pace and adequate budgetary support continues to be provided to this project, the Railways will reach Sidhi during the 17th Lok Sabha. For this, I would like to express my gratitude to the Union Government.

Within my parliamentary constituency lies Singrauli district, which is an industrial district and where coal is found in the largest quantities. I would like to state that although there was a railway line in Singrauli, there was no train connectivity from there to Delhi or Bhopal. In January 2016, I requested the then Railway Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji, to operate new trains, and on 12 August 2017, two weekly trains from Singrauli to Bhopal and Delhi were sanctioned. For this as well, I would like to express my gratitude to the Union Government.

Another very important railway project of my parliamentary constituency, the Katni-Singrauli-Ramna rail line, which had been pending for several years, has also been initiated by our Union Government.

Several historic initiatives have been received in my parliamentary constituency, Sidhi, including ten stoppages at various important stations, three railway ticket reservation centres, and the inclusion of Singrauli Railway Station in the list of Adarsh Railway Stations. For these as well, I would like to express my gratitude to the Union Government and the Bharatiya Janata Party.

With the blessings of the Bharatiya Janata Party and the trust of the people of my parliamentary constituency, I have once again been

elected as a Member of the House for the 17th Lok Sabha, and a Bharatiya Janata Party Government under the leadership of Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji has once again been formed at the Centre. The dream of bringing the Railways to my parliamentary constituency has not yet been fully realised. Therefore, I will continue my efforts so that during this term, the Railways may reach Sidhi. At the end, I would like to conclude my remarks by placing before the Government a few rail-related demands pertaining to my constituency.

1. Kindly provide adequate budgetary allocation to expedite the Lalitpur-Singrauli railway project and issue necessary directions to the concerned officials for accelerating the work.

2. Kindly provide sufficient funds for the doubling of the Katni-Singrauli-Ramna railway line and issue directions to the concerned officials and the executing agency to speed up the construction work.

3. Kindly regularise the Singrauli-Bhopal (22165/66) and Singrauli-Nizamuddin Express (22167/68) services.

4. A new evening Intercity train service from Singrauli to Jabalpur may kindly be introduced.

5. Kindly provide a stoppage of the Singrauli-Nizamuddin Express (22167/68) at Sarai Railway Station in Singrauli district.

SHRI RITESH PANDEY (AMBEDKAR NAGAR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, on looking at this Railway Budget, a saying comes to mind: much digging of the mountain, but only a mouse emerges. In her speech, the Hon. Finance Minister, in the characteristic style of the BJP, has projected a very large figure. She has stated that an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore will be made in Indian Railways by the year 2030. By placing such a huge figure of Rs. 50 lakh crore, an attempt is made to suppress the underlying reality, and the BJP does this in its usual manner. The reality of Indian Railways is that it is a commercial undertaking of the Government and needs to be viewed as such. Indian Railways needs to earn profits. It needs to generate profits in order to expand itself. Is Indian Railways able to do this efficiently? This needs to be examined. Is Indian Railways generating profits commensurate with its capacity? Is Indian Railways getting burdened with debt? Is it lagging behind due to an inefficient and lethargic organisational culture? In my view, Indian Railways is afflicted by all these issues. If one looks at the profits of Indian Railways over the past few years, they have been continuously declining.

Sir, according to the figures placed by the Ministry of Railways, in the year 2015-16, the net revenue was Rs. 19,228 crore.

Thereafter, it fell to Rs. 4,913 crore in 2016-17. In the year 2017-18, it further declined to Rs. 1,666 crore, and yet a dream of investing Rs. 50 lakh crore is being projected. I would like to ask the Hon. Finance Minister whether, if such investments are made, the taxpayers' money that will be spent will be utilised meaningfully. On this issue, the Hon. Railway Minister should also certainly clarify the position.

Sir, if we look at the backbone of the Railways, it is evident that the Railways has to stand before the Union Government with a begging bowl for its capital expenditure. The Railways is not able to meet its own expenditure and has to depend on the Union Government, which is proposing to provide Rs. 66,105 crore. I do not wish to make a very long speech, as I also need to raise issues pertaining to my constituency. Borrowings from the market and banks are to the tune of about Rs. 83,000 crore. The Railways spends only about six per cent of its revenue on capital expenditure. It is a matter of serious concern that the Railways does not have adequate internal resources of its own.

Finally, I would also like to make a request to the Hon. Railway Minister with regard to my constituency. A train that used to operate in our area has been discontinued, and no mention has been made

about it. Train Nos. 54110 (Down) and 54109 (Up) used to run via Mughalsarai, Jaunpur, Shahganj, Akbarpur, Faizabad, Sultanpur, Pratapgarh and Allahabad. This service was extremely important for students of the region. Earlier, the Hon. Member of Parliament from Faizabad had also demanded doubling of the Faizabad-Akbarpur section, and I would like to strongly support and reiterate that request. There is also a need to construct an underpass in Ambedkar Nagar. Gosainganj and Akbarpur fall within Ambedkar Nagar district, and both these stations require repairs and proper upgradation. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to kindly pay due attention to these matters.

[*]SHRI SUMEDHANAND SARASWATI (SIKAR): While supporting the Railway Budget presented by the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, I congratulate him. I also express my gratitude to the Hon. Minister of State for Railways, Shri Suresh Angadi ji. I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to the Hon. and dynamic Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji, under whose leadership Indian Railways is progressing on the path of development. The manner in which the Railways has developed during the tenure of Hon. Shri Piyush Goyal ji as Railway Minister is indeed noteworthy.

While supporting this Budget, I would like to place before the House a few suggestions with reference to my Lok Sabha constituency of Sikar and the State of Rajasthan. I hope that the Hon. Minister will pay attention to these and make sincere efforts to implement my demands. My demands are as follows.

Along with the Sikar Lok Sabha constituency, the Jhunjhunu and Churu Lok Sabha constituencies are also important areas of this region and are connected through the same railway track. There are several important religious places in this region, namely: (1) Shri Khatu Shyam ji, (2) Shri Salasar Balaji, (3) Jeen Mata ji, and (4)

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

Shakambhari Mata and Lohagarh Dham. Devotees not only from India but from across the world visit these places.

The business community of this region is spread across the entire country and they frequently visit their native place.

From these three regions, nearly one lakh soldiers serve in the Indian Army, guarding the borders of the nation. These soldiers are provided only railway passes and warrants. From this perspective as well, an extensive railway network is essential in this area. Sikar is also known as an education hub. About one lakh fifty thousand students from the State and from various other places are pursuing their studies here. Therefore, in the interest of students as well, there is a strong need for the development of railway services in this region.

Gauge conversion work is underway in my region. The work from Delhi to Loharu, Loharu to Sikar, and from Churu to Sikar via Ringas has been completed. However, the work from Ringas to Jaipur remains incomplete. This work should be completed at the earliest, and the gauge conversion project should be expedited.

1. A daily train service may kindly be started on the Delhi-Sikar-Jaipur route.

2. Train services may kindly be introduced from Sikar to Mumbai, Sikar to Ahmedabad, Sikar to Kolkata, and Sikar to Jammu.
3. The important religious place of Shri Khatu Shyam ji in this region should be connected by rail. For this purpose, a new railway line may be constructed from Ringas to Didwana via Khatu and Dataramgarh.
4. An overbridge should be constructed in place of the Jhunjhunu bypass level crossing at Sikar. In view of the increasing number of trains at Jaipur, a service station should be constructed at Sikar so that, in future, there is no shortage of space for stabling trains at Jaipur. Adequate land and water availability exist for this purpose.
5. The Shri Ganganagar-Jaipur Express may be made a daily service and extended up to Jaipur.
6. The Indore-Bikaner train may be made a daily service.
7. Earlier, the Shri Ganganagar-Jaipur Express and the Indore-Bikaner Express used to have stoppages here, which may kindly be restored.

I hope that due consideration will be given to my demands.

SHRI VIJAY KUMAR DUBEY (KUSHINAGAR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, the Union Government has increased investment and provided impetus to the Railways so that the growing requirements of the future may be met. With a railway network of 63,000 kilometres, operated by 22,000 trains and carrying about 15 lakh passengers, India, which has the world's third-largest railway network, is witnessing visible transformation in its Railways. We all remember that during the sixty years of earlier leadership, while travelling by train, people used to pray to God that they might not be compelled to use the toilets. Whether it was the condition of toilets in railway coaches, the cleanliness of the coaches, or the unhygienic state of railway stations, the present changing face of the Railways, which is before us all, clearly reflects the improvement in the situation. Electrified railway lines are spreading to every corner of the country. Cleanliness has been ensured not only in trains, but also in retiring rooms and at stations. Most importantly, the construction of underpasses in place of unmanned level crossings has been taken up on a war footing, and I can say that this has brought an end to many accidents. This era of change has come under the leadership of our Hon. Prime Minister. On this occasion, while making a request to

the Hon. Railway Minister, I would like to draw his attention to the fact that Kushinagar Lok Sabha constituency, which lies at the farthest end of the country, is located along the Nepal border. I had raised the issue, through a Starred Question and also during Zero Hour, that on the Chhitauni to Tamkuhi railway line, even ten kilometres of work could not be completed over a period of five years. I request that this work may be expedited so that facilities may be provided to the people of Bihar and the country. In the same manner as station upgradation is being undertaken, I would like to request that stations such as Paniyahwa, Khadda, Kaptanganj, Ramkola and Padrauna, which are in a dilapidated condition, may be beautified and modernised. The DEMU train that used to operate from Padrauna has also been discontinued. A new train service up to Lucknow should be introduced. If the most important Buddhist Circuit of Kushinagar is connected with the Buddhist Circuit of Kapilvastu, it will certainly open the way for the arrival of foreign tourists. Kushinagar should also be connected with Deoria. Most importantly, the underpasses constructed from Thawe to Gorakhpur remain waterlogged during the rainy season. This appears to be an engineering lapse, and the Hon. Railway Minister should pay special attention to this issue. At Gopalgarh, which falls under Kasya Nagar

Palika, where three roads converge and where there are schools on both sides, children often meet with accidents. I request that an underpass may kindly be constructed at this location. I thank you.

[English]

SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA VISWANATH (KAKINADA): Thank you, Sir, for giving me an opportunity to express my views and my concerns relating to the Demands for Grants.

First of all, I would like to congratulate the hon. Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman *ji*, who is the first full-time female Finance Minister, for presenting a full-fledged Budget in Lok Sabha. You have given me three minutes to speak. I would like to confine myself to the problems concerning my Parliamentary constituency.

First of all, I think, Pithapuram-Kakinada railway main line was sanctioned in 1960, but the execution of the project is yet to be started. Till 2019, its status has not changed. Pithapuram-Kakinada railway main line has been a long-pending demand of the people of Kakinada. During 2014-19, the Railway Ministry sanctioned nearly Rs. 450 crore for its development.

We do not know what has happened to that. A few months back, the Railway Board has frozen this project. It is very unfortunate.

After completion of 60 years, the problem is still there. We are not finding what the problem is. That project is the dream of the people of Kakinada. This is a long pending demand of the Kakinada

people. Land is available with us. Our Chief Minister Shri Jagan Mohan Reddy Garu is also ready to extend every kind of cooperation.

I want to explain the whole scenario. Kakinada city has now become a corporation. Kakinada corporation has more than seven lakh people. A big port is there. Two fertilizer factories are also there. It is very important. I would request the hon. Minister to commence this project at the earliest.

I want to mention two points. In spite of Kakinada town becoming a corporation in 2005, the name of the Railway station still has remained as Kakinada town. Many other towns in Andhra Pradesh which have become corporations have changed their Railway station names. I request the hon. Minister to kindly change the name of Kakinada Town as Kakinada Smart City Railway station.

From my East Godavari district, many devotees go to Varanasi. We are requesting for a train from Kakinada to Varanasi.

I have a last point. Kakinada ROB LC13, Pithapuram ROB LC431 and Pithapuram RUB LC430 are also pending for a very long time. The hon. Finance Minister has stated that infrastructure is the backbone of any nation’s development and quality of life, whether it

is highways or railways or airways or even digi-ways. We have gone beyond incremental growth to attain transformative achievements.

So, I request the hon. Minister that the Kakinada-Pithapuram project may be commenced at the earliest.

[Translation]

DR. SANJAY JAISWAL (WEST CHAMPARAN): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I rise to speak on the Demands for Grants on Railways for the year 2019-20, presented as part of the Union Budget by the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji.

Like you, Sir, I am also fortunate to have seen both the UPA and the NDA Governments. During the UPA regime, there were only announcements. From Shri Lalu Prasad ji to Shrimati Mamata Banerjee ji, announcements were made for more than one thousand surveys and over five hundred train services. However, these remained mere announcements and no actual work was carried out. If I speak of my own region, the Hon. Atal Bihari Vajpayee ji had initiated the work of converting the Darbhanga-Raxaul-Narkatiaganj line from metre gauge to broad gauge. The then Railway Minister, Shri Ram Vilas Paswan ji, had initiated the new railway line from Sugauli to Hajipur. However, during the ten-year period from 2004 to 2014, we did not witness any work being carried out on the ground. When the NDA Government came to power, we witnessed execution of works. Land acquisition was started at a rapid pace and

our railway line was completed. Today, under the Raxaul-Hajipur rail line, many projects are on the verge of completion.

The manner in which our Government works is best exemplified by our own region. Shri Manoj Sinha ji laid the foundation stone for the electrification of the Muzaffarpur-Bettiah-Gorakhpur line in April 2017, and he himself inaugurated the project in the year 2018.

As soon as our Hon. Prime Minister assumed office, announcements were made regarding doubling of railway lines, work on all bridges was taken up, and the process of doubling commenced across the board. I will not take much of your time. However, some Hon. Members from the BSP have been stating that if Rs. 50 lakh crore is to be invested, then why is it not a commercial venture? For us, the Railways is a medium of public service and not a means of profiteering. However, leaders of the BSP are accustomed to earning profits; they think only in terms of extracting money from the Railways and from every poor person.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I have two questions. Otherwise, I would not have risen to speak. More than 52 Members have spoken, yet no one has raised these two issues, which may also be a concern for you. Our biggest problem relates to the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana. Roads are constructed for villages under this scheme, and

these roads often cross railway lines. At that time, no one raises any objection. Later, when accidents begin to occur at such crossings, the Railways says that it is not responsible and that the road was constructed independently. If the road did not have the requisite legal approval, why was its construction allowed in the first place? And once the road has been constructed under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana, a solution must be provided, either by the Minister of Rural Development by ensuring proper railway crossings on roads built under rural road schemes, or by the Hon. Railway Minister by evolving an appropriate solution. When an ordinary citizen meets with an accident and loses his life, the Railways says that it does not know how the road came to be constructed and that it is not its responsibility because there is no unmanned level crossing at that location. This issue needs to be addressed urgently.

Sir, the second major problem relates to Road Over Bridges, which is particularly acute in Bihar. For ten years, I kept demanding the construction of two overbridges at Bettiah and Raxaul, but not a single one was sanctioned. I am grateful to Shri Manoj Sinha ji that when he became the Minister, he sanctioned eight Road Over Bridges for me at one time in the year 2014. The Union Government has released its share, but after one Road Over Bridge, the State

Government does not release its share. I would like to submit that the Railways should also evolve a mechanism in this regard. Announcements are made and the Railways releases its share, but if the Road Over Bridge is not constructed, the public does not derive any benefit. Therefore, there should be a mechanism under which, for all Road Over Bridges announced by the Railways, additional support is ensured from the State Government. Raxaul is the gateway to Kathmandu. Anyone travelling to Kathmandu has to cross that road. There is sheltering for nearly 16 hours there, and no one is able to proceed to Kathmandu. The road remains blocked for 16 hours, and I am unable to do anything because the Union Government and the Railways have already released their funds. Therefore, there should be a mechanism under which the Railways and the State Government together decide how the Road Over Bridges that have been approved will be completed. I would like to hear the Hon. Minister’s response on this issue as well. I thank you for giving me so much time to speak. Thank you very much.

[English]

SHRI RAJMOHAN UNNITHAN (KASARAGOD): Sir, I would like to express my views on the Budget for the year 2019-20 presented by the hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman in this august House.

The Budget 2019-20 is an evidence of the obvious discrimination of the Central Government towards the State of Kerala, especially towards my constituency, Kasaragod. I am sorry to say that Kerala has been vehemently neglected by the Central Government. The long-pending demand for a Railway Zone in Kerala is neglected in this Budget. Also, it is quite unfortunate that there is no fund allocation for the Kanjikode Railway Coach Factory in this Budget, which is a long-pending demand of Kerala.

The Kerala Rail Development Corporation Limited is a joint venture between Kerala and the Indian Railways for executing rail projects on a 51:49 cost-sharing basis. The former Chairman of the Railway Board, Shri Ashwani Lohani had agreed in principle to a proposal for two additional lines between Thiruvananthapuram and Kasaragod, parallel to the existing double line. The two cities are located 575 kilometres apart, and the new line will ease the burden on the current track, which is currently overloaded. Also, the State

had suggested constructing a high-speed line but the Railways pointed out technical issues. However, it is said that a semi-high-speed line could be considered.

I am raising three different issues relating to the railways. If these issues are addressed, it will contribute to the comprehensive development of my constituency, Kasaragod.

Every day, there are 92 trains passing through Kasaragod, the northern tip of Kerala. The constituency has three model stations which are under the category of ADARSH stations, namely, Kasaragod, Kanhangad and Payyanur. It is very unfortunate to say that no fund allocation happened for the development of these stations yet. The train connecting Kasaragod and other important cities in North and South India, namely Thiruvananthapuram Central-Hazrat Nizamuddin Superfast Express does not have a stop in the district.

Similarly, the Coimbatore-Bikaner Express and Tirunelveli-Dadar Superfast Express do not have even one stop in the district. The Netravati Express connecting the capital cities of Kerala and Maharashtra has no stop in Nileshwaram, a commercial hub of the district. The station has traffic of around 12 lakh passengers and generates Rs. 4.53 crore in revenue annually. I request the hon.

Minister to provide a halt to morning train Parasuram Express in Cheruvathur. I also request him to provide a halt to Ernad Express at Pazhayangadi for the benefit of students and office-goers. Antyodaya Express requires halts at Kanhangad and Payyannur and a stop for Chennai-Egmore Express at Trikaripur.

Sir, my second point is, the Jan Shatabdi Express connecting Thiruvananthapuram and Kannur, and Executive Express connecting Alappuzha and Kanui should be extended to Kasaragod, as Kerala does not end at Kannur but at Kasaragod. The major hurdle to extend the train is the lack of a rail yard in the district. The railways have 37 acres of land in Kumbla station near Kasaragod. This land can be developed for this purpose.

Also, two trains leave for Bengaluru from Kannur - one via Coimbatore and the other via Shravanabelagola in Karnataka. The train via Coimbatore can be extended to Kasaragod. If the Railways can start a Mainline Electric Multiple Unit (MEMU) service connecting Kozhikode and Mangaluru for morning and evening trips, it can benefit students, officer-goers and people seeking health care.

The third aspect is about the proposed 90-kilometre Kanhangad-Kaniyoor line, which will halve the travel time from

Kanhangad to Bengaluru to 6 hours. Around 41 kilometres of the proposed line is in Kerala and around 49 kilometres is in Karnataka. The feasibility study for the project is over. The Kerala Government has expressed their willingness to acquire the required land at free of cost and bear the construction cost as per the norms. Now, the consent from Karnataka Government is required to fulfil the project. Once completed, it will be a great boon for the entire development and welfare of all poor farmers, tribals, employees, senior citizens, students, businessmen, patients, and all classes of people dwelling in this hilly area. It will also be a great boon for all endosulfan affected patients of both States. Further, this line can also be utilized as an alternative to Konkan when it is blocked especially during monsoon season.

So, I would request the Government to do the needful to fulfil this project at the earliest. With these words, I conclude my speech with the hope that the

Railway Budget 2019-20 will consider the demands of Kerala as well as my constituency, Kasaragod.

HON. CHAIRPERSON : The hon. Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways wants to intervene in the Debate.

… (Interruptions)

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Members, please sit down. The hon. Minister is just intervening. It is not his final reply. Final reply will be given tomorrow.

Now, the hon. Minister of State.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH C. ANGADI): Hon. Speaker, Sir, it is a great pleasure for me to participate in the Railway Budget today. Since morning, the hon. Members of all parties across the House are sitting here and taking interest in the debate.

I am very proud that I come from the State of Karnataka from where, as you know, Basaveshwara has given the concept of democracy to the world. In the 12th Century, Basaveshwara established an academy called *Anubhava Mantapa* where different people from different societies came together and formed a casteless society. The norm of the society, as he said, was 'work is worship', on which our hon. Prime Minister is also working day and night for the betterment of 130-crore people of our country. After elections, the hon. Prime Minister has again devoted himself for the development of this country. He wants to make our country a *Vishwaguru* in all aspects.

[Translation]

India becoming a world leader is a goal on which we are presently working. We are reflecting on how India can become a world leader and how steps can be taken in that direction. Sir, you are aware of this. I feel a sense of pride that, since morning, Shri Adhir Ranjan

Chowdhury, Shri Sunil Kumar Singh, Shri Sudip Bandyopadhyay, Shrimati Kanimozhi Karunanidhi, Shri Durga Prasad, Shri Rajan Baburao Vichare, Shri Chandrashekhar ji… … *(Interruptions)*

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Hon. Minister need not read out the names of all the Members. More than 60 Members took part in the discussion.

SHRI SURESH C. ANGADI: About 60 Members took part in the discussion.

When the hon. Prime Minister entrusted me with the responsibility of Railway portfolio and when I started attending to the work, I started feeling that this Ministry is like a family. It looks like a *parivar*. The Railway employees are working day and night. They are working like a *parivar*. In Basavanna's *vachan*, it is called:

Ivanarava ivanarava iva nammava iva nammava

Kudalasangamadeva nimma maneya maganemdenisayya

21.52 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

It is a great pleasure for me to say that when I go to the office in the morning, I find all the officials and staff already working there

very hard. I went to attend many inaugurations. There also they have made good preparations. On the other day, I went to Anupgarh, Bikaner and Bhatinda along with Shri Arjun Meghwal ji, which are there on the border of Pakistan. Shri Arjun Meghwal took me there. It was a great pleasure for me to inaugurate a new train there. So, the staff of the Railway Ministry, consisting of 13 lakh employees, are working day and night for the betterment of the country. The same staff was working earlier also. But there was no vision. It is a great pleasure for me to say to you that Shri Narendra Modi has given a vision to us. For that I must congratulate him. The hon. Prime Minister has given a vision that Indian Railways is the growth engine of the nation's *vikas yatra*. The country will receive both speed and progress through the Railways. Railways today is better funded. The trains are safer, cleaner, and faster. The stations are cleaner. The latest technologies are being inducted and passengers are getting the digital experience. Every part of the country is being connected with rail line. As I stated hon. Speaker, Sir, in Basavanna's vachan it is said:

Ivanarava ivanarava iva nammava iva nammava

[Translation]

We travel frequently by train. During such journeys, whether one is from Kanyakumari to Kashmir or from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from Gujarat to Arunachal Pradesh, it is not known which State a person belongs to, which language he speaks or which caste he belongs to. When we travel by train, a person from one State may be on the upper berth, another from a different State on the lower berth, and beside us may be someone speaking another language, yet we all travel together in harmony. There is no division there. Our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, has connected 197 countries through the celebration of International Yoga Day.

In the same manner as, our Railways has connected the entire country. This also creates a strong emotional bond. At times, while travelling by train, the responsibility also lies with the Members of Parliament. On several occasions, emergency indicators are found missing, coaches are not clean, and stations are not clean. Making complaints is very easy. However, beyond making complaints, we must also reflect on, *[English]* what is our responsibility? The Hon. Members must understand that it is also their responsibility. During the last 55 or 60 years, before Shri Narendra Modi came to power,

they were made as political issues. In a single day, there used to be two Budgets as the Britishers were doing. Earlier Budgets were only political budgets. *[Translation]* Earlier, people were misled by repeatedly showing on television that fares would be reduced by five rupees or whether they would be reduced at all, but no real development took place. The Railways is also one of the essential means. Just as road transportation and shipping are modes of transport, the Railways is also a vital mode. After Shri Narendra Modi ji assumed office, with a clear vision, the separate Railway Budget was abolished and merged, thereby imparting the required momentum to the Railways. Today, I can felicitate Shri Narendra Modi ji for bringing it under a single Budget, allocating resources to the country and ensuring that so many people are working and delivering results. These very people were present earlier as well. Then why did progress not take place? We must engage in self-introspection. There is no need to blame anyone. If 130 crore people of the country work sincerely for a minimum of eight hours a day for the nation, India will certainly emerge as a great power in the world.

[English]

Sir, we can show our power to the entire world. Today, under the leadership of the hon. Prime Minister, there has been massive

capital expenditure by the Railways to help in resolving the railway problems. The UPA Government kept the Railways under dearth of funds. For so long, pending projects could not be completed. If you look at the Railway Budget of ten years during UPA Government, you will realise that they could not complete even ten per cent of their promises. This was because, neither they had the political will, nor they had the administrative capacity. There was no political leadership also.

Shri Narendra Modi Ji provided decisive leadership, clear vision, good administration. The results are for all to see. capital expenditure has been more than double under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi Ji. Between 2009 and 2014, it was Rs..2.30 lakh crore. But it was Rs.4.97lakh crore between 2014 and 2019. Sir, it has doubled. This year also, the capital expenditure is targeted to be Rs.1.6 lakh crore. UPA spent Rs. 1.25 lakh crore from 2004 to 2009. This is meant for higher focus on safety, completion of projects, improved capacity, connecting for plunged areas, North-East aspirational districts etc., modern technology, cleanliness of stations and trains, better passenger amenities. *[Translation]* The Hon. Prime Minister's thinking is clear. The first priority for trains is safety. The second is

punctuality, trains should run on time. The third is cleanliness. The fourth is providing Wi-Fi, passenger amenities, installation of cameras, and separate coaches for women. All these aspects are being actively considered. When I visited a railway station after becoming a Minister, I carried out my first inspection in a general coach. The condition of the general coach was so poor that I appealed to all my staff and officers to pay special attention to the poor and the farmers. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER: Do not make requests. Give orders. A Minister will not make requests. No requests, only orders.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI SURESH C. ANGADI: Sir, I will give orders and I will also make requests.

22.00 hrs

I have already issued orders there. Orders will be given, and people should also introspect. I would like to request all countrymen to reflect on this as well. In neighbouring countries such as Japan, China and Germany, trains run at speeds of 400 kilometres per hour. I have been thinking for a long time as to why trains in my country do not run at such speeds. I come from the State of Visvesvaraya, the

great engineer of the world, yet today I ask why our engineers are failing in the Railways. Why have we not been able to achieve trains running at 400 kilometres per hour in the Railways? This is due to the failure of leadership of the previous governments. Now, Shri Narendra Modi has envisioned the bullet train because he dreamt of it well in advance.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, if you all agree, may the time be extended?

... (Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI ARJUN RAM MEGHWAL): Hon. Speaker, Sir, the time may be extended by two more hours.

HON. SPEAKER : If the House agrees, the time may be extended by two hours.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes-Yes.

HON. SPEAKER: Thirty more Hon. Members are yet to speak. The Hon. Minister has given an excellent reply and has personally seen and experienced the conditions in the railway coaches.

... (Interruptions)

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I have a suggestion. All Members wish to participate in the discussion. Therefore, along with the Minister's reply, a written reply should also be given to all Members.

HON. SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister will look into this at his level. The Hon. Minister is giving a good reply. He is sharing his experience, that is, responding on the basis of what he has personally seen. We should make this effort.

... (Interruptions)

HON. SPEAKER: I would request from this Bench as well as from that Bench that once again all party Whips may request their respective Hon. Members that the discussion on the Railway Budget is in progress. The entire country is watching.

SHRI SURESH C. ANGADI: Sir, it is a great pleasure to note that the Railways is like a family. I observe the employees working here, who work with great sincerity from morning till evening. If they are not encouraged, how will they perform? Therefore, encouragement is our responsibility. Criticising others is very easy. A party which remained in power for so many years abandoned work and indulged

only in politics, leaving behind a tarnished image of the country and the Railways. Today, a great deal of good work is being carried out in the Railways. We have provided Wi-Fi facilities. We are implementing bio-toilets.

You are aware that when Shri Narendra Modi ji took a broom in his hand, a nationwide cleanliness campaign was launched. You too have initiated a campaign on the 13th and 14th for cleanliness, and the notice has already been issued. If the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, had not taken the initiative by wielding a broom and launching the cleanliness campaign, you may yourself reflect on what our condition would have been today. It calls for introspection by the entire House and by the respective State Governments as well, to ensure that India remains neat and clean and that we provide the necessary facilities for this purpose. Earlier, when we visited railway stations, one had to hold one's nose due to the foul smell and the filth that prevailed. Today, all railway stations are neat and clean. There is a high level of cleanliness. For this, credit must go to the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji. Before my tenure as Railway Minister, Shri Sadananda Gowda ji, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji, Shri Piyush Goyal ji and Shri Manoj Sinha ji have served in this capacity. All these Ministers have made significant contributions

towards cleanliness, and I would like to felicitate them as well. Today, when one sits in railway coaches, it gives a feeling similar to how we are seated in Parliament at present. The Railways too reflects a parliamentary atmosphere. It is like a family. Therefore, in the coming days, for further improvement in cleanliness and overall development of the Railways, all Hon. Members must take active interest. All Hon. Members should assume responsibility for cleanliness in their respective States in a time-bound manner.

[English]

All the Members of Parliament should also take interest. Had we merely delegated responsibility to officials and remained passive, none of this would have been possible. We can see the highest ever commissioning of double lines. We can see consistent improvement in safety year by year. We can also see that the train accidents have reduced from 118 in 2013-14 to 59 in 2018-19. Sir, we have removed 3,479 UMLCs during 2018-19. We are going to switchover completely to production of safer LHB coaches. We are currently making new coaches. For safety, it is more important. We are filling about 4 lakh safety posts. The *Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh* fund of Rs.1 lakh crore is created for spending on ensuring safety of Railways.

We have the highest ever commissioning of doubling, three-line and four-line. We have the highest ever electrification of 5,276 route km. in the financial year 2018-19, which is eight times in comparison to 610 km. achieved in 2013-14. We have carried out electrification work at a scale more than eight times greater than that. We have the highest ever freight loading to the tune of 1,221 million tonnes in 2018-19. Some individuals even went to Harvard and returned with certificates, claiming that they had done excellent work. Without waiting for any appreciation certificate from anyone, under the leadership of Narendra Modi *ji*, even in freight loading, we have achieved 62 million tonnes compared to the earlier years. Sir, CAPEX between 2014 and 2019 is more than double if we compare it with the figures between 2009 and 2014. When it comes to CAPEX, it is Rs.1.6 lakh crore, which is the highest ever.

We have inducted 12,649 wagons - which is 50 per cent higher - against 8,015 wagons in the financial year 2017-18. Sir, LHB coach production has increased significantly, from 2,480 in 2017-18 to 4,429 in 2018-19. When it comes to electric loco production at DLW, we can see an increase from 25 in 2017-18 to 145 in 2018-19.

Under *Vande Bharat* - Make in India, India stands first in high-tech, energy-efficient and self-propelled train. We could see that

trains are running 35-40 per cent faster than the fastest train between Delhi and Varanasi. We could also see substantial reduction in travel time due to faster acceleration and deceleration. We have also introduced world class features for the sake of convenience of passengers.

Under `Make in India' initiative, we have enabled world's first ever conversion of diesel locomotive into electric locomotive in Diesel Locomotive Works (DLW) in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh. These are some of the achievements we have made.

I would like to thank all the Members, including the new Members, who have participated in the debate. I would also thank you for your support for giving me an opportunity to speak. It is the duty of all the Members of Parliament to take care of the Railways as your personal property. Most people think that it is their right to untidy the Railways. It should not happen in the coming days. Many foreigners visit our country. India is one of the important tourist destinations in the world. Due to inconvenience of railway network, many tourists are not visiting our country.

We have to develop many more tourist places in India. By doing so, we can create maximum employment opportunities for youths, engineers, etc. The only thing is that we have to change our vision.

We all have to work hard. We also have the direction of our Prime Minister to go for cashless transactions. In the railway canteens in Parliament House, the Central Hall, whatever food we are providing from the IRCTC, everyone should go for cashless transactions or App for making payment. No cash transactions should be made. Only then, we could see a lot of improvement in the Railways. With your blessings, and the blessings of the hon. Speaker, I have made intervention. Hon. Railway Minister would reply to the debate tomorrow. I thank all the Members for patiently participating in the debate. I once again thank all the hon. Members.

[Translation]

***SHRI PARBATBHAI SAVABHAI PATEL (BANASKANTHA):** Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister, Indian Railways is continuously moving forward on the path of progress. When our Government was formed for the first time in 2014, what we inherited in the name of Indian Railways was a gasping system lying in an ICU. Under the leadership of Hon. Shri Narendra Modi ji, our Government accepted this challenge and began the work of reviving the Railways. As a result of these efforts, today the Railways has become capable of providing a comfortable and convenient journey to its users. I would like to congratulate the Hon. Railway Minister, who has made tireless efforts to develop the Railways into a healthy and robust system. Through the Make in India initiative, we are moving forward with the resolve to promote indigenous manufacturing and build a New India, an India that will be fully self-reliant and strong. In addition to this, our Government is also working in the direction of modernising the country. In this Budget, our Government has announced the development of the railway sector on the basis of the Public Private Partnership model. We are

* Speech was laid on the Table.

aware that it often takes several decades to complete all approved railway projects. Therefore, our Government has planned to use Public Private Partnership for the rapid development of railway projects within a fixed timeframe, including track laying, rolling stock manufacturing, and the delivery of passenger and freight services, so that targets can be achieved within the stipulated period. Public Private Partnership will lead to a significant increase in employment in the country and will also enable the Railways to earn substantial revenue. Our Government has set a target of investing about Rs. 50 lakh crore in railway infrastructure between the years 2018 and 2030, with a view to improving railway infrastructure and strengthening the Railways' basic framework. In this context, the annual capital outlay of the Railways will be around Rs. 1.5 lakh crore to Rs. 1.6 lakh crore. I would like to place before the House a few demands relating to my parliamentary constituency. In North Gujarat, districts such as Mehsana, Patan, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha and Aravalli have become large districts. From North Gujarat to Mumbai, Pune and the southern States, there are numerous important religious places. However, there is no direct railway facility from this region. Any train service that exists comes from outside the State, while people from all these districts reside elsewhere for

employment, business and government or private jobs. Every day, more than 50 luxury buses operate towards the southern States. If a new train service is started in both directions, it would generate substantial revenue for the Railways and provide better facilities to passengers. Patan is the ancient capital of Gujarat. Recently, Rani ki Vav of Patan has been included in the list of World Heritage sites, and foreign tourists frequently visit this place. There is also the Modhera Sun Temple. Mehsana and Banaskantha are known as Milk Cities and as Aryan Cities, and Unjha is the largest grain market in Asia.

1. 19107/19108 Bhavnagar-Udhampur-Bhavnagar

2. 19269/19270 Muzaffarpur-Porbandar-Motihari-Muzaffarpur

3. 19565/19566 Okha-Dehradun-Okha

4. 19573/19574 Jaipur-Okha-Jaipur

5. 19579/19580 Delhi-Rajkot-Delhi

6.16501-16502 Ahmedabad-Yashwantpur-Ahmedabad, I would like to demand that Train No. 16501/16502 Ahmedabad-Yeshwantpur-Ahmedabad be operated on a daily basis. At present, this train arrives at Ahmedabad at 3.45 a.m. every Tuesday and departs at 6.40 p.m. the same day, remaining stationed at

Ahmedabad for nearly 13 hours. If this train is extended up to Mehsana-Patan-Palanpur, it would provide great convenience to religious pilgrims travelling to Sai Baba of Shirdi, located near Kopargaon, and would also prove highly beneficial for travel to South India. Every day, more than 50 luxury buses operate towards the southern States. If a new train is started in both directions, it would generate good revenue for the Railways and provide significant convenience to passengers. Train No. 22451/22452 Chandigarh-Bandra runs twice a week. If it is extended via Una and Indore up to Himachal Pradesh, it would be of great convenience to passengers, as this region includes important religious places such as Anandpur Sahib, the karmabhoomi of Shri Guru Gobind Singh ji, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs, as well as Mata Naina Devi and Mata Jwalamukhi. Train No. 09564/09565 Okha-Shirdi Nagar Special Holiday Train was introduced in the year 2017, but it has not been included as a holiday train in the new timetable. If this train is regularised as Okha-Shirdi Nagar via Nashik, Mehsana, Patan, Palanpur and Ahmedabad, it would be extremely convenient for passengers. Train No. 12267/12268 Ahmedabad-Mumbai Duronto has been extended up to Rajkot. If a similar train is started up to Mehsana, Patan and Palanpur, it would fulfil a long-pending demand

of the people of this region. Just as arteries function in the human body by ensuring the operation of vital organs throughout, in the same manner Indian Railways is continuously serving the nation and setting outstanding benchmarks in service while contributing to the country's development. In conclusion, I thank all the employees of Indian Railways and wholeheartedly felicitate Shri Piyush Goyal ji, who is working day and night to accelerate the pace of railway development and to achieve the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's goal of a developed India. I am deeply grateful to you for giving me the opportunity to place my views on this important subject.

Thank you.

[*]**SHRI AJAY MISRA TENI (KHERI):** While supporting the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways, I submit that the following works are necessary for my constituency:

1. Rail operations on the Mailani-Lucknow section of the North Eastern Railway may be commenced at the earliest.

2. Lakhimpur Railway Station may be developed as a Model Railway Station and Khiri Railway Station may be developed as a rake point.

3. Omal Railway Station may be accorded the status of a terminal railway station.

4. A Railway Over Bridge may be constructed on the Lakhimpur-Gola route, and a pedestrian passage may also be provided beneath the existing limited overbridge.

5. A heritage train may be operated in the Dudhwa National Park.

6. The survey of the proposed Palia-Nighasan-Belraya route may be completed expeditiously and construction work may be commenced.

7. The Bahraich-Mailani rail route may be made operational at the earliest.

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[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

[*]**SHRI JANARDAN MISHRA (REWA):** The vastness and reach of Indian Railways, and its immense strength in connecting the different parts of the country, is far greater than what the common people see and experience in their daily lives. However, it has been the misfortune of Indian Railways that those who guided and ran it often had a very narrow and limited outlook. It was viewed merely as a means to secure votes. Its resources were exploited for personal interests, as a result of which its condition became akin to that of a paralysed person. However, when the people of the country entrusted the responsibility of leading the nation to Shri Narendra Modi ji in the year 2014, new possibilities began to emerge even in the exhausted railway sector. All the Ministers who have been entrusted with the responsibility of the Railways have viewed it in a national perspective, in accordance with the vision of Shri Modi ji, and this approach continues consistently. Whether it is the laying of railway tracks, the establishment of a Railway University for research in the railway sector, the construction of overbridges and underbridges, or the issue of punctuality, this vision is clearly reflected. From the point of view of cleanliness, the Railways has made a significant contribution. This contribution has carried the

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

message of cleanliness to every corner of the country. The Railway Department has redefined its priorities.

My parliamentary constituency had long remained deprived of railway facilities. However, during these five years from 2014 to 2019, railway facilities in my constituency have gained new momentum. Approval has been accorded for the doubling of the Rewa-Satna railway line, and the work is in progress. The road from Rewa Railway Station to the National Highway has been converted into a four-lane road. Approval has been given for the construction of overbridges on National Highway No. 7 at Rewa and on the Rewa-Govindgarh road, and these works are also underway. Approval has been accorded for the construction of the Rewa-Sidhi rail route, and work on this is in progress. Approval has been granted for three additional platforms at Rewa Railway Station, for an AC coach maintenance shed at Rewa, for the beautification of Rewa Railway Station, construction of a modern waiting hall and expansion of other passenger amenities. The Rewa-Indore chair car service has been converted into a sleeper service. Passenger train services have been introduced from Rewa to Nagpur, Rewa to Rajkot and Rewa to Vadodara. Passenger ticket booking offices have been established at Mauganj, Sirmour and at the Rewa Post Office.

Dabhaura Railway Station has been shifted from the Jhansi Division to the Allahabad Division. Stoppages have been provided for the Chitrakoot-Allahabad Intercity and the Kshipra Express. The survey work for the new Rewa-Mirzapur via Hanumana rail route has also been completed. For the approval of all these works, I express my heartfelt gratitude, on behalf of the 25 lakh people of Rewa, to the Hon. Prime Minister and to all the Hon. Railway Ministers who have, from time to time, guided the Ministry of Railways during this period.

As I have stated earlier, the Governments prior to 2014 did not pay due attention to the expansion of railway facilities in my parliamentary constituency, Rewa. Therefore, much still remains to be done. I would like to request the Hon. Railway Minister to kindly consider the following:

(1) The work on the Rewa-Singrauli railway line may be completed expeditiously.

(2) A DPR may be prepared for the Rewa-Mirzapur via Hanumana railway line and approval may be accorded for the construction of this new rail route.

(3) Approval may be granted for operating the passenger train from Rewa to Indore for four days via Itarsi-Habibganj-Bhopal and for the remaining three days via the existing route.

(4) A new passenger train service may be started from Rewa to Mumbai.

(5) The Rewa-Nagpur passenger train may be operated regularly on a daily basis.

(6) The passenger train services from Rewa to Surat and from Rewa to Vadodara may be operated three days a week.

(7) New passenger train services may be introduced from Rewa to Pune and from Rewa to Kota.

(8) A stoppage may be provided for the Tapti Ganga Passenger train at Dabhaura.

In conclusion, I support the Railway Budget presented by the Hon. Railway Minister.

Thank you.

***PROF. RITA BAHUGUNA JOSHI (ALLAHABAD)** I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji for presenting to the nation, as India's first full-time woman Finance Minister, an inclusive, public-oriented and development-focused Budget. Her Budget reflects the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's vision of building a New India. Indian Railways is one of the largest railway systems in the world, and more than two crore people use it daily as a means of transport. Over the past five years, the manner in which the Modi Government has expanded basic facilities and planned the Railways on world-class standards is unprecedented. Shri Piyush Goyal has played a significant role, as a highly learned, diligent and capable colleague, in achieving the Hon. Prime Minister's objectives. Today, when we visit railway stations, it is hard to believe how the face of Indian Railways has changed within a short span of five years. Clean platforms, well-maintained coaches, clean toilets, escalators on platforms, facilities for persons with disabilities, robust security arrangements, efficient freight services and sustained efforts to ensure that more and more trains run on time are all commendable. If, in order to further improve railway facilities, the Railways is moving towards Public Private

* Speech was laid on the Table.

Partnership, this would be a correct step, as the Government aims to raise rail services to international standards by incurring an expenditure of Rs. 50 lakh crore by the year 2030. The Railway Budget has also taken care of employees, with provisions for their training and facilities. Preparations are underway to propose various measures under labour law reforms to ensure that employees receive the due returns for their hard work. This will benefit not only railway employees but also workers in both the organised and unorganised sectors. Special attention has also been given in this Budget to facilities for women employees.

Indian Railways has historically played an important integrative role in the social and economic development of the country. Indian Railways will make greater investments in suburban railway systems through special purpose vehicle structures such as the proposed RRTS (Rapid Regional Transport System) on the Delhi-Meerut route. Electrification of the broad gauge network of Indian Railways will be completed by the year 2021-2022. A target of electrifying 7,000 route kilometres has been fixed for the year 2019-2020. Further, for the year 2019-2020, the target for new lines, doubling, tripling and gauge conversion is 3,750 kilometres, as compared to 3,596 kilometres in the previous financial year. The Hon. Finance

Minister has stated that the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail project is progressing well and is scheduled for completion by the year 2023. The Railway Budget for 2019 has proposed the launch of an integrated skill development scheme, under which all 13 lakh railway employees will be provided basic training. In the Budget for 2019-2020, allocations have been made as follows: Rs. 7,255 crore for construction of new lines, Rs. 2,200 crore for gauge conversion, Rs. 700 crore for doubling, Rs. 6,114.82 crore for rolling stock, and Rs. 1,750 crore for signalling and telecommunications. The Hon. Finance Minister has provided Rs. 66,105 crore for the Railways in the Budget. To develop railway infrastructure, an investment of about Rs. 50 lakh crore will be required between the years 2018 and 2030, for which the Government is considering the PPP model. The Government is also laying emphasis on the modernisation of railway stations. Along with this, there is a plan for the development of suburban railways to improve rail systems in major cities. For railway safety, the Rail Safety Fund was created in the year 2017-18. This year, the Railways has deposited Rs. 5,000 crore in this Fund, while the Union Government has contributed Rs. 20,000 crore. Our Hon. Prime Minister has drawn up several plans to bring about practical transformation in the Railways by the year 2022. By 2022,

all feasible tracks will be converted to broad gauge and electrification of all railway tracks will be ensured. Last year, the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the proposal for electrification of the remaining 13,675 route kilometres of railway lines. The total cost of electrifying the entire railway network is estimated to be about Rs. 12,134 crore. Work will also be undertaken to develop smart railway stations across the country. Wi-Fi facilities will be provided at all railway stations. Indian Railways has already provided Wi-Fi services at many stations. RailWire Wi-Fi service has been launched at 831 railway stations, making it one of the largest public Wi-Fi networks in the world. The Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, had earlier stated that the national transporter plans to provide free Wi-Fi at about 4,000 railway stations across the country. The national transporter will complete the Dedicated Freight Corridor project by the year 2022. This project will make the movement of goods significantly easier and more economical.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA AZAD (LALGANJ): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am extremely grateful to you for granting me permission to participate in the discussion on the Railway Budget.

HON. SPEAKER: Since all Members have congratulated the Hon. Minister, I also congratulate him.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA AZAD: Hon. Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Railway Minister to the long-standing demand of our region for conducting a survey for laying a new railway line and operating a new train service from Varanasi via Lalganj, Azamgarh, up to Gorakhpur.

I demand that new train services be started from Azamgarh Railway Station to Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata, Chennai and other metropolitan cities, so that the people of this area may get relief in their travel.

I also request the Hon. Railway Minister that trains departing from Azamgarh, namely the Mahua Express, Tapti Ganga, Garib Nawaz and Mau Express, may also be given a stoppage at Saraimir Railway Station, so that the local population may benefit from these services.

Sir, like many stations across the country, a considerable amount of vacant land is available near Azamgarh Railway Station. Rest houses, haats and markets may be developed on this vacant land so that passengers can purchase essential items. This will also lead to an increase in Government revenue and employment opportunities.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister, would you like to say something?

SHRI SURESH C ANGADI: Hon. Speaker, Sir, I have not spoken about my own State.

HON. SPEAKER: You may speak at 11.30 a.m.

SHRIMATI SANGEETA AZAD: Sir, the Railways is the seventh largest employer in the world. More than 13 lakh employees are working in the Railways, and over 2 crore 30 lakh passengers travel by train every day. I demand that a special drive be launched to immediately fill the backlog of vacant posts reserved for SCs, STs and OBCs in Group 'A', 'B', 'C' and 'D' categories of railway employees, which have been lying vacant in large numbers for several years.

22.12 hrs (Dr. (Prof.) Kirit Premjibhai Solanki *in the Chair*)

Sir, I further demand that the proposal issued under the 100 Days Action Plan to create seven units of the Indian Railway Rolling

Stock Company be stopped. It is unfortunate that this proposal has been mentioned in the General Budget recently presented by the Hon. Finance Minister. At the same time, two trains have been handed over to the private sector through IRCTC, and the practice of contractualisation has been introduced in several activities. Instances of outsourcing have also come to light, which is extremely distressing. I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Railway Minister to the parliamentary constituency of the Hon. Prime Minister, Varanasi, where railway employees are staging dharnas and protests against privatisation. I urge that all their demands be accepted and that the protests be brought to an end immediately.

Thank you very much.

SHRI ARUN SAO (BILASPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, over the past five years, under the leadership of Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji, Indian Railways has witnessed all-round development. Today, Indian Railways is passing through a golden phase. I am confident that under capable, competent and youthful leadership, and under the guidance of Hon. Shri Piyush Goyal ji and Shri Suresh Angadi ji, Indian Railways will continue to progress steadily and will meet the expectations of the people in the times to come.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the Bilaspur Railway Zone is the highest revenue-earning railway zone in the country. Yet, for years, the Bilaspur region has remained neglected, and the people there have not been able to derive commensurate benefits. Although a recruitment board office has been opened in Bilaspur, the recruitment process is so slow that the youth of the region are not receiving adequate benefit.

Sir, due to the policies of previous Congress Governments, Mungeli and Kawardha have so far remained deprived of railway connectivity. Owing to the efforts of the Government led by Hon. Shri Narendra Modi ji, approval for the railway line has been granted, but the pace of work is extremely slow. I would like to urge the Hon. Minister to expedite the work on the Katghora-Mungeli-

Kawardha-Dongargarh railway line, so that the people of that region may receive the benefits of railway connectivity at the earliest.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, a Railway Tribunal has not yet been established at Bilaspur. Even today, people from across the State are compelled to travel to Bhopal, causing them considerable inconvenience. I would like to request the Government to establish a Railway Tribunal at Bilaspur at the earliest.

Sir, Bilaspur is an important place. It is the second largest city of the State of Chhattisgarh and also the headquarters of a Railway Zone. Raipur is the capital of Chhattisgarh. The Union Government should make efforts to develop the railway stations of both these cities as world-class stations. In order to provide employment to local unemployed youth, it is extremely necessary to establish a wagon and coach manufacturing factory at Bilaspur. Earlier, the Railways had announced the opening of a medical college at Bilaspur, but no work has been undertaken in that direction so far. Necessary action should be taken expeditiously to open a medical college at Bilaspur. The existing hospital is presently not adequately equipped. Its facilities should be expanded.

An international hockey stadium had been sanctioned at Bilaspur, but the allocated funds were later withdrawn. The funds

should be restored and construction should be taken up at the earliest. Several trains operate from Usalapur Railway Station, but there is a lack of passenger amenities there.

Similarly, there is a shortage of passenger amenities at Kargi Road, Kota, Belgahna, Pendra Road, Bilha and Jairamnagar stations as well, and the Government needs to pay attention in this regard. Demands have also been made for providing stoppages of several trains at these stations, and the Government should give due consideration to these demands.

[English]

DR. BEESETTI VENKATA SATYAVATHI (ANAKAPALLE): Respected Sabhapati Ji, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity.

Indian Railways is the largest public sector employer. People demand responsible, timely and user-friendly service from it as its operations affect the entire country.

In this august House, let us remember Gandhi Ji. Before embarking on the freedom struggle, Gandhi Ji travelled throughout the country in trains to study the people's attitudes, emotions and their feelings towards their country. The Indian Railways has history of such great importance.

Sir, I would like to urge upon the hon. Railway Minister, through you, that Indian Railways should maintain its autonomy. The Railway Board is the final authority on taking decisions about expansion and improvement of the railway network within the country and catering to the needs of the masses. This has to be preserved.

Sir, the time is very precious at this hour. I, therefore, come straight to the demands of my State Andhra Pradesh.

I belong to Anakapalle parliamentary constituency in Andhra Pradesh. Recently, it has been announced that the new railway zone - Southern Coast Railway - will be headquartered in Vishakhapatnam. I want to bring to your kind notice and through you, to the hon. Minister of Railways that it has never happened in the history of Indian Railways that a Railway Zone is running without a Railway Recruitment Board. But it is so in Vishakhapatnam.

So, Sir, through you, my humble request to the hon. Minister of Railways is to consider the people's ambition to have a Railway Recruitment Board of South-Coast Railway Zone at Vishakhapatnam.

As was told yesterday, the capital expenditure for the financial year 2019-20 is Rs. 1,60,176 crore. We have a long pending demand for a direct train from Vishakhapatnam to Varanasi, from Vishakhapatnam to Bengaluru and one more train from Vishakhapatnam to Tirupati. So, these are all the main demands from our State.

We have also a demand for stoppage of a few express trains at Anakapalle station because it is an A-I category station. These trains are - Lokmanya Tilak Express, Falaknuma Express, Amaravati Express, Nanded-Vishakhapatnam Express, and also, stoppage of

Janmabhoomi Express and Ratnachal Express trains at Narsipatnam Road Station. To enlighten Narsipatnam Road, we have to remember the great freedom fighter, Alluri Sitarama Raju, who fought for the freedom of our country from this place. It is the demand of the people of two assembly constituencies Narsipatnam and Partakellopeta that stoppage of these express trains should be provided at Narsipatnam Road as they are facing lot of transport problems to reach either Visakhapattinam or Amaravati our capital city.

I thank you very much, Chairperson Sir, for giving me this opportunity at the last hour to speak about my Constituency.

Jai Hind!

[*]**SHRI S. MUNISWAMY (KOLAR):** Hon. Chairman sir, Thank you for giving me the opportunity to take part in the discussion on the demands for grants of the Ministry of Railways for the year 2019-20.

At the outset I would like to express my thanks to Hon. Minister for Railways Shri Piyush Goyal ji and Hon. Minister of State for Railways Shri Suresh Angadi ji as they are entrusted the responsibilities of the ministry by Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji.

Sir, I am representing Kolar district in Lok Sabha. After independence for the first time a member of Bharatiya Janata Party is elected from Kolar Parliamentary constituency in Karnataka. Once my district was a prosperous one, but now it is drought hit poverty ridden district. Earlier, the person representing my district was a Railway minister during the UPA regime, now they are sitting in the opposition bench. No work is possible if there is no will-power to work for the country and for the district. Kolar is the best example for this. During UPA only annoucement of new projects were made in every Railway Budget, bill boards were installed all over the

[*] English translation of the speech originally delivered in Kannada.

country including my state Karnataka. Railway lines were announced for various states and foudations stones were laid. However, no railway project was implemented on the ground.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: We have many speakers. so, please conclude.

SHRI S. MUNISWAMY: During UPA regime the assurance was given for new railway line between Whitefield and Kolar, Kolar-to Kadapa via Mulabagilu, Srinivasapur, also announced a coach factory at Kolar. However, no project was implemnted by the UPA government. All these promises have never seen the light of the day. All the promises still remains on paper.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Conclude kindly.

SHRI S. MUNISWAMY: In the previous tenure of Shri Narendra Modi ji's government Shri Suresh Prabhu ji and now Shri Piyush Goyal ji and Shri Suresh Angadi ji, all the Railway ministers have been working hard for progress of the railways. This government has taken steps for Signal free crossings, Rail Under Bridges are replacing the Over Bridge. The government has addresed the issue of train accidents. Earlier there used to be a large number of railway accidents, now the number of accidents have come down; trians were not running as per scheduled, now-a-days they are running as

per the time schedule. Top priority is given for cleanlinsess. Railway lines are electrified. Therefore I congratulate the Hon. Prime minister shri Narendra Modi ji.

[Translation]

***SHRI AJAY TAMTA (ALMODA):** I thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister for this historic Railway Budget. A record allocation of Rs. 1.60 lakh crore has been provided for the Railways, with special priority accorded to the construction of new tracks, gauge conversion, doubling, rolling stock, signalling and telecommunications.

Whereas previous Governments failed to introduce the bullet train and used the Railways for political purposes, many projects could not be announced and there was a persistent shortage of funds for implementation of projects. In contrast, under the Government led by Hon. Shri Narendra Modi ji, works are being completed on a priority basis in the spirit of "what is said is done". Provision of drinking water at stations across the country, upgradation of waiting halls and other passenger amenities are among the Government's priorities. The Hon. Prime Minister's vision is to make India a technological power so that people receive world-class facilities.

My State, Uttarakhand, is home to major pilgrimage centres along with international tourism destinations. Every year, lakhs of tourists and pilgrims visit the State. Expansion of rail routes will be

* Speech was laid on the Table.

instrumental in increasing rail traffic. As we are aware, neighbouring country China has made significant progress in extending its rail network up to its borders.

If the construction work of the sanctioned railway track from Rishikesh to Karnaprayag, aimed at connecting the four Dhams of Uttarakhand to the rail network, is commenced at a rapid pace, it will greatly benefit lakhs of pilgrims, tourists and the local population of the country.

My State, Uttarakhand, shares its borders with Nepal and China, where rail operations are extremely necessary from a strategic point of view. In my parliamentary constituency No. 03, Almora, for the first time since Independence, the gauge conversion of the Bhojipura-Tanakpur railway line, covering a length of 101 kilometres, has been completed under the Modi Government. Train services such as the Triveni Express and the Delhi-Bareilly Express have now commenced operations on this track. Owing to the border location, strategic importance and significant military presence in this region, there is a need for high-speed train services from Tanakpur Railway Station to Lucknow, Dehradun, Mumbai and Delhi. Keeping in view the religious significance and military importance of the area, new trains may be introduced in the name of

Purnagiri and Pithoragarh, so that this region may find due recognition on the world map. Purnagiri is regarded as a major pilgrimage centre of North India, while Pithoragarh is famously known as ‘Mini Kashmir’.

The survey for the new Ramnagar-Chaukhutia-Gairsain railway line was approved in the year 2015-16, and an agency was finalised for this purpose in November 2016. I therefore request that approval may kindly be accorded for this new railway line.

The Tanakpur-Bageshwar-Jauljibi railway line, which is a project of strategic importance, has already had its survey report forwarded by the North Eastern Railway to the Railway Board for approval. Necessary financial sanction may kindly be accorded for the construction of this project.

Approval may also be granted for conducting a survey of the railway line from Chaukhutia to Bageshwar via Garur, with an approximate length of 19 kilometres through tunnel routes. This will help reduce distance and save time by providing tunnel connectivity in difficult and inaccessible mountainous areas.

In conclusion, I would like to state without hesitation that the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister have made

successful efforts to make Indian Railways world-class. The extent of appreciation for these efforts can never be sufficient.

[English]

ADV. ADOOR PRAKASH (ATTINGAL): Hon. Chairperson, thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways for 2019-20. Going through the Budget, we can see that the hon. Minister is banking totally on the public-private participation for development of rail projects. It is estimated that railway infrastructure would need an investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore for the next decade. The report published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation in December 2018 showed that the cost overrun of 205 delayed railway projects is Rs. 2.21 lakh crore. But there is no mention in the Economic Survey and the Budget Speech about cost escalation due to project delays. The Government is generalizing this issue by proposing the PPP mode for completion of the sanctioned projects.

Safety is a major issue which Railways has been facing in the recent past. For passenger safety, the Government had announced the creation of Rashtriya Rail Sanraksha Kosh with a corpus of one lakh crore of rupees over a period of five years. The present status of

the same is not known and there is no mention about this in the Budget.

The decision of the Union Government to share the cost of the development projects with the States on 50:50 basis will definitely impede the development of railway.

The State of Kerala which witnessed the worst flood in the century is struggling for reconstruction. The State is in deep financial crisis and unable to bear the 50 per cent cost of all the projects. As a result of this cost sharing condition, the State is in such a position that it cannot utilize the allocation earmarked in the Budget.

The allocation for doubling of railway lines in Kerala is not sufficient. Requests from the State for higher allocation for other developmental works were also ignored. The Angamali-Sabarimala new railway line was sanctioned in the year 1997-98 at a cost of Rs. 550 crore. The project is presently held up and the project cost has increased to Rs. 2815 crore.

There are regular complaints from passengers of Kerala-bound long- distance trains about poor maintenance and old coaches. Recently, four passengers travelling on Kerala Express train from Agra to Coimbatore died of heat stroke. Railways should take

necessary steps so that such unfortunate incidents are not repeated. Theft incidents are also reported, especially in long-distance trains.

The Government had proposed development of railway stations across the country and some stations were selected. Indian Railway Stations Development Corporation had proposed Varkala Sivagiri railway station in my constituency to develop it as a world-class station. A master plan of Rs. 600 crore has been prepared by RITES for the same. I request the Government to consider the development of this station on top priority.

There are ten level crossings in my parliamentary constituency. We need to construct rail overbridges over there. Passengers are facing acute difficulties at the level crossing at Chrirayinkil. Construction of a rail overbridge is of very urgent need.... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly sum up by mentioning important points only.

ADV. ADOOR PRAKASH : I am concluding, Sir.

Land has already been acquired but the work has not started. Work on these level crossings should start without delay. Construction of a railway overbridge at Edava in Varkala is also a

long pending demand. I would request the Government to consider these demands on priority.…*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI ARJUN LAL MEENA (UDAIPUR): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to thank you at the outset. I also express my gratitude to the country's dynamic Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, the Hon. Minister of State, and the Union Government. I come from the Udaipur Lok Sabha constituency of Rajasthan. Udaipur is an important place from the point of view of tourism, history and as a wedding destination. Through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to this matter.

In the year 2009, when the UPA Government was in power, the gauge conversion from Udaipur to Himmatnagar via Ahmedabad was announced. However, over a period of five years, only Rs. 109 crore was spent on this project. On behalf of the people of my constituency, I extend my best wishes to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Modi Government. When the Government led by Shri Modi ji came to power in 2014 and our Hon. Railway Minister assumed charge, an amount of Rs. 1,250 crore was provided for these gauge conversion projects. As a result, the work on the 211 kilometre gauge conversion rail line from Udaipur to Umra, Zawar Mines, Jaysamand Road, Semari, Rishabhdev Road, Dungarpur, and further

into Gujarat up to Shamlaji and Himmatnagar commenced at a rapid pace. During this period, work on Road Over Bridges and Road Under Bridges has also been underway. However, the work on the tunnel before Zawar Mines, which was scheduled to be completed by December, is progressing at a slow pace.

I would like to request the Hon. Railway Minister to kindly expedite the said work. Through you, Sir, I would also like to submit that there is a railway station named Surkhandkheda, with habitation on both sides. Earlier, drinking water and irrigation water were supplied there through a pipeline. I had already provided Rs. 5 lakh from MPLADS for this purpose. I humbly request the Hon. Minister to ensure that this work is completed. Finally, I would like to request that approval be accorded for conducting a survey for a new railway line from Udaipur via Gogunda to Pindwara and Mount Abu, so that passengers travelling to Mount Abu as well as those going towards Jodhpur may be provided better facilities. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI SURESH PUJARI (BARGARH): I am thankful to you, Mr. Chairman, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways. I will be more grateful if I am given a little more time.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No extra time will be given. Kindly confine to three minutes only.

SHRI SURESH PUJARI: I am saying this because of three reasons. Firstly, this is my maiden speech in this august House. Secondly, I would like to bring to the kind attention of the House that my State of Odisha has got the highest allocation my State has ever got after Independence. When you get more, you develop the habit of appreciating more and also demanding more. I will be laying major part of my speech on the Table. Through you, Mr. Chairman, I would be apprising the Hon. Minister about certain problems concerning my constituency as well as the State.

During UPA regimes from 2004 to 2014, Odisha got an allocation of Rs.4190 crore only and against that in this year alone, Odisha got more than double of what we got in long nine years of UPA Raj. The allocation between this period from 2014-2019 has gone up to Rs20,000 crore in Odisha. The current Railway Budget

has 13 per cent more allocation of funds for East Coast Railway which is the Railway Zone of my State. Apart from other areas of South Eastern Railway, there has been 60 per cent hike in the allocation for new lines in Odisha amounting to around Rs.2630 crore. There has been 118 per cent enhancement in allocation for passenger amenities which is put at Rs.182 crore.

It is pertinent to mention here that the railway lines are being constructed in my State at the rate of 29 kilometres per year as compared to 10 kilometres per year between 2004 and 2014. But there is still higher scope for acceleration of work in Odisha provided there is better cooperation and coordination between the State Government and the Department of Railways.

I am thankful to the Department of Railways for sanctioning Rs.1400 crore through EBR for Jharsugda-Barpali via Bargarh new rail line. It is part of my constituency. Having said that, I will just raise two demands of my constituency.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude now.

SHRI SURESH PUJARI: Odisha is a State which was formed in 1936 on language basis by carrying out parts of West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You put your demand.

SHRI SURESH PUJARI: The entire State of Odisha needs to be put in one Railway Zone, *i.e*., East Coast. Part of my constituency is in the East Coast Zone and other part is in Bilaspur Division of South East Central Railway and another part in Chauradhar division of South Eastern Railway whose survey has already been completed. My submission is that the entire railway network in Odisha should be put under one zone for the better functioning of the Railway network in Odisha. Jharsugda is a place that deserves a railway division. In the district from which I hail from, the district of Bargarh, there is a genuine demand for a new rail line from Bargarh to Nuapada *via* Bijapur and Padampur. I will lay rest of my speech.

*I express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister for giving special attention to Odisha by way of record allocation for overall improvement of Railway network in Odisha which has been the target of discrimination since independence for a long time in the last century. Odisha, which has been getting 600 to 700 cr annually during the last UPA government, which put together which comes

* This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

around Rs.4,190 crore from 2004 to 2013, got five fold more this time between 2014 to 2019. The allocation between this period is more than Rs.20 thousand crores. The current Railways budget has 13% in allocation of funds for East Coast Railway, the main Railway Zone of my State which comes around Rs.7,010 crores apart from allocation made to other zones, that covers part of my State's Railway network. There has been 63% hike in allocation for New Lines in Odisha, amounting to around Rs.2,630 crores and 118% enhancement in allocation for passenger's amenities, which is put at Rs.182 crores. It is pertinent to mention here that railway lines are being constructed in Odisha @29 km per year since 2014-18 as compared to 10 km per year between 2004-2014. There is still higher scope of acceleration in the event of closer coordination between the Railway and State Government. Similarly the doubling work has gone up from 16 km per year in 2004-14 to 83 kms per year 2014-18.

Similarly, electrification of lines in Odisha has gone up from 35 km per year from 2004-14 to 110 km per year during 2014-18. The Budget grant for 2019-20 for Railway in Odisha is almost same as provided in the interim budget - Rs.5993 Cr. this year against 5940 Cr. in the interim budget - against last year's allocation of Rs.5252

crores. Gratitude to Hon. Prime Minister/Finance Minister/Railway Minister for record allocation in the history of Rail Budget for Odisha. The Budget provided five surveys of new rail lines, 2 automatic coach washing plant, road over bridges and road under bridges across Odisha. Estimated investment of Rs.1,400 crore through EBR for Jharsuguda-Barpali via Bargarh New Line of my Parliamentary Constituency has been provided. The Doubling of rail line includes Jharsuguda-Rengali, part of my Parliamentary Constituency and Sambalpur-Titagarh via Bargarh covering a distance of 182.11 km for which Rs.170 crore has been earmarked + 170 Cr. in the Interim Budget. Sambalpur Telchar (174.11 km) has got a grant of Rs. 249 crores apart from another Rs.249 granted in the Interim Budget. The Khurda Road - Bolangir New line, which has got Rs.350 + Rs.350 crores in both interim and this budget needs acceleration for early completion.

Amongst Flyovers, my Parliamentary Constituency and the Railway Division has got Brundamal - Jharsuguda Fly over costing 86 Crore and fly over in Sambalpur, Sarla, Sambalpur City were allocated sufficient funds which were long standing demand of the people of the area. Demand of Odisha in general and Question related to Orissa in particular:

Odisha is a State formed on the basis of language way back in 1936. Prior to that some part of Odisha was in Bengal and some part of Odisha was in Madhya Pradesh. Though the portion of Odisha in West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh were carved out, the railway installation of Odisha still continues to be on the other side of fence even after almost a century.

East Coast Railway was established on 8th August 1996. Even after the lapse of almost twenty years railway offices across the state of Odisha have not yet been brought within the ambit of East Coast Railway from either South Eastern Railway, South East Central Railway or other railway zone of the country.

It is pertinent to mention here that the district of Jharsuguda, which is a district within my Parliamentary Constituency, has railway offices under the administrative control of South Eastern Railway, South East Central Railway as well as under East Coast Railway in Odisha.

Jharsuguda railway office is under Chakradharpur Railway Division of South Eastern Railway Zone and Brajrajnagar and Belpahar are within the ambit of in Bilaspur Division of South East Central Railway zone. Similarly in the costal Odisha, Balasore, Bhadrak and Mayurbhag are in the South Eastern Railway. For the

greater interest of the state of Odisha and of the railway as a whole, all the railway offices as well as it’s rail lines should be brought within the administrative control of East Coast Railway, Khurda in Odisha. The railway office of Sundargarh District which is a scheduled area should also be put under administrative control of East Coast Railway.

Bargarh is a district on other side of Sambalpur, fortunately within the administrative control of Sambalpur Railway Division of East Coast Railway. Bargarh is a district which produces one-fourth of Odisha's annual peddy production, for which it is said to be Bhatahandi, Rice Bowl, Mata Annapurna of Odisha but this station has neither been electrified yet nor has the facility of watering the train as a results of which not a single train originates from Bargarh of Odisha which once upon a time was a epi-centre of India’s revolutionary freedom movements.

Surendra Sai was a freedom fighter and warrior who waged an armed struggle against the Britishers, twenty eight years before the first war of independence that took place in the year 1857.

Many such revolutionaries of that moment went to gallows, many were to sentenced to deportation for life and sent to the

Cellular jail of Andaman and they never returned and many were shot dead.

Surendra Sai was sent to the prison and he spent in prison for long thirty seven years till his death which will longest in the history of the world.

Ghens is a place in district of Bargarh where three generations sacrificed their life along with hundred others for the liberation of the motherland. Madho Singh, the zamindar of Ghens was hanged in 1858 during the sepoy mutiny and out of his three sons, Khate Singh was sentenced to deportation for life and sent to Andaman and his other two sons Kunjel Singh and Barri Singh were hanged to death.

Today we are all set to celebrate the 75th year of the India's Independence and 150th year of Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary.

Can we take this occasion as an opportunity to pay rich tribute to all those unsung National Heroes by developing the Indian Railway network in the district Barger by:

1. Laying of new rail lines from Bargarh to Nuapada via Bijepur and Padampur and name those railway station in name of those National Heroes.

2. To go for modernization of Bargarh Railway Station with electrification, watering facility and second platform with adequate lighting facility.

3. Running of local train from Titlagarh to Sambalpur early morning via Bargarh to enable the commuters to reach Sambalpur by 6 AM in the morning to avail 18303-Sambalpuri Intercity Express and 22839-Rourkela Bhubaneswar Intercity Super Fast Express.

4. Simultaneously it needs Vishakhapatnam Amritsar Hirakud Express to run three days in a week through Titlagarh-Bolagir to enable the people of the area to go to the National capita, Delhi.

5. It also requires many over bridges including one at village Tora. Both the district of Bargarh, Jharsuguda as well as Sambalpur require of upgraded Coach Display System for the convenience of passengers, particularly the elder ones as the coaches remain far away from the platform.

6. Barpalli the birth place of one of the finest poets of Odisha and mother India Prakruti Kabi Gangadhar Meher, which is hub centre of Sambalpuri textiles, the largest Khadi and Cottage Industries of the entire state. Barpalli also deserves to go for second platform, railway overbridge and stoppage of Nagawali Express and name either a

train or the Over Bridge or the Railway Station in name of Gangadhar Meher.

The escalator inaugurated few month back in Jharsuguda Railway Station be made operational.

Trains going through Attabira of bargarh district and Bagdihi, Belpahar and Brajrajnagar of Jharsuguda district be made to stop for the passengers of those areas to board train which passes through those platforms without stoppages.

Last but not the least, there are many districts in the state of Odisha which don’t have an inch of railway track in the district like Kandhamal, Boud Deogarh and many other districts have symbolic presence of Railways in the districts. They need to be included within the large railways network in the country.

The Sambalpur- Berhampur rail line survey work covering a distance of 240 KM has already been completed since 2015-16 and it need allocation of funds for laying new rail lines.

7. Balangir Khurda Rail lines needs acceleration in speed for early completion.

8. The third Railway line which received one hundred fifty Cr. in the years 2015-16 from Rourkela to Jharsuguda needs special attention for early completion.

9. In this connection the district of Deogarh as well as the sub division of Kuchinda in Sambalpur also deserves special attention of the railways so that be it can get connected by existing proposal of the railway department in and around those areas so that in the 75th year India Independent the people of this area can see a railway track and locomotive running over the track.*

[*]**SHRI KHAGEN MURMU (MALDAHA UTTAR)**: I am putting some important demands of my 7 Malda Uttar Parliamentary Constituency in West Bengal to Railway Minister to incorporate in Demand Draft of Railways Budget which would be fulfilled immediately. These demands have not been fulfilled since long time and the people of my constituency are facing a long of difficulties. The details of the demands are as under:-

The common man and traders in my constituency have to face the problems of Traffic Jam because of railway crossing, such as Mangalbari and Samsi and there are some shortage of basic facilities like Shades, Chairs, Waiting Hall and Drinking Water etc. at the railway station in my constituency. These facilities would be providing at the earliest.

1. New One pair of Super Fast Trains like Tejas and Humsafar from Maldah Town to New Delhi via Samsi and Katihar should run immediately.
2. Addition of new coaches (LSB Coaches) of Train No. 13153/54 Gaur Express which runs from Sealdah to Malda Town and Malda Town to Sealdah.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

3. Stoppage of Train no. 15941 UP/15952 DN Jhajah - Dibrugarh Express at Samsi Railway Station (A large number of passengers/pilgrims to get opportunity to go to Deoghar/Babadham, Asansol and Durgapur etc.)

4. Stoppage of Train No.12377/12378 Padatik Express at Samsi Station.

5. Extension of Platform along with its shed at Samsi Railway Station.

6. A well furnished Bio-Public Toilet of platforms at Harishchandrapur and Samsi Railway Station.

7. One Flyover Bridge has been sanctioned by the Ministry of Railways to construct over spl. L.C. Gate no. NC-101, of Samsi in 2007-08 but no progress has been made to start its work, as a result road traffic users facing tremendous trouble waiting at L.C. Gate for more than 30 minutes.

8. Stoppage of South Bound Train 15227/15228 Muzaffarpur-Yashwantpur Express at Samsi Railway Station.

Thanking you.

[*]**SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA (AMRITSAR) :** I thank you Hon. Speaker Sir, for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Demands for Grants (Railways) 2019-20. The time at present is 10.40 in the night and I thank you for giving all of us the opportunity to speak on this subject.

Sir, Amritsar is an old city, a historic city. Railway lines had been laid from Lahore to Kolkata. G.T. Road was also there between these two cities. At that time, trade went on in unified India. However, after the division of India in 1947, Amritsar because the last station. The freight corridor comprised of Ludhiana-Kolkata route. I would urge upon the Hon. Minister to extend the freight corridor to Amritsar. Inclusion of Amritsar is the need of the hour.

Sir, the Punjab Government is going to celebrate the 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji. I would urge upon the Hon. Railway Minister to start a special train from Dera Baba Nanak to Amritsar. Also, special trains from all states to Amritsar should be started so that the devotees are able to pay their obeisance at Amritsar on the occasion of 550th Birth Anniversary of Shri Guru Nanak Dev ji.

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[*] English translation of the speech originally delivered in Punjabi.

Sir, the platforms of Majitha, Ramdass and Dera Baba Nanak need to be renovated and these stations too should be upgraded. During the time of UPA government, Patti-Mahu link stretch of 24 kms. was inaugurated. It will help the security forces as their vehicles ply to Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Pathankot etc. Journey to Mumbai is curtailed by 240 kms. This is a project of three more states including Punjab. They are Rajasthan, J&K and Himachal Pradesh. So, I urge upon the Hon. Railway Minister that it should provide financial grant so that land could be acquired for this purpose.

The lines that need further extension and renewal are railway lines from Batala to Tanda, Garhshankar to Una, Chandigrah to Rajpura via Mohali, Phillaur to Nawanshahar and Mor Mandi to Talwandi Sabo. 121 kms of railway lines need to be laid. Also, sir, the doubling of Pathankot-Amritsar railway line should be done at the earliest.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly conclude. Only list your important demands.

SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA : Sir, trains from Amritsar to Southern states should be started. New railway rakes should be

provided. Sir, the food provided in Shatabdi and other trains is very sub-standard. Kindly improve the quality of food.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Kindly conclude. Thank you.

SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA : Just one more minute, Sir.

Sir, the train to Hazoor Sahib runs only once a week. It should be converted to a daily train and it should ply via Tarn Taran and Beas, so that the people of the area gain out it.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Shri Mahendra Solanki ji

SHRI GURJEET SINGH AUJLA: Sir, I would like to draw the attention of all Hon. Members towards one important point. Trains are named after religious gurus etc. We have Golden Temple express, Jallianwala Bagh Express, Haridwar Express, Hazoor Sahib Express. However, the condition of those trains is so bad that it leaves much to be desired. So, I urge upon the Hon. Minister to take special cognizance of the trains and improve their condition at the earliest.

Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHENDRA SINGH SOLANKY (DEWAS): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak on this subject. I also thank my Party for granting me this opportunity. In India, the Railways is a major means of passenger as well as freight transportation. Indian Railways connects the people of the country from one corner to another and also strengthens our national economy. As time is limited, I will keep my remarks brief. If we look at the last five years of the tenure of the Hon. Prime Minister, it becomes clear that alongside the all-round development of the country, there has also been significant expansion and development of the Railways. I would like to take my point forward with the following couplet:

"Neither from a fellow traveller nor from a close companion will it emerge;
The thorn stuck in our foot will be removed by ourselves alone."

The thorn that is stuck in our foot has to be removed by us ourselves. In the same spirit, by removing this thorn, the Hon. Prime Minister put an end to the practice, prevalent since before Independence, of presenting a separate Railway Budget, and by

taking a positive initiative, he merged the Railway Budget with the General Budget.

Sir, through you, I would like to bring to the notice of the Hon. Railway Minister the problems of my region. In my constituency, there is a district named Agar Malwa, which, even after seventy years of Independence, does not have any railway connectivity. Similarly, the Ashta area also lacks railway connectivity. In order to address the problems of this region, it is necessary that a railway line from Ujjain to Jhalawar be laid via Agar, so that the long-standing difficulties of the people may be resolved. Likewise, a railway line should be laid from Indore to Bhopal via Ashta, so that the people of that area, who are facing hardship due to the lack of rail facilities, may be provided relief. Similarly, in Sujanpur, many traders frequently travel to Mumbai. While there are stoppages of trains connecting almost all major metropolitan cities, there is no stoppage for trains travelling to and from Mumbai.

I request the Hon. Railway Minister to kindly provide a stoppage there. Further, the principal railway station of Dewas Lok Sabha constituency is Dewas Railway Station, which lies between Indore, Ujjain and Bhopal. However, this station has not yet been adequately developed. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to kindly

undertake the modernisation of Dewas Railway Station and develop it as a Model Railway Station.

***SHRI PRADEEP KUMAR CHOUDHARY (KAIRANA):** I would like to place my views on the subject of the Railways.

In the Kairana Lok Sabha constituency of Uttar Pradesh, there is inadequate train connectivity. The Janta Express operates from Delhi via Shamli to Saharanpur, and the people of the region have repeatedly demanded stoppages for this train. I request the Government to kindly provide a two-minute stoppage of the Janta Express at Elam and a two-minute stoppage at Nanauta in Saharanpur district. Further, there is no long-distance train operating on the Delhi-Shamli-Saharanpur rail route. Long-distance train services may kindly be introduced on this route so that the people of the region may get proper opportunities to travel to distant places. In addition, the coaches of the Express train running from Lucknow to Moradabad and from Saharanpur to Chandigarh have become very old, and clean blankets and bed sheets are not being provided. Attention is also required towards improving the Chandigarh Express train.

Further, the Begampura Express runs from Jammu via Ambala, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Lucknow to Varanasi and returns on the same route. During the running and halts of this train, there are

* Speech was laid on the Table.

severe jerks in the AC coaches, which creates fear among passengers and causes inconvenience, particularly at night. This issue in the train may kindly be rectified. Moreover, the facility of AC First Class coaches in the Begampura Express may be enhanced, as a large number of passengers travel by this train every day.

Additionally, a Superfast train may be operated on the Saharanpur-Delhi route, which may also be run via Meerut. Along with this, the platform at Nanauta Railway Station is not properly constructed. Proper construction of the platform at Nanauta Railway Station may kindly be undertaken.

[English]

***DR. UMESH G. JADAV (GULBARGA):** I request the Hon. Minister of Railways for the development of my Parliametary Constituency i.e, Kalaburagi/Gulbarga in Karnataka State.

I would like to bring it to kind notice of the Government of India that the Divisional Headquarter at Gulbarga was sanctioned under the jurisdiction of South western Railways (SWR) in the 2014 Budget. But since then there is no progress on the sanctioned work.

Gulbarga region accounts near to 50% of the revenue contribution to Solapur Railway Division so speeding up of the sanctioned Division work is very much important and need of the hour.

I would like to demand the below mentioned work on priority basis, for the Development of Kalaburagi Railway Station and for the complete development of Railways in Parliamentary Constituency, the details are as follows

1. Air Condition Waiting Room required, as Kalaburagi District called as the 'Kutch of Karnataka" due to its extreme temperature in summer season. During the summer the

* Speech was laid on the Table.

temperature goes as high as 46 Degree which makes a complete sour experience to the passengers to wait for their train in such extreme hot condition at Railway Station.

2. Installation of Escalator on all platforms should be completed at the earliest.
3. Ramp required on all platforms for disabled people and old aged people.
4. GRP Police Residential Quarters to be constructed in Kalaburagi.
5. New Building to be constructed for the GRP Outpost in Kalaburagi.
6. GRP Staff to be hiked.

My Request for New Trains are as follows:

1. New Train from Kalaburagi to Mysore via, Bangaluru as there is huge movement of commuters between Kalaburagi and Mysore via Bangaluru. This new train will also help those who travel to Bangaluru for their regular work.
2. New Train from Kalaburagi to Mumbai, being one the most backward district in Karnataka my Parliamentary Constituency consist of huge SC/ST population which completely depend on

daily wages work for their livelihood, for which they prefer to go the Economic Capital of the Country which is known as Mumbai. So frequent commute to Mumbai from this area is very high.

3. New Train from Kalaburagi to Shirdi, as there is huge demands for the pilgrimage to Shirdi. It is a long pending demand by the people of this area.

4. New Train from Kalaburagi to Patna**,** as Kalaburagi is called as the 'Dall Bowl of India" because it consist more than 400 Dall Mill in the City, where huge number of workers from Bihar and Eastern Uttar Pradesh comes to Kalaburagi in search of job.

5. New Train Bangalore to New Delhi Via Kalaburagi, Bidar as there is no direct train from Bidar to its National Capital. This train will help the people of both the district.

Extension and Halting/Stoppage of current ongoing trains in my Parliamentary Constituency are as follows

1. Request for Stopping/Halting at SHABAD RAILWAY STATION OF Train No 18519/18520 (VSKP -LTT-VSKP). This is long pending request by the people of Shahbad who run

to Wadi or Kalaburagi to catch this train though many trains stop at this station.

2. Train No 11307 & 11308 Kalaburagi - Hyderabad - Kalaburagi (Intercity Passenger) and Train No 18519 & 18520 Vishakhapatnam-Lokmanya Tilak Terminal - Vishakhapatnam run via Chittapur and Shahbad but there is no halt. So this train may be given halt at Chittapur and Shahbad which will help the workers who work in Various Cement Factory in this area.

3. BIDAR - KALABURAGI Demu/77655 to be extended till Wadi Station**.**

4. Train No 01408 SUR KOP Special and Train No 11051 SUR KOP Express which originate from Solapur (SUR) to be extended till Kalaburagi (KLBG) as there are huge number of pilgrims who preach and regularly visit Kolhapur Mahalaxmi Devi Temple from my Parliamentary Constituency.

5. Train No. 16571/16572 Bidar to Yeshwantpur to go via Kalaburagi Railway Station.

6. Train No 19420/19419 Chennai - Ahmadabad - Chennai to Halt at Kalaburagi, it will help the passenger who wish to travel to Chennai and Ahmadabad.

7. Train No 11011/11012 Solapur to Hassan train to be started from Kalaburagi.

8. Train No 12219/12220 Duranto Express should be given halt at Kalaburagi.

9. Train No 22601/22602 train Halt required at Shahbad.

10. As you may know that there is train facility from Gulbarga to Hubli i.e., Hubli - Secunderabad express train number 17320 and 17319 and we are very thankful for providing us with the facility… But there is one request to start a train from Gulbarga to Hubli via Guntkal…there are no train facilities towards Bellary and Hospet from Gulbarga**...** People from Gulbarga region working in Bellary and Hospet industries are facing problems to travel

11. My last but not the least demand is Pitline at Kalaburagi Solapur Yard.

With this I conclude with quote of *Mehmet Murat ildan* for my Beloved Hon. Minister for Railways Shri Piyush Goyal ji and Hon. Minister of State for Railways Shri Suresh Angadi ji "Be like a train; go in the rain, go in the sun, go in the storm, go in the

dark tunnels! Be like a train; concentrate on your road and go with no hesitation!

DR. JAYANTA KUMAR ROY (JALPAIGURI): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak.

I am from Jalpaiguri Lok Sabha parliamentary constituency of West Bengal. It is in the northern part of West Bengal. This area has long been neglected in different aspects. However, this Government under Shri Narendra Modi is trying to do good to our people.

I want to make only three points as I do not want to take much time. My first point is regarding Padatik Express. Padatik Express is the main lifeline of Jalpaiguri town. This halt is going to be ceased from September, as they are not giving tickets from September onwards. So, I would request the hon. Minister through you for the Padatik Express to continue as before as it is the lifeline of the people of Jalpaiguri.

Secondly, there is a Superfast Express train which goes from Haldibari to Kolkata. Kolkata is about 700 kilometres from Jalpaiguri town. This train comprises of Chair Car and sitting seats only. I would request the hon. Minister for more AC III tier coaches alongwith sleeper coaches also so that patients can travel to Kolkata. As there are no super speciality facilities in our town, more often, patients are referred to places nearby Kolkata or Kolkata itself.

Thirdly, there is an upgradation of railway line from Sealdah to NJP railway station and electrification is going to be completed very soon on that line. If Vande Bharat Express could be provided on that line, then it will cut our time and the time of travel will be reduced.

Lastly, there are many underpasses which have been constructed in our area. They are flooded with water. I would request the hon. Minister to look into this matter so that passengers or vehicles can travel through those underpasses.

[Translation]

SHRI NAYAB SINGH SAINI (KURUKSHETRA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget.

Through you, Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Government to my Lok Sabha constituency, Kurukshetra. At the outset, on behalf of the Hon. Chief Minister of Haryana, Shri Manohar Lal ji, and the people of Haryana, I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji. During the last five years, 81 kilometres of new railway lines have been commissioned in Haryana, 51 kilometres of railway lines have been doubled, and eight surveys covering about 561 kilometres have been completed. I would like to point out that during the period from 2009 to 2014, under the previous Governments, six Road Over Bridges and 26 Road Under Bridges were constructed. However, during the period from 2014 to 2019, 19 Road Over Bridges and 125 Road Under Bridges were constructed. Similarly, during 2009 to 2014, 46 unmanned level crossings were eliminated, whereas between 2014 and 2019, 121 unmanned level crossings were removed. All this has been achieved in Haryana

during the last five years under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, for which I would like to express my gratitude.

Through you, Sir, I would also like to draw the attention of the Government to a few other important demands of my constituency. In Kurukshetra, Pehowa is a world-famous pilgrimage town dating back to the Mahabharata period and is renowned as the sacred city of Saraswati. At this pilgrimage centre of Pehowa, on the instructions of Lord Shri Krishna, Maharaja Yudhishthira performed the last rites and offered pind daan for the peace of the souls of the warriors who were killed in the Mahabharata war. The Saraswati Ghat is located at Pehowa, where performing religious rites holds great significance. Pehowa has been mentioned in the Mahabharata and several other ancient scriptures… … *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please come to the subject. Do not go into history.

SHRI NAYAB SINGH SAINI: Kurukshetra has been accorded even greater importance than Haridwar, Pushkar and Gaya. Every year, lakhs of pilgrims and tourists visit Pehowa in Kurukshetra. The distance between Kurukshetra and Pehowa is about 20 kilometres, and it should be connected by a railway line. Gulachika is a

township where Haryana's largest marble market is located, due to which traders frequently visit the area.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please take your seat now.

SHRI NAYAB SINGH SAINI: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, there are two or three issues relating to my constituency. Kindly allow me some time to speak on them. After great difficulty, I have been given an opportunity to speak.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: You go too much into history. Please come to the issues.

SHRI NAYAB SINGH SAINI: I am coming to the issues.

The Gulachika railway line should be extended up to Patiala so that traders and customers may benefit. A new railway line should be constructed from Kurukshetra to Yamunanagar. Through you, Sir, I would like to bring this to the notice of the Government. A new train service should be started from Kurukshetra to Haridwar, which is a major demand of the people of Kurukshetra. A Road Over Bridge should be constructed on the road from Ambala Khudakalan up to NH-1 Highway so that the local population may benefit. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude in just two sentences.

SHRI NAYAB SINGH SAINI: A ROB should be constructed on the railway line on the road from Ambala Khudakalan up to NH-1 Highway. The survey for the Yamunanagar-Chandigarh railway line has already been conducted, and work on this should be commenced.

I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Now, Dr. Shashi Tharoor.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR (THIRUVANANTHAPURAM): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you like, in the interest of time, I can just speak the main points and leave the full text on the Table.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: No. You can either speak or lay your written speech. You cannot do both the things.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR: Then, I will speak, Sir.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: But you should conclude your speech within two and a half minutes. Your party's time is already over.

DR. SHASHI THAROOR: Since most of the larger national issues of the Indian Railways have largely been highlighted by my esteemed colleagues, with your permission, Sir, I would like to quickly bring to the attention of the hon. Minister of Railways, certain critical and long pending issues related to my Constituency

of Thiruvananthapuram, which is the Capital of the State of Kerala and one of its largest economic hubs. It attracts a lot of commuters from neighbouring districts but connectivity has become particularly problematic.

We have been waiting for a long time for a suburban train service on the Thiruvananthapuram-Chengannur route, which will increase connectivity with the neighbouring districts. The land acquisition, which is the usual answer given, is already complete. So, it should not be delayed. The Minister would certainly also see the utility in instituting the promised second MEMU service between Thiruvananthapuram and Kollam on the one hand and Nagercoil and Kanyakumari on the other.

Another issue is the frequent delays in popular trains, particularly those that cater to the peak hour commute -- such as the Nagercoil-Kochuveli passenger or the Vanchinad Express - as well as the very short stops at various stations. I can tell you that we have a very famous Technopark in Kazhakoottam station where major trains like Vanchinad Express stop for one minute. It is a safety hazard. There are literally thousands of people to get on and get off in that one minute. This kind of thing has to be fixed. There are major institutions like the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre that are

dependent on this train, and I think, the Minister must be reasonable about these things.

Many of our stations like Neyattinkara, Nemon, Parassala, Balaramapuram and Kazhakootam need urgent overhaul and modernisation of infrastructure including the provision of basic drinking water facilities, toilets, parking facility, re-roofing of platforms.

Leaky trains have happened in Kerala. There was a passenger, who complained that water was flowing into the train during the rain. So, this has to be improved.

I would make just two more points and conclude. A prominent request from my Constituency has been the need to establish a dedicated train on the Thiruvananthapuram-Velankanni-Madurai route, a famous pilgrimage route. It will cater to a lot of devotees in Kerala, who frequently travel to both these spiritual centres. At the same time, there is also an immense need for additional train service and connectivity between Thiruvananthapuram and the major cities of South India.

Finally, Sir, on infrastructure development, there is an urgent need for timebound completion of the long standing proposal to double the tracks between Thiruvananthapuram and Kanyakumari

and to double the works between Thiruvananthapuram and Kottayam/Alappuzha.

Sir, the automatic signalling system had been announced a long time ago but has not been finished yet. So, it has to be taken care of.

Finally, Sir, we do need a lot more basic facilities. Recently, on the floor of the House, I had drawn the attention of the Minister on the need to provide internet and WiFi facilites in all long distance trains that either pass through or stop at Thiruvananthapuram, such as the Nizamuddin Rajdhani, the Mumbai Jayanti Janatha or Kerala Express, for the convenience of passengers. I am sure that everybody would agree with me that such improvement will allow passengers to attend to emails and work, or even access entertainment options. All this may attract more commuters to consider travelling by railways over other options.

In the end, I must stress that while the majority of these concerns relate to Thiruvananthapuram, if the Minister were to act on these issues, it will be beneficial for the State of Kerala as a whole in terms of the convenience of regular commuters, increased frequency of trains and improved infrastructure.

I do hope that the hon. Minister will take my suggestions in a constructive manner. With these words, I conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI SUBHASH CHANDRA BAHERIA (BHILWARA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you. In my Lok Sabha constituency, when the UPA Government was in office in the year 2013, the foundation stone for a MEMU coach factory was laid, but no work was undertaken thereafter. When I sought information on this issue during the previous Session, it was stated that there was presently no requirement for MEMU coaches. Therefore, through you, Sir, I request the Hon. Railway Minister that if a MEMU coach factory cannot be established there, some other factory may be set up instead, as a substantial amount of railway land is available and all necessary facilities exist there. Efforts may kindly be made to establish an alternative factory. Secondly, before Independence, a survey was conducted for a railway line, and work had also commenced from Jaipur up to Todaraisingh, Shahpura and Lambiya. A metre gauge railway line was constructed up to Todaraisingh, the earthwork for the onward section was completed, and in some places even tracks had been laid. However, during gauge conversion, the Todaraisingh section has not yet been converted, and the existing railway line has also been dismantled. Sir, my request is that even if

a new railway line is not constructed, the existing line may be gauge converted and extended further up to Lambiya via Shahpura.

Thirdly, a major problem that is arising relates to the new underpasses being constructed by the Railways. At many locations, these underpasses are being built too narrow, making it impossible for buses to pass through them. There is also a serious problem of waterlogging in these underpasses. In irrigated areas, water accumulates due to canals, causing severe difficulties in movement. A permanent solution to this problem needs to be found. Fourthly, there is heavy traffic on the Ajmer-Bhilwara-Chittorgarh railway line, and therefore this section should be doubled. Apart from these issues, a great deal of good work has been carried out in our area, for which I express my gratitude.

23.00 hrs

SHRI SUBRAT PATHAK (KANNAUJ): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, at the outset, I would like to thank India's first Finance Minister for presenting an excellent Budget. I would also like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister, who has given me the opportunity to enter this House for the first time and to become a part of history, wherein India's first woman Finance Minister has presented the Budget.

Sir, I come from the Kannauj parliamentary constituency. From my childhood till now, most of my travel has been by road and by air. The main reason for not travelling by rail has been the lack of railway development in my region, particularly in rural areas. There are no railway lines there. In addition, the poor condition of cleanliness at railway stations was also a major reason due to which one did not even feel inclined to visit railway stations. I would like to thank the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and also the former Railway Minister, Shri Suresh Prabhu ji, for developing the Railways in such a manner that facilities such as lifts, escalators, plastic bottle crushing machines, mechanised cleaning and housekeeping are being provided at major railway stations across the country. For this, I express my gratitude to them. I would also like to state that, along with the bullet train, several high-speed trains such as Vande Bharat have been introduced during the last five years. Many railway stations across the country are being developed on the lines of airports. For this, I would like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and his entire team.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I come from the Kannauj parliamentary constituency. Kannauj has a glorious history and was once the capital of Emperor Harshavardhan.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please come to the subject. Do not go into history.

SHRI SUBRAT PATHAK: Sir, I am coming to the subject. Kannauj was once the capital of the entire country during that period and was a prosperous city. However, despite its rich heritage, development in Kannauj has not taken place in a commensurate manner. Kannauj is also known for *itra* and aroma.

Sir, due to the lack of smooth rail connectivity, proper development of Kannauj has not been possible. Therefore, through you, I would like to place the following demands before the Union Government. The Kannauj Railway Station should be named after Emperor Harshavardhan. Kannauj Railway Station should be connected with the broad gauge network. A direct rail line should be laid from Kannauj to Lucknow and Delhi. Similarly, I demand that my parliamentary constituency, Kannauj, be fully connected to the railway network by laying rail lines from Kannauj to Tirwa via Bidhuna up to Etawah, from Kannauj via Thathiya and Rasulabad up to Jhijhak, from Gursahaiganj via Chhibramau and Saurikh up to Mainpuri, and likewise Kannauj should also be connected with Hardoi district.

***SHRI C.P. JOSHI (CHITTORGARH):** I place my views on the Budget for the year 2019-20. I would also like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Finance Minister for presenting this Budget before the nation, keeping in mind the interests of every section of society. In the recent election, the people of the country have given a very clear mandate. After evaluating the performance of the Government during its first term, the people have once again extended even stronger support. By doing so, they have given a mandate to carry forward, without interruption and at a faster pace, the journey of development that has been underway since 2014. During the last five years, the Railways has established several new dimensions and, through many innovations, has presented world-class facilities to the citizens of the country. For the year 2019-20, the revenue of the Railways is estimated at Rs. 2,16,935 crore. In the year 2018-19, revenue from freight traffic recorded an increase of six per cent, while no change was observed in revenue from passenger traffic. For the year 2019-20, the total expenditure of the Railways is estimated at Rs. 2,07,900 crore, which represents an increase of nine per cent over the Revised Estimates for 2018-19.

* Speech was laid on the Table.

Railway infrastructure will require an estimated investment of Rs. 50 lakh crore during the period from 2018 to 2030. Public Private Partnership will be utilised to facilitate rapid development and completion of tracks, manufacturing of rolling stock, and delivery of passenger and freight services.

Indian Railways will be encouraged to invest more in suburban railway systems through special purpose vehicle structures such as the proposed Rapid Regional Transport System on the Delhi-Meerut route. Transit-oriented development will be promoted to ensure commercial activity around transit hubs.

To make railway travel a pleasant and satisfying experience for the common citizen, a large-scale railway station modernisation programme will be launched during this year.

Expenditure on safety includes revenue expenditure such as the repair and maintenance of tracks and wagons. It also includes capital expenditure such as track renewal, bridge works, construction of level crossings, and underbridges and overbridges. In the Union Budget for 2017-18, a National Rail Safety Fund was created to ensure passenger safety in the Railways. Generally, this safety fund is utilised for eliminating unmanned level crossings and for improving and modernising signalling systems. This fund amounted

to Rs. 1 lakh crore for a period of five years, that is, Rs. 20,000 crore per year.

The fastest train, Train 18, manufactured by the Integral Coach Factory at a cost of Rs. 97 crore, has achieved a maximum speed of 180 kilometres per hour and is replacing India's fastest Shatabdi trains. Train 18 has been operating successfully from Delhi to Varanasi. With the Vande Bharat Express, India has entered a new era of mobility. It is India's first high-tech, energy-efficient, self-propelled train and a prominent example of the success of the *Make in India* initiative. On Christmas Day, the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, inaugurated Asia's second longest bridge in Assam. The bridge was inaugurated 16 years after its completion. With the commissioning of this bridge, travel time between Tinsukia in Assam and Naharlagun in Arunachal Pradesh has been reduced by nearly ten hours. For the first time in the world, the Railways has converted a diesel locomotive into an electric locomotive. At the Diesel Locomotive Works of Indian Railways in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, this global first was successfully implemented to enable the Mission Electrification programme, setting a new benchmark. The Railways has established its first transport university, the National Rail and Transportation Institute (NRTI), at Vadodara in Gujarat.

After Russia and China, this is the third such university in the world. Another milestone has been added to the Railways with the introduction, for the first time, of air-conditioned local trains for the Mumbai suburban railway system. Preparations are underway to introduce more such trains. Over the past five years, the Government has accorded top priority to railway safety. In 2018-19, Indian Railways achieved its best ever safety record, which is the result of sustained and comprehensive efforts. All unmanned level crossings on the broad gauge network have been eliminated. The average pace of commissioning new lines, doubling, third and fourth line projects has increased by 59 per cent. In my parliamentary constituency, approval has been accorded for a new railway line between Barisadri and Neemuch. In addition, the doubling work between Chittorgarh and Neemuch is nearing completion, and approval has also been granted for the doubling of the Neemuch-Ratlam section. The Ahmedabad-Mumbai High Speed Rail project will bring about a revolution in India’s transport sector through speed, safety and superior service. One hundred per cent electrification of Indian Railways’ broad gauge routes has been targeted by 2021-22. Electrification of the Ajmer-Chittorgarh-Udaipur section has been completed, and electrification work on the Ratlam-Chittorgarh-Kota

section is in progress. Once this is completed, Chittorgarh will be connected by electrified routes from all four directions. In 2018-19, the Railways achieved a significant milestone in advancing the country's economy by recording its highest ever freight loading. Freight earnings reached an all-time high. The Dedicated Freight Corridors are gateways to India's superfast growth and development. The first sections of the Eastern DFC (Bhaundan to Khurja, 200 kilometres) and the Western DFC (Rewari to Madar, 200 kilometres) have been completed. In my parliamentary constituency at Khemli, a CONCOR container depot has been established, enabling direct transportation of goods from traders to ports. The Railways is improving passenger services by transforming stations through the installation of modern amenities such as escalators, lifts, free Wi-Fi, ticket vending machines and water vending machines, and by incorporating local art in station design. The Railways has introduced Tejas, Antyodaya and Humsafar trains, and has upgraded trains and coaches including Deen Dayal and Anubhuti coaches. To connect passengers with the digital world, high-speed Wi-Fi services have been provided at stations. In my parliamentary constituency as well, Humsafar trains to Mysuru, Rameswaram, Delhi and Patliputra, along with a Mahamana Express, have been introduced.

To make ticketing convenient and hassle-free, paperless unreserved ticketing through the UTS mobile application has been launched. For the first time, the Railways has introduced multiple applications for ticketing, grievance redressal, food menus and tracking of trains. Catering has also been a focus area, with improvements in food quality through mandatory printing of MRP on all food items, monitoring of food production in kitchens, and the use of artificial intelligence. As a tribute to Mahatma Gandhi and in support of the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji's *Swachh Bharat* campaign, the Railways has focused on cleanliness through initiatives such as bio-toilets, third-party independent surveys, integrated cleaning systems, and record establishment of on-board housekeeping services. Indian Railways is also playing an active role in promoting tourism and providing tourists with a unique experience through initiatives such as the Ramayan Express, Panchtakht Express and the Buddhist Circuit train. To enhance transparency and accountability by bringing together all digital initiatives of Indian Railways, the Rail Drishti dashboard has been launched, which provides comprehensive railway-related information. Recognising the importance of empowering the railway family, several measures have been taken, including delegation of

powers. A historic recruitment drive is underway to fill 1.5 lakh vacant posts, and lakhs of appointments will be made over the next two years. In my parliamentary constituency as well, the Railways has established dimensions of development that had not been seen since Independence, whether it is new railway lines, gauge conversion, electrification, doubling, new survey works or the introduction of new trains. However, along with these achievements, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Railway Minister to certain railway-related issues in my parliamentary constituency.

• In Pratapgarh district, the survey for the new railway lines from Mandsaur to Pratapgarh and from Pratapgarh to Banswara has already been completed. A new railway line may kindly be established there.

• The survey of the Neemuch-Singoli-Rawatbhata-Kota route has also been completed, and approval for the railway line on this route is required.

• Doubling of the Chittorgarh-Ajmer and Chittorgarh-Kota sections may kindly be undertaken. At present, both these routes are being connected through electrification. The doubling work on the Chittorgarh-Ratlam section is in progress. Completion of doubling

on these routes will enable high-speed trains to enter the Mewar region.

• The gauge conversion work on the Mavli-Marwar section needs to be commenced at the earliest.

• Due to delays in the gauge conversion work on the Udaipur-Himmatnagar section, Udaipur has not been able to receive the railway benefits that it deserves.

• The gauge conversion work on the Mavli-Barisadri section is at its final stage. If, along with this, the work on the Barisadri-Neemuch section is also taken up at a fast pace, it will be immensely beneficial.

• The Ajmer-Chittorgarh route has now been electrified. Therefore, the Shatabdi Express operating from Delhi to Ajmer may be extended up to Chittorgarh.

I support the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways for the Budget year 2019-20. Thank you.

SHRI VINOD LAKHAMSHI CHAVDA (KACHCHH): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget.

Sir, I would also like to specially thank the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Finance Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister. Today's Budget has been brought forward to take the Railways to greater heights and to provide the best possible services. I congratulate them, particularly for the provisions in the Railway Budget relating to metro rail, rapid rail, private trains under the PPP model, modernisation of signalling systems, and the development of multi-modal transport hubs at railway stations.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please confine yourself to the issues of your constituency.

SHRI VINOD LAKHAMSHI CHAVDA: Sir, several provisions such as the expansion and redevelopment of 22 stations and modernisation of railway engines have been made in this Budget.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, if we look at the past five years, in my Kachchh Lok Sabha constituency as well as at other railway stations, development works have been undertaken by linking each railway station with art, culture and rural life. Under the cleanliness drive, works relating to toilets, sanitation, Wi-Fi facilities and digitisation

have been carried out. Over the last five years, various development works have been undertaken at many railway stations across the country, such as installation of indicators on platforms, provision of escalators and lifts, expansion of platforms, installation of covered sheds, and several other passenger-friendly measures.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to place a few issues pertaining to my constituency before the Hon. Railway Minister. During the last five years, several changes have taken place, many new trains have been introduced, and upgradation and development works have been carried out at railway stations in my area. However, I would like to submit that the broad gauge work from Bhuj to Naliya, which has been pending for several years, should be commenced at the earliest. Further, at present, there is only one train operating from Bhuj to Delhi. Therefore, an additional train service may kindly be introduced. A superfast train from Bhuj to Mumbai may also be started. There is a strong social linkage between Kachchh and Saurashtra, and therefore a train service may also be introduced on that route. Besides, Kachchh is like a mini India, as people from several States reside there. There are persistent demands from people belonging to different States for train services from Gandhidham to Darbhanga, Gandhidham to Gorakhpur, and

from Bhuj to Haridwar, Gwalior, Ahmedabad, ... *(Interruptions)* and other destinations. ... *(Interruptions)* Through you, Sir, I place these demands before the Hon. Railway Minister.

SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA (AMRELI): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you very much. First of all, I would like to thank our Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji, and our Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji… ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Naranbhai, please come to the subject, as the time is very limited.

SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I express my sincere gratitude to Shri Anurag Singh Thakur ji and to the Hon. Railway Minister. I also thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants of the Ministry of Railways. We are commemorating the 150th birth anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi, and in the year 2022 we shall celebrate the 75th anniversary of our Independence. Previous Governments ruled this country for more than 55 years, yet the condition to which the country was reduced, particularly in the Railways, is something that still compels us to reflect. Therefore, I wish to state that in my district, Amreli in Gujarat. …*(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please speak about Amreli.

SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA: Sir, the British laid the railway line in the year 1912. Today it is the year 2019. More than 100 years have passed, yet not a single component of that rail section had been replaced. However, after the Government led by Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji came to power, and particularly after the year 2014, the work carried out through broad gauge in my region has taken place for the first time even after 72 years of Independence. I will now come directly to my demands.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, the broad gauge conversion work on the Dhasa-Khijadiya, Luniadhar, and Luniadhar-Jetalsar sections in my constituency is in progress. This work has been underway for the last two years, but the pace is extremely slow. If it continues at the same rate, it will take another two years. Therefore, this work should be expedited. Secondly, the broad gauge conversion of the Khijadiya-Amreli-Chalala-Dhari-Visavadar-Talala-Junagadh-Prachi-Kodinar section should be undertaken. The DPR and estimates for this have already been prepared by Rail Vikas Nigam Limited and submitted to the Railway Department. Further, the railway line from Gariadhar to Palitana, which is the world's largest pilgrimage centre of the Jain community, also requires attention. ... *(Interruptions)*

HON. CHAIRPERSON : Please Conclude .

SHRI NARANBHAI KACHHADIYA: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, kindly give me just one more minute. There is a major Jain pilgrimage centre in this area, for which a provision of Rs. 369 crore was made in the year 2015. However, work on this project has also come to a standstill.

Finally, I would like to submit that a large number of people from my region, around 10 to 12 lakh, are residing in Surat, Mumbai and Ahmedabad for their livelihood and employment. At present, more than 300 private luxury buses are operating from my region. Therefore, the Surat-Mumbai and Ahmedabad-Bandra-Mahuva train services should be started at the earliest. I have repeatedly raised this demand. ... *(Interruptions)*

* Our Government has announced in this Budget that the railway sector will be developed on the basis of the Public Private Partnership model. We are aware that it often takes several decades to complete all approved railway projects, and that prior to 2014, owing to the corrupt policies of the UPA Government, there was unethical exploitation of railway resources during their tenure. As a

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* This part of the speech was laid on the Table.

result, there is a need for funds and other resources to sustain the process of developing the basic infrastructure of Indian Railways. Therefore, our Government has planned to utilise Public Private Partnership for the rapid development of railway projects within a stipulated timeframe, including track laying, rolling stock manufacturing, and the delivery of passenger and freight services, so that the targets may be achieved on time. I welcome this step of the Government, because Public Private Partnership will lead to a substantial increase in employment in the country and will also enable the Railways to earn good revenue.

I would like to place a few demands relating to my parliamentary constituency. I wish to draw attention to the gauge conversion work underway on the Khijadiya-Visavadar section of the Bhavnagar Division. In my parliamentary constituency, under the Bhavnagar Division of Western Railway, gauge conversion work is being carried out through RVNL on the following sections: (1) Visavadar-Junagadh, and (2) Beraval-Talala-Visavadar. In connection with the said works, as per the directions received from the Railway Board, the revised DPR relating to the electrical sub-estimate was forwarded to Western Railway on 12 April 2019.

However, no approval has so far been received from Western Railway, due to which the entire process remains pending.

In my parliamentary constituency, a budget of Rs. 402 crore has been approved for the doubling of railway lines on the Dhasa-Khijadiya-Luniadhar-Jetalsar section, and tenders for execution of the work have been received in two phases. The first phase, from Dhasa to Luniadhar, covering 49.50 kilometres, has been allotted Rs. 191 crore, and the second phase, from Luniadhar to Jetalsar, covering 55 kilometres, has been allotted Rs. 181 crore. Tenders for both these works were floated on 15 June 2016, and the works are being executed through two companies. The stipulated time for completion of these works is three and a half years.

However, due to the inaction of the officials concerned, the work is progressing at an extremely slow pace. I would like to request the Hon. Minister to ensure adequate allocation of funds so that this project may be completed expeditiously.

Under the Bhavnagar Division, a third set of projects relating to my parliamentary constituency comprises four new railway lines, namely: 1) Visavadar-Junagarh, 2) Visavadar-Talala-Beraval, 3) Talala-Delvada, 4) Kodinar-Prachi and all these four lines pass through Amreli district. Earlier, an amount of Rs. 1 crore each was

sanctioned for the final survey of these four lines. However, due to non-allocation of funds so far, no progress has been made on these works.

If funds are also allocated for these four projects along with the Khijadiya-Amreli-Chalala-Dhari-Visavadar project, all these schemes can be completed simultaneously. This will bring substantial benefits to the people of Amreli and will enable the development of Amreli as a major railway junction.

Under the Bhavnagar Division, approval may kindly be accorded for the gauge conversion works on the following sections: (1) Visavadar-Junagadh, and (2) Beraval-Talala-Visavadar, so that these projects may be completed at the earliest. Their completion will bring substantial benefits to the people of Amreli, enable the development of Amreli as a railway junction, and will also prove beneficial for the Ministry of Railways.

In the Budget for the year 2015, approval was granted for conducting a traffic survey for laying a new railway line from Gariadhar to Palitana in my parliamentary constituency. The survey was completed and the report was forwarded by the General Manager, Western Railway, to the Railway Board as early as October 2015. The estimated cost of this project is Rs. 369 crore.

The population of this area is approximately two lakh, and till date they have remained deprived of railway facilities. Palitana is home to an ancient and highly revered Jain pilgrimage centre. Owing to the exceptional beauty of its architecture, people from other communities, as well as tourists from within the country and abroad, visit this place. Despite its immense religious and tourist significance, no railway line has been laid here since Independence. Once railway connectivity is provided, this place will emerge prominently as a tourist destination, pilgrims and visitors will receive great convenience, and the Railways will also gain additional revenue.

There is a strong public demand to operate Train No. 12945-46, Mahuva-Surat, on a daily basis between Surat and Mahuva, along with a suitable change in its timings. In Surat, more than 20 lakh people from the Saurashtra region of Gujarat, particularly from the districts of Gir Somnath, Amreli, Bhavnagar and Botad, are residing. Out of these, thousands of people commute daily between Surat and Saurashtra. At present, for travel from Surat to these districts of Saurashtra, this train operates only once a week, departing from Surat at 5.30 a.m. on Wednesdays. Due to this limited frequency, passengers are facing severe inconvenience. Every day, more than

2,000 people travel from Surat to these districts using private and State transport buses or their own vehicles. Owing to the non-availability of regular train services from Surat to these districts, people are compelled to travel by private buses at fares higher than railway charges. Further, in my parliamentary constituency of Amreli, onion production in Mahuva is very substantial. I would like to request that arrangements be made by the Railways for the transportation of onions, so that onion farmers may benefit and traders may also derive greater advantage.

Our Government is committed to the principle of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, and is moving forward in the direction of inclusive and non-discriminatory development. The Hon. Railway Minister has worked continuously to take the Railways on the path of progress. Once again, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister for presenting this historic Budget, and I express my support for it.*

SHRI ABDUL KHALEQUE (BARPETA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I come from the Barpeta parliamentary constituency in Assam. Barpeta is also a district headquarters. Colonel Guruprasad Das, a son of Barpeta town, invented the railway vacuum brake in 1930. It is, however, unfortunate that till date Barpeta town, which is the birthplace of Colonel Guruprasad Das, has not been connected by rail. Sir, surveys were conducted for two new railway lines, but no progress has been made so far. One is from Jogighopa to Amingaon via Barpeta, and the other from New Bongaigaon to Kalgachia via Barpeta.

Hon. Chairperson, Barpeta town is the karmabhoomi of the great Vaishnav saints, Mahapurush Srimanta Sankardeva and Mahapurush Madhavdeva. There are numerous satras there, and therefore it is also known as a city of satras. Rail connectivity would not only promote tourism but would also strengthen cultural linkages. This land is a sacred place for three faiths, Hindus, Muslims and Buddhists. Rail connectivity would be highly beneficial. Sir, punctuality is a very important issue in the Railways. Railway data itself shows that the punctuality rate, which was 76 per cent in 2016-17, declined to 71 per cent in 2017-18 and further fell to 68 per cent in 2018-19.

Hon. Chairperson, train cancellations have also increased significantly. In 2014-15, 3,591 trains were cancelled, whereas in 2017-18 the number rose to 21,053.

Sir, nationalism has also been discussed in this House. However, when people travel by train, they must feel safe. If incidents of mob lynching continue, and if people travel by rail with fear in their minds, the nation cannot be strong. For nationalism and for the strength of the nation, it is essential that people feel secure.

SHRI ANIL FIROJIYA (UJJAIN): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. I also extend my sincere thanks to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Finance Minister. I would like to specially congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister for entrusting the responsibility of Finance Minister to a woman, who represents half of the country's population. As there is a paucity of time, I will come directly to the subject.

Sir, the then Minister of State for Railways, Shri Manoj Sinha ji, had visited Ujjain on 26 June 2016 and had announced that the Amritsar Express would be operated from Ujjain once a week. However, till date, this train has not been introduced. The people of our region are still waiting for it.

Sir, through you, I would like to make a request to the Hon. Railway Minister that the railway line from Indore to Jhalawar via Agar, which existed from 1932 to 1975 and was closed in 1975 during the Emergency, should be restored. This demand has also been raised earlier by the then Members of Parliament and present Union Ministers, Hon. Shri Thawar Chand Gehlot ji, Hon. Shri Satyanarayan Jatiya ji and Hon. Shri Premchand Guddu ji. The survey for this line has been conducted two or three times. Therefore, through you, I request the Hon. Railway Minister to kindly initiate this railway service at the earliest, as it will greatly benefit the people of the region.

Hon. Chairperson, Sir, through you, I would like to request the Hon. Railway Minister that, as Ujjain is the holy city of Baba Mahakal and a large number of devotees visit regularly, the Indore-Bhopal Intercity train via Ujjain, which earlier operated through this route but has since been diverted as a bypass service, should be restored. Further, a halt for the Jaipur-Bhopal Express may kindly be provided at Tarana Road Station. The Indore-Mumbai Central Duronto Express should also be given stoppages in both directions.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude your remarks.

SHRI ANIL FIROJIYA: Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I have been sitting here the entire day after observing a fast, and I am the most slender Member of the House. I seek your indulgence.

[English]

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

[Translation]

SHRI ANIL FIROJIYA : Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I would like to conclude in just a minute.

HON. SPEAKER: Not two minutes.

SHRI ANIL FIROJIYA: Sir, I am only placing my demands. The Hon. Railway Minister had visited Ujjain and, during programmes held at Ujjain and Indore, had announced that the Ujjain Shri Mahakaleshwar-Kashi Vishwanath and Varanasi Mahakaleshwar Express would be introduced. However, this has not materialised till date. Sir, just one minute more. The establishment of a training institute of Western Railway at Ujjain had commenced, but for certain reasons the work has been stopped. ...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

DR. K.C. PATEL (VALSAD): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, thank you very much for giving me the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget.

Sir, I am very much thankful to our Prime Minister, Hon. Narendra Modi Ji. *[Translation]* it is by whose inspiration that I have been able to enter this august House for the second time and have been given the opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. My parliamentary constituency of Valsad-Dang in Gujarat is connected to Maharashtra. Dang district is a 100 per cent tribal area. In Dang, nearly 50 per cent of the people have neither travelled by train nor even seen a train. Such is the situation in Dang district. Through you, I humbly request the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, and Shri Suresh ji, that the Bilimora-Waghai railway line, which is presently a narrow gauge line, may be extended. A survey has already been conducted to connect this line from Bilimora to Waghai, Ahwa, Saputara hill station and further up to Nashik. I request that this project be taken up and adequate allocation be provided in the Budget.

Sir, Vapi is a major industrial city, one of the largest industrial hubs in Asia. People from all parts of the country, whether from

North India, Jharkhand or Assam, come and reside in Vapi for employment. I request that the Gujarat train running from Ahmedabad to Valsad may kindly be extended up to Vapi.

Sir, finally, I would like to submit that the Mumbai-Delhi Rajdhani Express, which runs directly from Mumbai and halts at Surat, may also be given a stoppage at Vapi. This is my humble request. Thank you.

SHRI GAJENDRA UMRAO SINGH PATEL (KHARGONE): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in the discussion on the Demands for Grants under the control of the Ministry of Railways.

Sir, at the outset, I express my heartfelt gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, and the Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal ji, for formulating this Budget with the objective of initiating development works across the country through the Railways. I have been elected from the Khargone-Barwani Scheduled Tribe parliamentary constituency of Madhya Pradesh. Even after 72 years of Independence, this parliamentary constituency remains devoid of railway connectivity. Several elections have been held in this constituency. During the 70 years after Independence, the party which ruled the country for 55 years laid railway tracks there at the time of elections, won the elections, but neither constructed a railway line nor ensured railway connectivity for the area. The people had faith that, under the principle of *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vishwas*, during the last five years of the tenure of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, approval would be granted for the Indore-Manmad railway line. The entire public had confidence in this assurance.

Sir, through you, I would like to apprise the Hon. Minister for Railways that this Indore-Manmad railway line will be the first such railway line to be constructed after Independence. The alignment of the Indore-Manmad railway line has been finalised, and work on it should commence at the earliest. I would like to place this demand through you. This railway line will connect the States of Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. I would like to know into how many sections this project has been divided. My request is that the work on this project be completed expeditiously. At present, the work has not commenced from the Indore side, and even the process of land acquisition is still pending. I would like to request and urge the Hon. Minister for Railways that the people of our region have neither seen railway tracks nor trains. Khargone and Barwani are both tribal districts, and no railway line has been constructed in these tribal districts so far. Through you, I would like to urge the Union Government that land acquisition for this railway line be completed at the earliest and that the work be commenced without delay, so that the people may derive the intended benefits. I express my heartfelt gratitude to all of you. Thank you.

[English]

SHRI BENNY BEHANAN (CHALAKUDY): Sir, I wish to highlight some points unique to Kerala with respect to development of Railways in the State.

Kerala though is a State where the population distribution and development is such that there is no urban-rural divide. Observing the seamless development one can just suggest that it is a big city rather than a small State.

So far as railway infrastructure is concerned, the line utilization is more than 100 per cent and it is impossible to operate anymore new trains with the existing infrastructure. We need alternative lines for which adequate land is needed. We have proposed to make a South-North High-Speed Corridor from Trivandrum to Kasaragod, that is, 575 kilometres.

HON. CHAIRPERSON: Please conclude.

SHRI BENNY BEHANAN: Sir, I need just one minute to finish my speech.

Sir, getting land for development anywhere is difficult, but in our State it is impossible. The total area of the State itself is less. There is only 38,863 square kilometre land available of which 9000-

odd square kilometres have to be left alone as it includes Western Ghats, forests, 47 rivers and lakes, and even ecologically fragile regions. Thus, almost one-third of all the available land could not be put to any developmental use. All these factors push density of population so high that the State, as I said earlier, is a big city. I explain it all just to drive the point that State of Kerala is unique and it needs same considered uniqueness in dealing the issues as well.

The issues pertaining to accession of land for development of railways and national highways could, therefore, not be solved applying the present one-formula-fit-for-all approach. The State thus deserves to get special treatment. While deciding payment for compensation on acquired land for the development of railways, the component of the State Government has to be reduced from the present level of 50 per cent to at least 20 per cent and the component of the Central Government has to be increased as a special case as far as Kerala is concerned. Thank you.

[Translation]

SHRI PRADEEP KUMAR SINGH (ARARIA): Hon. Chairperson, Sir, I express my gratitude to you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

Sir, I come from a highly backward region. Our area is the land of the eminent litterateur Phanishwar Nath ‘Renu’ ji, and of late Shri Ramlal Singh ‘Snehi’ ji and Dwij Devi ji. I represent the Araria parliamentary constituency. Earlier also, during the period from 2009 to 2014, I was a Member of this House when the UPA Government was in power. Even at that time, I had repeatedly raised issues concerning my area on the floor of the House. I would like to speak for just two minutes about the UPA, which claimed to speak of development, because I come from a very backward region located near the Nepal border, adjoining West Bengal as well.

Sir, from our area, only one train, the Seemanchal Express, is in operation. There is a place called Jogbani near the Nepal border, and this train runs from the Jogbani border up to Delhi. There is neither a pantry car nor any proper arrangement for food and beverages in this train. It has only one air-conditioned coach, which is of Third AC category, whether one may call it Three Tier or Two Tier. In this

train, there is only a single such coach. Passengers often travel for as long as thirty hours without food.

Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the need for providing a pantry car in that train. The condition of the coaches is extremely poor and they remain very unclean. Therefore, the coaches should also be replaced. My second request is that this train originates from close to the Nepal border, and we share a close *roti-beti* relationship with Nepal. A large number of tourists travel from there up to Delhi. In this regard, I would like to place a few demands. We often have to travel to the State capital, Patna, for various purposes, but there is no direct train for Patna from our area. Katihar station is only about 115 kilometres away, from where an Intercity Express departs for Patna at six in the morning. I would request that this train be extended backward so that it may originate from the Jogbani-Araria region. This would only require an extension of the existing service and would enable people of the area to commute conveniently to and from Patna.

Further, the Amrapali Express currently runs directly from Katihar to Amritsar. Through you, I would like to request that this train be operated from Jogbani instead of Katihar. From our area, there is only one train to Kolkata, which operates three days a week.

I request that this train be made a daily service. Varanasi is the cultural capital of India, and tourists from Nepal as well as from our region visit the city for religious rites and tourism. I would therefore request that a direct train service to Varanasi be introduced from our area. Finally, there was a metre-gauge line from Forbesganj to Saharsa, which has been under conversion to broad gauge for the last ten years, but the work has remained incomplete till date. I request that this line be made operational at the earliest.

23.29 hrs (Hon. Speaker *in the Chair*)

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, a new arrangement has been made and we have to conclude before 12 noon. Therefore, all of you may speak for two minutes each.

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY (GODDA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would first like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak on this subject. I have been a Member of this House since 2009. For the first time, I have seen a Speaker take the initiative to give all new Members an opportunity to speak, allocate time to them, and remain equally involved himself. Otherwise, you could have simply concluded the discussion and moved ahead. For this, I would like to personally thank you on behalf of the entire House.

I would also like to thank the Hon. Prime Minister, the Hon. Railway Minister, and the entire Government. Shri Arvind Sawant ji is watching from here. When the whole country is asleep, how does the watchman and the guardian remain awake? The biggest example of this is that we are holding a discussion on the Railway Budget even at this hour.

HON. SPEAKER: The discussion should continue till 12 noon, so that people may say that the Members of Parliament work for the nation.

DR. NISHIKANT DUBEY: Sir, that is precisely why I thanked you. Today, you may appreciate that those who have elected the Bharatiya Janata Party, Shri Modi ji, and Members like us, understand this clearly. I come from a very backward region, where

perhaps 90 to 95 per cent of the people may have already gone to sleep, but they would still feel reassured that the representative they have chosen, the Government they have elected, the Prime Minister they have trusted, and the Speaker, the Prime Minister and the entire Parliament they have constituted, are all together thinking about villages, the poor and farmers, and are remaining awake to hold this discussion. The reason is that in the rhythmic sound of the train lies the heartbeat of the common man, and in the prosperity of the Railways lies the prosperity of the nation.

Today, the Railways is afflicted with serious challenges. It is facing competition from three fronts: road transport, waterways and aviation. The Hon. Prime Minister has enabled even those who used to wear slippers to travel by aeroplane. ... *(Interruptions)* Slippers and rubber sandals are the same; in Bihar and Jharkhand we use the same term. Secondly, among the various modes of transportation, waterways are the cheapest. In freight movement, road transport has assumed a major role. Hon. Speaker, Sir, I wish to place on record for the House and the entire country that in the year 2008, the then Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad ji, made an announcement regarding freight. At that time, there was a boom in iron ore. A separate freight rate was proposed for domestically consumed iron

ore and a different rate for exported iron ore, especially since events were to be held in China. However, the Railways had no effective mechanism to implement this. As a consequence, companies engaged in exports, including a large company like Rashmi Metallic, siphoned off nearly Rs. 30,000 crore. The CAG report had pointed this out. Under the then Government led by Shri Manmohan Singh ji, when Shrimati Mamata Banerjee ji was the Railway Minister, this Rs. 30,000 crore scam remained buried in the CAG report. Our Government has now come to power, and a CBI investigation is currently underway. Through you, I urge the Government that immediate action be taken against all companies involved in this Rs. 30,000 crore scam and that those responsible be sent to jail.

Shri Sunil Singh ji has made several observations. I will conclude my remarks within two minutes, particularly as the proceedings are to continue only till 12 noon. ... *(Interruptions)* Shri Sunil Singh ji spoke of lollipops. They had no funds. Across the world, wherever there are railways, it is the Government that builds railway lines. Many people say that the Railway Budget has been merged and the separate Railway Budget has been done away with. The reason is simple: the Railways do not generate surplus funds everywhere, nor can new railway lines be constructed everywhere

without Government support. That is precisely why, in comparison with the rest of the world, railway lines were not developed in India, and particularly in backward States like ours, they were hardly developed at all.

Many Hon. Members here may have travelled to Europe. They often feel that trains in Switzerland and England run exactly on time. I would like to inform all Hon. Members that Governments across Europe together provide passenger subsidies amounting to 73 billion US dollars, approximately five lakh crore rupees, to their railway systems. It is only because of this support that Euro Rail services function efficiently. In India, due to the policies of the Congress Governments, such financial support was never provided, as a result of which railway infrastructure could not be developed adequately.

With specific reference to backward States like ours, I would also like to point out that numerous announcements were made and several Memoranda of Understanding were signed with States. For instance, an MoU was signed with our State of Jharkhand, but the projects announced under it were delayed for 10 to 15 years. Therefore, a White Paper should be brought out explaining why such announcements were made, how much money was actually allocated, and how the public was misled. I demand that the

Government of India place all these details before the people through a White Paper.

Further, Jharkhand is a State which contributes nearly 40 per cent of the Railway's revenue. I often state that if my State were to say that it would not provide freight revenue to the Railways, the Railways would come to a standstill.

Despite this, regions like ours have continuously faced discrimination. We are placed in competition with Bihar and West Bengal. Neither the Government of Bihar nor the Government of West Bengal contributes any financial support to the Railways. As Hon. Members Shri Sanjay Seth ji and Shri Sunil ji have also pointed out, the headquarters or General Managers are located either in Kolkata or in Hajipur. Jharkhand has always been neglected. The entire revenue generated from our State is diverted to Eastern Railway, East Central Railway and South Eastern Central Railway, benefiting Bengal or Bihar, while Jharkhand continues to suffer neglect.

Through you, I would like to urge that the Railways extend special consideration to States like ours. Railway lines should be constructed on the Barwadih-Chirmiri, Gaya-Bodh Gaya, Hansdiha-Godda, Pirpainti-Jasidih, Chitra-Baidyanath Dham (Basukinath),

Godda-Pakur, and Vikramshila-Katoria routes. In the year 2008, Shri Lalu Prasad ji had announced the opening of a Divisional Railway Office at Bhagalpur, but it has not materialised due to non-availability of land there. I would like to submit that we are fully prepared to provide land at Jasidih and Deoghar. If the headquarters cannot be established at Bhagalpur due to land constraints, it may kindly be set up in our region.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, anywhere in the world, employment generation and economic growth are driven primarily by tourism. It is for this reason that places such as Singapore, Paris and London have progressed through tourism. In our region, we have Parasnath, Deoghar, and Mandar Hill. We also have, in the Rajmahal Hills, one of the world's oldest fossils, dating back nearly nineteen to twenty million years, which bears testimony to ancient civilisation. The entire Anga region was once the capital of Karna. It is necessary to consider how the Railways can create infrastructure for the common poor in such a region, as it is a socio-economic aspirational district.

Through you, I would like to urge the Government of India to focus on Jharkhand, to focus on poor States like ours. By focusing on Santhal Pargana, and by exposing to the public the corruption and misdeeds committed over the last fifty to sixty years, the

Government should move forward on a path that leads to the development of this region. With these words, Jai Hind, Jai Bharat.

SADHVI PRAGYA SINGH THAKUR (BHOPAL): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I express my sincere gratitude to you. Bhopal is the capital of Madhya Pradesh. I support the Railway Budget because an effort has been made to include provisions for the welfare of all sections. Several good schemes have been brought forward, which address the problems of the Railways and pave the way for improved functioning. I therefore support this Budget. Bhopal is the capital of Madhya Pradesh, yet it faces several railway-related problems. Mumbai is an industrial hub and is also regarded as the industrial capital of the country. However, there is no direct train from Bhopal to Mumbai. I request that this demand be duly considered.

Further, Habibganj is a railway station that has been privatised. As a result, poor people are facing severe difficulties. There are serious complaints of overcharging, and therefore strict regulation and inspection are required so that the public is not exploited. The parking arrangements made there have been priced at very high rates, which has caused hardship even to ordinary passengers.

Several trains pass through Sehore, but do not halt there. Similarly, the number of stoppages at Sant Hirdaram Nagar is very limited. I request that the number of stoppages at Sant Hirdaram

Nagar be increased and that trains passing through Sehore and Sant Hirdaram Nagar be provided halts at these stations.

DR. (PROF.) KIRIT PREMJIBHAI SOLANKI (AHMEDABAD WEST): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am most grateful to you for permitting me to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways. I express my gratitude to the Hon. Prime Minister Shri Narendra Bhai Modi ji, the Hon. Railway Minister, and the Union Government. Work on the country's first bullet train, from Ahmedabad to Mumbai, has already commenced. I am particularly thankful to the Hon. Prime Minister for taking India into a new era.

I come from Gujarat. In North Gujarat, there has long been a deficiency in the railway network. It has remained a neglected area. At one time, Patan used to be the capital of Gujarat, and the distance from Patan to Bhildi, which now falls in Banaskantha, was 51 kilometres. For the last 70 years, since 1954 when Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri ji was the Railway Minister, the people and political leaders of the region had been demanding a railway line there, because beyond Bhildi a railway line towards North India and Jammu had already been proposed. However, during the period of Congress rule, no development took place on this railway line. Under the guidance of the Hon. Prime Minister, railway tracks have now been laid there, and when the Hon. Prime Minister visited Ahmedabad recently, he flagged off the commencement of construction of the Patan-Bhildi

railway line. For this, I am deeply grateful to the Government, and especially to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister. My native place is Chanasma, and the distance from Chanasma to Radhanpur is 65 kilometres. Beyond Radhanpur, there is a railway line up to Kandla, which also lies close to the sensitive Pakistan border. At times of heightened sensitivity, there is a need for an additional railway line in this region. The Hon. Railway Minister Shri Piyush Goyal ji is present here, and I humbly request him that if the 65-kilometre stretch from Chanasma to Radhanpur is connected by a railway line, it will provide us with a new railway route up to Kandla and the Pakistan border.

Sir, Kalol, Kadi, Katosan and Bahucharaji Mata are important Shakti Peethas. The gauge conversion work on the Chanasma-Ranuj railway line is in progress. However, due to certain reasons, the pace of work is not commensurate with requirements. I humbly request that this work be completed at the earliest.

I will conclude my remarks by making two points concerning Ahmedabad. The Kalupur Railway Station in Ahmedabad is extremely heavily loaded. My request is that if Sabarmati and Maninagar railway stations are developed as terminal stations, trains to North India may be operated from Sabarmati, and trains to South

India and Mumbai may be operated from Maninagar. Ahmedabad has been declared India’s first World Heritage City. I request the Hon. Minister that the development and renovation of Ahmedabad Railway Station may be undertaken on a heritage theme. I thank you sincerely for giving me the opportunity to speak.

HON. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I would request all of you to conclude your remarks within two minutes, so that I do not have to ring the bell due to certain technical reasons.

SHRI UNMESH BHAIYYASAHEB PATIL (JALGAON): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would like to speak on the Demands for Grants of the Railways in my local language, Marathi.

[English]

Hon. Speaker Sir, we have been discussing the Railway Budget and we have already touched upon so many issues. So, I would not reiterate those issues. I would like to raise some new issues before Hon. Railway Minister. Hon. Chairman Sir, I belong to North Maharashtra and the world famous Ajanta Ellora Caves are situated in this area. Hence I would like to request Hon. Railway Minister to connect these cave-sites with rail network. It would be very convenient for foreign tourists visiting these sites. Chalisgaon-Dhule rail line was laid during British Era and no further development was done. I must mention that gauge conversion and electrification work is done by this Government only. So, I am very thankful that funds have been allocated for Jamner - Pachora rail line. Ajanta Caves are just 20 kms. away from Jamner and it would be very beneficial if it is connected with railway line.

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* *English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

[Translation]

This will provide very good facilities for tourists coming from abroad. However, today I would like to state that the Chalisgaon-Dhule railway line has existed since the British period, and it is this Government that has changed the scenario. For seventy years, no Government paid due attention to it. The existing railway lines remained as they were; neither were they electrified nor were they converted to broad gauge.

[English]

*Hon. Speaker Sir, we have been demanding for Auragabad-Chalisgaon railway line for the last 30 years. We have a lot of expectations from you and Hon. Prime Minister Modi ji. Only you can connect Marathwada and North Maharashtra region through rail network. I have total faith in you that a son of Maharashtra would definitely do justice. Tripling of Manmad -Jalgaon rail line has been done by this Government and four lines have been laid between Jalgaon and Bhusawal. Our government is focusing on railway connectivity which will lead to employment generation. You are running this House for the last 13 hours and I am also very thankful

* English translation of this part of the speech originally delivered in Marathi.

for giving me an opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. Rail travellers of Khandesh are also waiting for Pune-Dhule, Pune-Mumbai rail connectivity and for some more stoppages on existing network. I am sure you will fulfill our demands.*

[*]DR. SANGHMITRA MAURYA (BADAUN): It is well known that even after the completion of 72 years of Independence, the district of Badaun remains completely disconnected from the national capital, Delhi, and the capital of Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow. There is no train service operating from Badaun to either Delhi or Lucknow. This is nothing short of an anomaly.

I am confident that this matter may not have come to the notice of the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways, because representatives of other political parties who were elected from Badaun earlier avoided raising this important issue. However, I firmly believe that this matter will now receive due attention, because the farsighted vision of our Hon. Prime Minister is encapsulated in a single phrase, namely, *Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas, Sabka Vishwas*.

The Hon. Prime Minister wishes to connect every corner of the country through the railway network. A leader who envisions the operation of bullet trains in the country will certainly bestow upon Badaun a train service that connects it with Delhi and Lucknow. Such a train will not only connect Badaun with Delhi and Lucknow, but will also connect the hearts of the people of Badaun directly with

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

our Hon. Prime Minister. This will not merely signify the development of Badaun, but will also keep in view the interests of its youth, students, traders, working professionals, women and senior citizens, and will provide a new direction to their progress.

It is evident that progress itself constitutes the broad vision of our popular Hon. Prime Minister. This is the vision that the nation has attained after 72 years. Therefore, I am confident that it will not be necessary for me to repeatedly remind the Government of this matter. At the same time, I would also like to draw attention to the fact that in my own parliamentary constituency, a halt should be provided for the Mahakal Express at Babrala station, which falls under the Gunnour Assembly segment. This will benefit not only the local population but also residents of two or three neighbouring districts.

Further, at Dhanari station in the same Gunnour Assembly segment, Train Nos. 54461 and 54462, which presently stop only during a special fair held once a year, should be provided regular stoppages. This will benefit the local population as well as adjoining districts such as Bareilly, Hathras, Moradabad, Delhi, Agra and Firozabad from a commercial and business perspective.

With these good wishes, I once again express my gratitude while supporting the Railway Budget presented by the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Railway Minister.

***SHRI RAJKUMAR CHAHAR (FATEHPUR SIKRI):** Over the last five years, very commendable work has been carried out in the railway sector. Under the leadership of the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, cleanliness is now visible at railway stations. Trains are running on time. Cleanliness and hygiene have improved in various trains, and the quality of food has also become better. Escalators have been installed at stations, and machines providing mineral drinking water have been set up. The number of passengers has increased, and people feel safe while travelling.

I would like to make a request and place a demand before the Government that Fatehpur Sikri (Agra) is one of the world's major tourist destinations, attracting a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. I would request that a Metro train service between Agra and Fatehpur Sikri be introduced. The Agra Metro has already been approved.

I would also like to make a humble request in public interest that underpasses constructed beneath railway crossings in Agra district are experiencing severe waterlogging during the monsoon season. This is adversely affecting daily life and causing great hardship to the general public. I request the Government to take effective

* Speech was laid on the Table.

measures, including rainwater harvesting and other suitable interventions, to prevent waterlogging in railway underpasses in Agra district, as well as across the country, so that the common people may obtain relief.

With these words, I conclude my remarks while supporting the Demands for Grants of the Railways.

SHRI GAURAV GOGOI (KALIABOR): Hon. Speaker, Sir, thank you. I will conclude my remarks by confining myself to eight points. First, the ruling side repeatedly states that nothing was done for the North-Eastern region. I would like the Ministry of Railways to clarify whether it is not a fact that had the late Hon. Dr. Manmohan Singh ji not accorded *national project* status to the Bogibeel Bridge and the Silchar-Lumding broad gauge conversion, the resources required for these projects would never have been made available. In that context, I would like to know whether the Government proposes to take up any new national project in the North-Eastern region. Secondly, Kaziranga has immense potential for wildlife conservation and tourism. Is any railway project being contemplated to support tourism and connectivity in that area? Thirdly, during our tenure, initiatives were taken to connect the North-Eastern region with South-East Asia, including the Kaladan Multi-Modal Project and the Asian Trilateral Railway. I would like to know how much progress has been made on the Asian Trilateral Railway, which is a UNESCO-linked initiative. Fourthly, the economy of the North-Eastern region suffered significantly after the creation of Bangladesh, because the earlier corridor through Bangladesh was lost and connectivity had to be routed via Siliguri. Is any railway

corridor being planned in coordination with Bangladesh to restore more efficient connectivity? Fifthly, there has been repeated discussion about cold storage. Is the Railways planning any cold-storage infrastructure so that fruits, vegetables and spices from the North-Eastern region can be transported efficiently? I seek your permission to raise two more points. Sixthly, when the Hon. Minister earlier held the portfolio of Coal, coal transportation shifted largely from rail to road. Subsequently, when it was realised that railway freight revenue was declining and the Hon. Minister assumed charge of the Railways, that policy was changed and coal was brought back to rail, thereby improving freight revenue. However, the Railways cannot remain dependent only on coal freight. Apart from coal, what other commodities does the Government propose to focus on in order to increase freight revenue? Lastly, the Railway Budget has been merged with the General Budget. It has been said that if Members are interested, they may read the Budget documents, and for figures they may refer to the annexures. If everything is to be read from documents, then what is the purpose of delivering a Budget speech at all? One might as well simply circulate the papers and let Members read them. ...*(Interruptions)*

HON. SPEAKER : Shri Ramesh Bind is speaking in the House for the first time.

SHRI RAMESH BIND (BHADOHI): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak.

HON. SPEAKER: As this is your first speech, please maintain decorum. You have to conclude your remarks within two minutes.

SHRI RAMESH BIND : While supporting the Railway Budget, I congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi ji, and the Hon. Railway Minister, Shri Piyush Goyal ji. I have been elected from the Bhadohi Parliamentary Constituency in Purvanchal. Bhadohi is known as the city of the carpet industry, and it has Bhadohi Railway Station and Gyanpur Road Railway Station.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, Bhadohi Station serves the carpet hub, and at present there is an Allahabad-Jaipur train operating through this area.

That train remains halted at Allahabad for nearly ten hours. The people of my constituency, and I myself, request that this train be extended up to Varanasi via Bhadohi, which would greatly benefit the local population. Travel to and from Delhi via Gyanpur Road Station is also very inconvenient. The Purva Express passes through

that route. Through this House, I would like to request the Hon. Railway Minister that a halt be provided for the Purva Express at Gyanpur Road Station. Further, escalators should be installed at both Bhadohi Station and Gyanpur Road Station, and the length of the platforms at these stations should be increased. Thank you.

SHRI GOPAL JEE THAKUR (DARBHANGA): Hon. Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me time to speak on the Railway Budget.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I come from the North Bihar-Mithila region. On 22 February 1974, the foundation stone of the Sakri-Hasanpur railway line was laid by the then Railway Minister, late Shri Lalit Narayan Mishra ji. Thereafter, the foundation stone was again laid in 1996 and once more in 2008. However, till date, the Sakri-Hasanpur railway line has not been completed. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister that the section between Aglam-Biroul-Harinar has been partially made operational through remote control. This should be extended further and the Kusheshwar-Hasanpur railway line project should be made operational at the earliest. I would also like to request the Hon. Minister that the announcement made in 2008 by the then Railway Minister, Shri Lalu Prasad ji, regarding construction of a railway line from Laheria Sarai to

Saharsa, should be included in the present action plan in the larger public interest.

Hon. Speaker, Sir, I would further request the Hon. Minister that premium trains, Duronto trains and Humsafar trains should also be introduced from Darbhanga to other major cities of the country. At present, the Anand Vihar-New Delhi Garib Rath Express operates only two days a week, causing considerable inconvenience to the common people. Therefore, the Jaynagar-Anand Vihar Garib Rath Express should be operated on a daily basis. Sir, my submission is that there is no good train connecting Darbhanga, the heartland of Mithila, with the national capital. Hence, the Dibrugarh Rajdhani Express should be operated to Delhi via Barauni, Samastipur, Darbhanga, Sitamarhi and Gorakhpur. Finally, Sir, there are several level crossings within Darbhanga city, where traffic congestion causes severe hardship to the public for many hours. By constructing overbridges at all these crossings, the people of Darbhanga can be relieved of persistent traffic jams. Thank you.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Nisith Paramanik

The Hon. Member comes from Cooch Behar. He is a new Member and has been elected for the first time from West Bengal.

SHRI NISHITH PRAMANIK (COOCHBEHAR): Hon. Speaker, Sir, the extent of development that Indian Railways witnessed during the first term of the Modi Government is known to every corner of the country. In the second term of the Modi Government, the Budget presented by the Hon. Finance Minister for Indian Railways will give a new direction to the Railways. An allocation of Rs. 6,050 crore has been made exclusively for road overbridges and underbridges, which will ensure safer and faster movement for both rail and road transport. Further, Rs. 1,750 crore has been sanctioned for installing modern signalling systems at 300 stations and interlocking gate systems at 250 level crossings.

An amount of Rs. 47,997 crore has been provided for 800 kilometres of new railway tracks, 800 kilometres of gauge conversion, and 4,000 kilometres of track doubling. From this, one can well imagine the pace at which Indian Railways will progress over the next five years. In addition, Rs. 6,900 crore has been allocated exclusively for railway network electrification. Keeping this in view, the Railways will reduce its dependence on diesel by two per cent. Over the next five years, this will help in reducing pollution, which is a serious concern for our country.

The Budget for 2019-2020 presented by the Hon. Finance Minister, Shrimati Nirmala Sitharaman ji, will not only impart speed to Indian Railways but will also ensure speed with enhanced safety. For this, we are deeply grateful to her. Sir, I come from Cooch Behar. At present, it takes 15 to 16 hours to travel from Cooch Behar to Kolkata. Earlier, there used to be a route by which trains travelled from Cooch Behar via Lalmonirhat in Bangladesh, Rangpur and Balurghat to Kolkata, which reduced the travel time by seven to eight hours. Through you, I would like to request the Hon. Minister for Railways that if this route can be restored, it will greatly ease travel to Kolkata not only for the people of Cooch Behar but also for all residents of North Bengal.

Sir, at present, there are only two trains operating between Cooch Behar and Kolkata. Through you, I would like to bring this to the notice of the Hon. Minister for Railways and request that a superfast train be introduced from Cooch Behar to Kolkata in the name of Maharaja Nripendra Narayan. This would be of immense convenience, particularly for patients who are taken to Kolkata for medical treatment. With these submissions, I conclude my remarks, expressing my sincere thanks and offering my respectful salutations to all Hon. Members of this august House.

HON. SPEAKER: Shri Ramesh Bidhuri, please conclude your remarks within 30 seconds.

SHRI RAMESH BIDHURI (SOUTH DELHI): Hon. Speaker Sir, I would like to submit a few brief requests. Train Nos. 1256 and 1258 (Punjab Mail), which run from Amritsar towards Mathura, should be provided a halt at Tughlakabad. I have already written three letters to the Hon. Minister in this regard. I would also like to thank the Ministry for constructing three foot overbridges and for significantly improving cleanliness at Tughlakabad, Okhla and Palam stations, which were earlier in poor condition.

A train runs from Palam to Khatu Shyam, used by a large number of devotees. I request that this train be given a one-minute halt at Palam station. I place this demand through you before the Hon. Ministers present here. At present, passengers are compelled to travel to Old Delhi or New Delhi and then return by taxi, causing inconvenience. I therefore request that Tughlakabad railway station be developed as a junction. If trains arriving from Mumbai halt at Tughlakabad, it will greatly benefit passengers, saving them considerable time currently lost in commuting to and from New Delhi. Thank you.

[*]**SHRI JANARDAN SINGH SIGRIWAL (MAHARAJGANJ):** I support the Railway Budget. I would also like to express my gratitude, on my behalf, to the Hon. Prime Minister and the Hon. Minister for Railways-

I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister for Railways to the following rail-related proposals concerning my constituency, Maharajganj in Bihar:-

1. A new railway line may be constructed from the birthplace of Jayaprakash Narayan to the places associated with the work of the revered Mahatma Gandhi, via Chhapra-Jalalpur Bazaar-Baniyapur-Bhagwanpur, extending up to Champaran.

2. Passenger services may be operated in the morning hours from Chhapra to Siwan via Mathrak, Maharajganj and Dhuraudha, and similarly return services may be operated from Siwan to Chhapra via Dhuraudha, Maharajganj and Mathrak.

[*] Speech was laid on the Table.

HON. SPEAKER: All Hon. Members may collect their speeches.

Hon. Joshi ji will convey thanks to all Hon. Members who remained present till late in the night.

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS; MINISTER OF COAL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI PRALHAD JOSHI): Sir, on behalf of the House and all Hon. Members, I extend my thanks to you and congratulate you. In recent history, this is a record. It has been possible due to your initiative. Therefore, I once again place on record my gratitude to you.

I also thank our Hon. Minister for Railways, Shri Piyush Goyal, the Hon. Minister of State, Shri Suresh Angadi, all our Cabinet colleagues and all Cabinet Ministers who are present here. I thank all Hon. Members as well. I also express my appreciation to all the staff, including the Secretary-General seated here and the staff present outside. I place on record my thanks to everyone. After 1996, 2000 and 2001, this marks a new record in the 21st century. Once again, I thank the Hon. Speaker and all concerned. I also thank the members of the media.

HON. SPEAKER: The Lok Sabha stands adjourned till 11 a.m. on Friday, the 12th July, 2019.

23.59 hrs

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, July 12, 2019/Ashadha 21, 1941 (Saka).

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