

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE **(1977-78)**

(SIXTH LOK SABHA)

TWENTY-SECOND REPORT

RAJDHANI EXPRESS

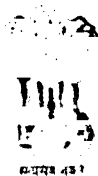
MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
RAILWAY BOARD

LALIT KUMAR
9-12-1977
by Sri Arjun
Signature

**[Action taken by Government on the Recommendations
of the Public Accounts Committee contained in
their 195th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha)]**

Presented in Lok Sabha on (9.12.77)

Laid in Rajya Sabha on (9.12.77)



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NEW DELHI

November, 1977/Kartika 1899 (S)

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PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

(1977-78)

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3. Shri T. R. Ghai—*Senior Financial Committee Officer.*

*Ceased to be a Member on his appointment as Minister of State w.e.f. 14.8.77

INTRODUCTION

1. The Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee as authorised by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Twenty Second Report on the action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Public Accounts Committee contained in their Hundred and Ninety Fifth Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on Rajdhani Express relating to Ministry of Railways.

2. On 10 August, 1977, an 'Action Taken Sub-Committee' consisting of the following members, was appointed to scrutinise the replies received from Government in pursuance of the recommendations made by the Committee in their earlier Reports :

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Shri C. M. Stephen | <i>Chairman</i> |
| 2. Shri Asoke Krishna Dutt | <i>Convener</i> |
| 3. Shri Gauri Shankar Rai | } <i>Members</i> |
| 4. Shri Tulsidas Dasappa | |
| 5. Shri Kanwar Lal Gupta | |
| 6. Shri Zawar Hussain | |
| 7. Shri Vasant Sathe | |

3. The Action Taken Sub-Committee of the Public Accounts Committee (1976-77) considered and approved the Report at their sitting held on 20 December, 1976 but could not be presented on account of dissolution of Lok Sabha on 18 January, 1977. The Action Taken Sub-Committee of the Public Accounts Committee (1977-78) considered and adopted the Report at their sitting held on 18 October, 1977. The Report was finally adopted by the Public Accounts Committee (1977-78) on 16 November, 1977.

4. For facility of reference the conclusions/recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report. For the sake of convenience, the conclusions/recommendations of the Committee have also been appended to the Report in a consolidated form.

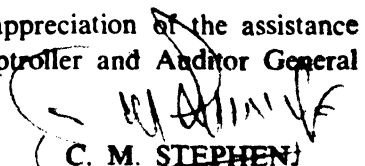
5. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the commendable work done by the Action Taken Sub-Committee of the Public Accounts Committee (1976-77) in considering and finalising this Report.

6. The Committee place on record their appreciation of the assistance rendered to them in this matter by the Comptroller and Auditor General of India.

NEW DELHI:

November 16, 1977.

Kartika 25, 1899 (S).


C. M. STEPHEN
Chairman,
Public Accounts Committee.

CHAPTER I

REPORT

1.1. This Report of the Committee deals with the action taken by Government on the recommendations of the Committee contained in their 195th Report (Fifth Lok Sabha) on Rajdhani Express, which was presented to the Lok Sabha on 5 February, 1976.

1.2. Action Taken Notes on all the 20 recommendations contained in the Report have been received from Government.

1.3. The Action Taken Notes on the recommendations of the Committee have been categorised as follows:—

- (i) *Recommendations/observations which have been accepted by Government.* S. Nos. 1—5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13, 16 and 20.
- (ii) *Recommendations/observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in the light of the replies of Government.* S. Nos. 17, 18 and 19.
- (iii) *Recommendations/observations replies to which have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration.* S. Nos. 6, 7 and 10.
- (iv) *Recommendations/observations in respect of which Government have furnished interim replies.* S. Nos. 14 and 15.

1.4. The Committee expect that final replies to those recommendations/observations in respect of which only interim replies have been furnished so far will be submitted expeditiously after getting them vetted by Audit.

1.5. The Committee will now deal with the action taken on some of their recommendations.

Doubling of North-South Trunk route—(Paragraph 1.77—Sl. No. 4)

1.6. Commenting on the need for speedy doubling of the North-South Trunk route, the Committee, in paragraph 1.77 of the Report, had observed:

“This is a state of affairs that needs to be remedied as soon as possible. While the Committee are not unaware of the constraints under which the Indian Railways operate, they are of the view that at least some of the difficulties are by no means insurmountable. It is distressing, for instance, to learn that though there is no dispute over the gains that would accrue to the Railways in particular and the nation at large by speedy doubling of the North-South Trunk route, this doubling

programme would take another seven to eight years to be completed. What is even more distressing is the indifference in this matter on the part of the Railway Board. The Committee had the misfortune to find the Board almost deriving comfort from the fact that since the doubling of the Bombay-Delhi route had taken twelve years, their performance in the matter of doubling the Delhi-Madras route was not a matter for undue concern."

1.7. In their Action Taken Note dated 13 August, 1976, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated:

"The observations of the Committee are noted. Out of a total so planned that bottle-neck sections, where capacity had already is already available on a total of 1782 kms. and the work is in progress and likely to be completed by the end of 1976 over 26 km. portion of this route. This will leave a balance of only 378 kms. in certain patches which have yet to be taken up for doubling, which is approximately 17 per cent of the total route length.

The phasing of the doubling of the North-South Trunk route was so planned that bottle-neck sections, where capacity had already become saturated, were taken up on priority, with a view to getting urgently needed relief. While the need for doubling of the balance portion of the G. T. Route, as well as of other important routes is indisputable, the Railways have been experiencing a serious constraint of resources, particularly during the last few years, with the result that it has not been possible to make satisfactory progress on various works, including some of the more important works already in hand. The resources availability not being unlimited, the Railways have to necessarily strike a balance between different areas of Railways Development Programme, such as procurement of rolling stock to handle increased freight and passenger traffic, develop line capacity by the cheapest means possible, construct new lines to open up new areas and connect new projects/mines, railway electrification, replacement of overaged assets, etc.

Keeping in view the relative priorities, it has not yet been possible to take up balance portions of the G. T. route for doubling. However, having regard to the need to develop additional capacity on this route, the doubling of the remaining sections also will be suitably programmed, within the resources made available to the Railways."

1.8. The Committee are not satisfied with the response of the Railway Board to their recommendation on the need for speedy doubling of the North-South Trunk route. It appears that out of a total distance of 2186 kms. between Delhi and Madras, a double line is already available on 1782 kms. and the work on another portion (26 kms.) of this route is now in progress and is likely to be completed by the end of 1976. This leaves a balance of no more than 378 kms. which is approximately 17 per cent of the total route length. That the Railway Board cannot even at this stage make a firm commitment in regard to the doubling of the entire North-South Trunk route, the need for which is indisputable, would imply that the priorities are not perhaps realistically kept in view. The Committee would urge on Government to take a more positive view and by overcoming what seem to be routine constraints, create soon the additional capacity which is sorely needed in one of the country's principal trunk routes.

Review of the need for providing air-conditioned first class accommodation on Mail/Express trains (Paragraphs 1.79, 1.80, & 1.89—Nos. 6, 7 & 16).

1.9. Dealing with the question of minimising the expenditure on providing air-conditioned first class accommodation, which has proved unremunerative in recent times after the September, 1974 hike in rail fares, the Committee, in paragraphs 1.79 and 1.80 of the Report had observed:—

Para 1.79:

“One immediate solution that suggests itself to the Committee for alleviating the problem of congestion in some of the existing mail and express trains is the provision of more accommodation for the non-affluent class of passengers by minimising the expenditure on providing air-conditioned first class accommodation which, in any case, has proved unremunerative in recent times after the September, 1974 hike in rail fares. A recent samples survey of the occupancy rate of air-conditioned first class in some of the ‘prestigious’ trains such as the Deluxe and the Rajdhani by different categories of passengers reveals an intriguing picture. During the period January 1 to June 30, 1975, the average occupancy of airconditioned first class on the Deluxe trains to and from Madras was respectively 75.5 per cent and 64.4 per cent. Of this, on the down direction from Madras to Delhi, while 2.8 per cent and 0.8 per cent of the berths were occupied respectively by Ministers and Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies, Railway Officers accounted for as high an occupancy as 20.5 per cent and other Government officers travelling on duty 1.4 per cent.

Occupancy on non-Government account and by foreign tourists was only 38.4 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively. The position was no better on the up direction towards Madras, the corresponding figures being respectively 2 per cent, 1.9 per cent, 12.2 per cent, 0.7 per cent, 56.5 per cent and 2.2 per cent. Similarly, on the Deluxe trains to and from Bombay, occupancy on non-Government account was only 62.9 per cent and 37 per cent, with as many as 159 berths and 200 berths out of a total utilisation of 1390 and 1031 berths being occupied respectively on the up and down trains by railway officers. The Deluxe trains to and from Calcutta tell a similar tale of distress with only 35.6 per cent and 40 per cent of the total utilised berths being occupied on private account while Railway Officers account for 8.4 per cent and 11.1 per cent of the occupancy.

Para 1.80

It is apparent that a large portion of the available air-conditioned first class accommodation is utilised on Railway and Government accounts, with the public exchequer bearing the cost, without any readily quantifiable corresponding benefits. Government would, therefore, do well to review the need for providing such a costly mode of travel to a small minority of public servants and evaluate the feasibility of reducing air-conditioned first class accommodation on trains, if not eliminating them altogether, so that the accommodation so released can be utilised to fulfill the more pressing social objective of providing additional accommodation for the weaker sections of the travelling public. The Committee note that certain steps such as a reduction in the frequency of air-conditioned first class coaches or their discontinuance on some of the trains, discontinuance of the construction of new airconditioned first class coaches on additional account, introduction of the new two-tier air-conditioned sleeper coaches, etc. have now been taken by the Railway Board. These steps by themselves would not solve the problem unless there is some fundamental rethinking on the part of the Railway Board and the Government Travel by the new two-tier air-conditioned sleeper coaches, for instance is still beyond the reach of the common man, and the operation of such coaches, not in lieu of but in addition to the air-conditioned first class on the Deluxe trains, would only further widen the gulf between the haves and the have-nots. It would also be of interest to analyse the extent to which the capacity in these new coaches are being utilised on non-Government

account and on Government account, either by officers travelling on duty or by those travelling on Leave Travel Concessions, with Government bearing the bulk of the cost of travel. The Committee would also like to be informed of the economics and occupancy of these new coaches."

1.10. In their Action Taken Notes dated 30 July, 1976 the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated:—

"Para 1.79. The observations of the Committee have been noted. The accommodation provided on important Mail/Express trains in various classes *vis-a-vis* utilisation thereof is reviewed from time to time. Wherever the utilisation in higher classes is not adequate, the composition of the train is changed suitably to cater to the needs of traffic. The higher class coaches thus withdrawn are replaced by second class coaches. A few instances relating to the year 1974-75 and 1975-76 are given below:—

South Eastern Railway

First class accommodation was withdrawn on 6 pairs of trains and replaced on 12 pairs of trains by second class on Howrah-Kharagpur route.

Eastern Railway

On 19 Up/21 Up, one composite FCS (First-cum-second) was replaced by one second class.

Southern Railway

On 56 trains (both B.G. and M.G.), one F.C. was replaced by one G.S. coach.

Para 1.80. The new type of Air-conditioned 2 tier sleeper coaches with carrying capacity of 48 passengers during day and night have been introduced on Deluxe trains in replacement of corridor type First Class coaches with 22/24 berth capacity. As these coaches provide Air-conditioned dust-free comfortable travel with first class fares only, passengers prefer travel in these coaches to that in ordinary first class coaches. These new coaches thus carry more accommodation, give considerable consumer satisfaction and bring more revenue to Railways.

The occupation of A.C. 2-tier coaches during December 1975 to February 1976 was as under:—

	25 Dn	26 Up	81/103 Ac Exp.	82/104 Ac Exp.	15 Dn.	16 Up
(i) Total No. of berths available	3120	5888	3120	3120	1248	1820
(ii) Total No. of berths utilised	2838	5442	3103	2706	1248	1743
Percentage	91.0	92.4	99.4	86.7	100.0	95.8
(iii) Total No. of berths utilised by :						
(a) Ministers	2	2	1	..	..	8
Percentage	0.1	..	..	..	..	0.4
(b) MPs & MLAs	25	89	227	256	116	92
Percentage	0.8	1.5	7.3	8.2	9.3	5.1
(c) Railway officers on Privilege and Duty passes	445	893	563	641	181	302
Percentage	14.3	15.2	18.0	20.5	14.5	16.6
(d) Other Govt. officers on duty	64	34	92	18	251	74
Percentage	2.0	0.6	3.0	0.6	20.1	4.1
(e) Private account	2266	4421	2214	1786	689	1261
Percentage	72.6	75.1	70.9	57.2	55.2	69.3
(f) Foreign Tourists	36	3	6	5	11	6
Percentage	1.2	..	0.2	0.2	0.9	0.3

As already mentioned, the present policy is to cut down Air-conditioned accommodation on trains where it is not adequately utilised and there is at present no programme to construct any new I class air-conditioned coaches on additional account. It is proposed to build more air-conditioned coaches of popular types *i.e.* composite with Chair Cars and 2 tier sleeper etc.

As already indicated in reply to 195th Report of the Public Accounts Committee, recommendation Nos. 14 and 15 (paras 1.87 and 1.88 of the same report) after completion of the costing of coaches services for Passenger services, specific studies of economics of A.C. Sleeper class will be undertaken and the results communicated to the Committee in due course."

1.11. With reference to the provision of the air-conditioned first class coach on the Rajdhani Express, the Committee had, in paragraph 1.89, observed :

"Pending the economic reappraisal of the Rajdhani service suggested above, the Committee feel that it should also be possible to effect certain economics and increase earnings by (a) the

replacement of the air-conditioned first class coach either by a chair car or by a two-tier air-conditioned sleeper coach so as to provide accommodation to a larger number of passengers, (b) augmentation of the existing capacity of the train by at least an additional chair car and (c) switching over to electric traction from diesel as early as possible. The Committee find that during the period from 1973 to 1975 (upto June), the occupancy of air-conditioned first class in the Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani ranged respectively from 79 to 100 per cent, 44 to 100 per cent and 37 to 87 per cent. On the other hand, the occupancy of the air-conditioned chair car during the same period ranged from 88 to 100 per cent, 73 to 100 per cent and 72 to 100 per cent respectively. Though the total earnings from air-conditioned first class might have increased on account of the increase in fares which has made travel by this accommodation even more expensive than air travel, the occupancy rate has decreased drastically. The Committee would urge the Railway Board to take a fresh look at the need for providing such opulent accommodation on the Rajdhani which could, perhaps, be substituted either by a two-tier AC sleeper coach or a chair car which would cater to a larger number of passengers."

1.12. In their Action Taken Note dated 4 August, 1976 the Railway Board have *inter alia* stated:

"The rail fares for Air-conditioned Class and Air-conditioned Chair Car have been reduced with effect from 1-5-1976. With this reduction in fares, the occupation of accommodation in these classes has been picking up satisfactorily and there is a fair sized waiting list at originating stations.

Board have instructed RDSO to carry out oscillation trials with WAM-4 electric locos fitted with modified axle boxes for operation of New Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani Express at a maximum permissible speed of 130 kmph (booked speed of 120 kmph). These trials are in progress and are expected to be finalised by RDSO during the next 3 to 4 months. After the successful completion of these trials, the question of switch over to electric traction for the Rajdhani Express and augmenting the payload capacity of this train will be decided by the Board."

1.13. The Railway Board have in a further note dated 19 October, 1976 stated:—

"The recommendation of the Committee is to increase earnings of Rajdhani trains by replacing Air-conditioned First Class

accommodation by Air-conditioned Chair Car and Air-conditioned 2-tier sleeper and also by augmenting the load of these trains by switching over from diesel traction to electric traction. In this connection, it has been clarified that accommodation provided on these trains i.e. Air-conditioned First and Air-conditioned chair car are already well patronised and generally fully occupied particularly with the reduction in fares with effect from 1-5-1976 in these classes. It is, therefore, not considered desirable to make any change in the present composition of Rajdhani trains by replacing Air-conditioned First by Air-conditioned 2-tier sleeper or by Air-conditioned Chair Car in view of patronisation of the accommodation already provided.

However, the type and number of additional coaches to be attached namely Air-conditioned 2-tier Sleepers or Air-conditioned Chair Cars will be determined when final decision for change of traction from Diesel to Electric is taken after the trials have been completed."

1.14. The Committee are unhappy that the Railway Board appear almost allergic to their suggestion for a rethinking on the provision in important trains of air-conditioned first class accommodation which has become largely unremunerative. A substantial proportion of the available air-conditioned first class accommodation in important trains is seen to be utilised on Railway and Government account, the public exchequer bearing the cost and without any readily quantifiable corresponding advantage to our railway system. Obviously, the need for providing such a costly mode of travel to a microscopic minority of public servants calls for a review. The Committee had particularly desired that the feasibility of reducing air-conditioned first-class accommodation might be explored with a view to more pressing social objective of providing additional accommodation for the overwhelming majority of the travelling public. Although the Railway Board have stated that accommodation provided on important Mail/Express trains in various classes was reviewed from time to time in the light of its utilisation, no specific analysis of the position as suggested by the Committee has so far been made. The Committee would reiterate that the Railway Board should undertake a specific feasibility study to ascertain whether airconditioned first class accommodation on any of the important trains could be eliminated or at least reduced in the larger interest of providing much needed additional accommodation in the cheaper categories. The idea of providing more AC 2-tier coaches, which has proved highly attractive, should also be further pursued. A full report in this regard may please be submitted to the Committee.

1.15. In regard to the Rajdhani Express trains the Committee had suggested that in the interest of providing the facilities of these trains to a

larger section of the population, the need for substituting the air-conditioned first class accommodation with a two-tier AC sleeper coach or a chair car might be examined by the Railway Board. The Committee regret that this has not been done. They would desire that the feasibility study suggested by them in paragraph 1.14 above, for ascertaining whether air-conditioned first class accommodation on important trains could be eliminated or reduced in the larger interest of providing much needed additional accommodation in the cheaper categories, should also cover specifically the substitution of air-conditioned first class accommodation on Rajdhani Express by a two-tier sleeper coach or a chair car.

Coordination between Central and State Governments in regard to power generation schemes—(Paragraph 1.83—Sl. No. 10)

1.16. Commenting on the electrification programmes of the Railways, the Committee, in paragraph 1.83 of their Report, had recommended:—

“In view of the fact that the electrification programmes of the Railways are also vitally dependent on the power generation schemes of the State Governments with their own financial constraints and limitations, the Committee feel that an integrated approach to the entire problem would be necessary if these programmes are to be given effect to. The Committee learn that the Railways have drawn up some proposals for establishing their own power stations and that site studies and preparation of feasibility reports in this regard have already been completed and are awaiting approval and allocation of funds by the Planning Commission. The Committee consider that it would be desirable to establish real coordination for this purpose between the Central and the State Governments and a pooling together of the available resources. Such a step would ensure that our scarce resources are not expended in avoidable duplication of effort. Government should also examine the feasibility of providing institutional finance to meet any shortfalls in the provision of the requisite funds for the joint venture which should give an added impetus for the speedier implementation of projects of vital importance. The Committee attach considerable importance to this recommendation and desire that the Planning Commission should process it early and initiate the necessary follow-up action.”

1.17. In their Action Taken Note dated 19 August, 1976, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated:—

“The recommendation of the Committee has been noted. The matter relating to power supply for railway electrification programmes will be coordinated suitably between the State and

the Central Government Departments so that the available resources are pooled together to the best advantage and there is no duplication of effort."

1.18. The Committee regret that a serious recommendation intended to ensure coordination between the Central and State Governments and to avoid duplication of effort in the matter of power generation schemes, has apparently drawn a perfunctory response. It was in the context of the Railway Board's proposal for setting up some captive power stations, that the Committee had wanted the Planning Commission, as the central co-ordinating agency to have a fresh look at the power generation schemes sponsored by the Central and State Governments as well as the Railways with a view to having an integrated approach to the problem. It had also been suggested that Government should examine the feasibility of providing institutional finance to meet any shortfalls in the provision of funds for such ventures. The Railway Board have merely noted the recommendation and stated that the matter relating to power supply for railway electrification programmes would be coordinated suitably between the State and Central Government Departments and the available resources pooled together to the best advantage and without any duplication of effort. The Committee would particularly ask the Planning Commission to give serious thought to the suggestions made in paragraph 1.83 of the 195th Report and intimate the specific action taken in this behalf at an early date.

Pattern of travel by foreign tourists in India (Paragraph 1.84—S. No. 11)

1.19. Dealing with the question of use of Rajdhani Express trains by foreign tourists, the Committee had, in paragraph 1.84 of the Report, observed:

"Viewed against this broader background, the running of the Rajdhani Express trains however attractive and important it may be is open to question. Though it has been claimed by the Railway Board that the Rajdhani Express has a role to play in the sphere of tourism, the Committee find that apart from a few visiting foreign delegations who are sent by the Railway Board by this prestigious train, only 17 foreign tourists had travelled by the air-conditioned first class by the Rajdhani to Bombay and another 17 to Calcutta during the six months from January 1 to June 30, 1975. It has also been admitted by the Railway Board that as the Rajdhani Expresses do not stop at places of tourist interest and foreign tourists have to plan in advance to travel by these bi-weekly services, they prefer to avail of other suitable trains or air services. The Committee are also of the view that a misplaced emphasis in this regard is perhaps being placed by the Railway Board as well

as the Department of Tourism. It is well known that quite a large number of foreign tourists, particularly the young among them, wishing to have a taste of India's natural beauty and her ancient culture prefer cheaper modes of travel and reasonable accommodation and food tariffs. Besides, the more affluent tourists, spanning the globe with their tight schedules and itineraries generally prefer the faster air travel. It would, therefore, be worthwhile for the Railway Board to review critically the pattern of travel by foreign tourists within India and to assess whether, in a country like ours it is proper to place excessive emphasis on luxurious rail travel for "attracting" foreign tourists. The Committee would like to know what is being done in this regard."

1.20. In their Action Taken Notes dated 4 August, 1976, the Railway Board have *inter alia* stated:

"While the pattern of general travel by foreign tourists in India, whether by air, rail or road is analysed by the Department of Tourism, special care is taken by Railway to afford requisite facilities to foreign tourists for their rail travel in India, e.g. booking of rail accommodation/retiring rooms in advance on receipt of their itineraries; provision of Tourists Guides at important stations, provision of tourist cars/saloons of the class desired. Whenever there is bulk movement or organised tour of foreign tourists by rail, special arrangements are made to run extra coaches|special trains including Air-conditioned to meet their requirements and itineraries."

"With regard to the running of Rajdhani Express, the Department of Tourism has observed that this train cannot be regarded as luxury because the tourists who are unaccustomed to heat, dust and smoke would regard the Rajdhani Express as a minimum necessity. A copy of the note received from Department of Tourism under U.O. No. 4-TT. II(4)/76 dated 28-6-76 is enclosed as Annexure 'A' (See pages 29-30). The Department of Tourism is of the view that continuance of Rajdhani Express is necessary not only for the foreign tourists but also for domestic tourist traffic."

1.21. In a note dated 19 October, 1976, the Railway Board have further stated:

"It has already been clarified that the pattern of travel by foreign tourists in India is analysed by the Department of Tourism who have assessed that about 20 per cent of foreign tourists visiting Delhi and Calcutta travelled by rail, nearly 31 per cent visiting Madras came by rail and 12.2 per cent only visiting Bombay arrived by train. No separate figures of foreign tour-

ists travelling by rail are maintained by the Zonal Railways. It has already been stated that the Rajdhani Express trains have been run to provide a fast and comfortable dust-free long distance journey between (1) New Delhi and Calcutta and (2) New Delhi-Bombay Central for the convenience of passengers. These trains are very popular and the present occupation is nearly 100 per cent. While the Rajdhani trains have attraction for foreign tourists, these trains have not been run for attracting Foreign Tourists traffic as such. It is no doubt correct that only 34 foreign tourists have travelled by Rajdhani Express trains, during the period from 1st January to 30th June 1975.

Department of tourism have further observed that running of these trains is necessary not only for Foreign Tourists but also for domestic Tourist traffic."

1.22. It appears neither the Railway Board nor the Department of Tourism have grasped the real import of the Committee's recommendation. By citing the example of Rajdhani Express the Committee had only attempted to focus attention on the exaggerated emphasis sometimes placed on the more glamorous elements of tourism development in the country. At present, however, many foreign tourists, particularly the young among them, keen on savouring India's natural beauty and perhaps to them exotic attractions prefer cheap modes of travel and reasonable accommodation and food tariffs. It was in this context that the Committee had wished the Railway Board and the Department of Tourism to review critically the pattern of travel by foreign tourists within India and to assess whether, situated as we are 'disproportionate' emphasis on luxurious rail travel for 'attracting' foreign tourists was not to be purposefully avoided. While Rajdhani may, in foreign eyes, be no luxury, it happens to be so in our Indian conditions. The Committee by no means disapprove of Rajdhani; on the contrary they wish it well. But a review at depth of the optimum utilisation of our still scarce railway resources is certainly due. The Committee consider that such a review is required, not only for reasons of economy and efficiency in the provision of tourist facilities but also to attract tourist traffic by rail on a wider basis.

Financial justification of the Rajdhani Express (Paragraph 1.85—Sl. No. 12)

1.23. Dealing with the question of financial remunerativeness of the Rajdhani Express trains, the Committee in paragraph 1.85 of the Report, had observed:—

"The Railway Board have tried to justify the introduction of the Rajdhani Express trains on grounds of financial remunerativeness as well. The Committee are aware that this 'prestige symbol' has caught the fancy of the better placed passengers

who can afford to pay for the comforts the train provides. The earnings of the two Rajdhani Express trains have also exceeded the direct expenses in all the years of their operation. This, however, presents only a partial picture of the economics of the matter. The earnings from Rajdhani have been compared only with the readily identifiable direct costs of operation without taking into account the indirect, distributable elements of cost such as provision and maintenance of permanent way, signal and telecommunication, other equipments and facilities, cost of train passing staff, coaching yard staff and over-heads which are common with other services. The Committee have been informed that it had not been possible so far to estimate the cost of these distributable items of expenditure in the absence of a scientific system for the assessment of the unit cost of coaching services. Even before the introduction of the Rajdhani Express, only an estimate of the out of pocket expenses or direct costs of running the train had been made to determine its financial remunerativeness. In the circumstances, the Committee feel that it would be incorrect to accept at its face value the incomplete financial justification of the Rajdhani Express furnished by the Railway Board."

1.24. In their Action Taken Note dated the 3 August, 1976 the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have stated:

"Here it is a case of introduction of a new service on an existing section. The indirect expenditure on provision and maintenance of track, signalling, cost of train staff, yard staff etc., is by and large in the nature of fixed costs incurred on behalf of the traffic as a whole and, irrespective of the fact whether the new service is introduced or not, such expenses would continue more or less at the same level. Therefore, it is but proper and as a matter of fact this system is universally adopted—to justify a new service on the basis of additional expenses directly attributable to such a service. In such cases, the profitability is measured by an appraisal which gauges the extent to which revenue added by the new service exceeds expenses which could be avoided by its elimination.

Assessment of Unit cost for coaching services is nearing completion and when once these cost data are available, fully distributed costs of running the Rajdhani Expresses would be worked out."

1.25. The Committee are anxious that the economics of the running of the Rajdhani Express is worked out expeditiously. It is common knowledge that unfortunately in our country rail travel is by no means a

very happy experience for the weaker sections of the population, which means the overwhelming majority. There is scope, certainly, for such prestigious trains as Rajdhani Express, since our railways must not lag, in elegance and efficiency behind the more advanced countries of the world. The Committee stress the need of maintaining a high standard for Rajdhani Express and the provision therein, efficiently and without discrimination among passengers, of the facilities proudly promised and so far welcomed by our not very exacting public. Even so, it is imperative that Rajdhani Express, popular as it has proved to be, should pay its way and should not be a drag on exchequer. The Committee urge that the economic appraisal of Rajdhani Express be completed without delay and intimated to them. If properly run, the service should on no account be found an unremunerative proposition.

Preparation of a long-range perspective plan for Railways—(Paragraph 1.93—Sl. No. 20)

1.26. In Paragraph 1.93 of the Report, the Committee had observed:—

“Now that a long-overdue technological breakthrough has been achieved on the Railways and considerable sums have been expended in effecting improvements to rolling stock, track standards and maintenance, signalling and telecommunication, etc., the Committee are of the view that the Railway Board should endeavour to make available, to the maximum extent possible, the benefits of present-day technological progress to a larger cross-section of the travelling public. As has been pointed out in paragraph 1.76, the Railway Board have no immediate plans for connecting other State capitals with Delhi by similar fast trains. Such further programmes should soon come on to the agenda. The Committee, meanwhile, would urge the Railway Board to consider the running of fast trains with cheaper accommodation to cater to the less affluent class of passengers rather than going in for more luxury trains of the Rajdhani type, which, in any case, would benefit only a select minority. For this purpose, a long-range perspective plan should be drawn up, in place of what appears to be an *ad hoc* approach as at present. Clear-cut, priorities for future investment both in respect of passenger and goods movement should also be laid down. The Committee trust that our Railways, realising that Rajdhani and similar runnings, while by no means unwelcome, cater to limited and privileged sections of the travelling public, will leave no stone unturned till a truly people-oriented railway service is made available to all.”

1.27. In their Action Taken Note dated 4 August, 1976, the Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) have *inter alia* stated:

“A long range perspective plan for both the passenger and freight traffic is already being developed by the Railways as a corporate plan covering the period upto 1988-89.”

1.28. The Committee note that the Railway Board recognise the need of a long-range perspective plan for an integrated development of passenger and freight traffic. Some action appears already to have been initiated for the formulation of such a plan for the period upto 1988-89. The Committee would urge that the comprehensive perspective plan should be finalised soon and clear-cut priorities for future investment called for thereby laid down. It may be added that if railway planning for our country is to be worthwhile, it must be aimed at providing truly people-oriented service. The Committee expect that no effort will be spared to see that in the matter of railway facilities, the benefits of technology are made available as largely as possible to the masses of our people.

CHAPTER II

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY GOVERNMENT

Recommendations

1.74. The Committee are glad that the Rajdhani Express service has, by and large, won wide appreciation from the travelling public. To the extent that they furnish a 'super-fast' service, by our Indian Standards, between Howrah & Delhi and between Delhi & Bombay, and as the show-piece, as it were, of the Indian Railways and a testimony to their technological break-through towards quality transport facilities, the introduction of these trains has been welcomed. The Railway Board cannot rest content, however, with operating a couple of such prestigious trains, which cater necessarily to the comparatively affluent class of passengers, when the needs of the larger multitude of less fortunate passengers remain unfulfilled. If after nearly three decades of independence and four Five Year Plans, the overwhelming majority of our railway passengers find themselves forced to travel at slow speed, often also in great discomfort, it is clear that the Indian Railways have still a lot of leeway to make up.

1.75. It appears that on account of various constraints such as the absence of adequate terminal facilities, slow pace of doubling of track, non-availability of locomotives in sufficient numbers, capable of hauling economically a larger number of coaches at higher speeds, etc., the Railways have been unable to keep pace with the ever-growing demands of the travelling public. Consequently the problems of insufficiency and congestion in the existing passenger services continue to plague the Railways. Thus, a slightly paradoxical situation has ensued with the Rajdhani Express at one end of the spectrum, capable soon of achieving speeds upto 160 kilometres per hour, and trains consisting of outdated coaches hauled at speeds as low as 25 kilometres per hour at the other end. Besides, with greater emphasis being laid on increasing freight earnings and perhaps also on account of the increasing losses incurred on passenger services, there appears to be a tendency to relegate such services, to a secondary place. Unless the Railways fulfil their larger social commitments and cater to the needs of the great multitude of passengers, the achievements of such trains as Rajdhani Express would be little more than easy showmanship fundamentally unrelated to the broader national interest.

1.76. The Committee have learnt that having introduced two such trains which have brought two metropolitan cities closer to the capital, the Railway Board is not contemplating the introduction of similar attractive trains

for connecting other State capitals with Delhi, on account of the absence of a double line throughout the relevant routes. Similarly, the more popular Jayanti Janata Express trains, that provide faster, non-airconditioned second class travel from Delhi to Cochin and Mangalore, to Secunderabad and to Samastipur, are not likely to be extended to other cities, owing to the non-completion of the doubling of the track and the lack of terminal capacity at the destination stations. By the conversion of the Grand Trunk Express (Delhi-Madras) into an airconditioned deluxe train twice a week, a peculiar position prevails on the Southern trunk route, in which the weaker sections of the passengers have been deprived of ordinary second class accommodation on the days the Deluxe operates. It would, thus, appear that faster and more comfortable rail travel is available today to a minority of better-placed passengers, while for the overwhelming majority, rail travel still remains none-to-happy an experience.

1.86. The Committee are of the view that in addition to the direct and indirect costs of operation of the Rajdhani Service, it would also be necessary to take into account the social cost of running the service. Admittedly, on the days the Rajdhani operates, there is a loss of nearly three paths of goods trains on an average on the Delhi-Howrah route, besides an increase in the detention to goods trains (including the Super Express goods trains) and other passenger trains on the route, with consequent loss of earnings not perhaps susceptible of precise quantification. The Committee concede that these losses are only notional to some extent, and that it is perhaps inevitable for a fast train to displace slower trains running on the same route. It cannot, however, be denied that there has been a certain loss to the nation as a whole by the detentions and displacement of trains, goods as well as passenger. It is, therefore, a moot point whether the running of a luxury service, consisting of just six airconditioned passenger coaches (one first class coach and five second class chair cars), could be considered justifiable from an overall national point of view. The Committee would have been happier if the Railway Board had succeeded in introducing similar fast trains, though with reduced comforts, to cater to a larger number of less affluent passengers, so that the benefits of the technological breakthrough on the Railways were made available to larger sections of the country.

1.93. Now that a long-overdue technological breakthrough has been achieved on the Railways and considerable sums have been expended in effecting improvements to rolling stock, track standards and maintenance, signalling and telecommunication, etc., the Committee are of the view that the Railway Board should endeavour to make available, to the maximum extent possible, the benefits of present-day technological progress to a larger cross-section of the travelling public. As has been pointed out in paragraph 1.76, the Railway Board have no immediate plans for connecting

other State capitals with Delhi by similar fast trains. Such further programmes should soon come on to the agenda. The Committee, meanwhile, would urge the Railway Board to consider the running of fast trains with cheaper accommodation to cater to the less affluent class of passengers rather than going in for more luxury trains of the Rajdhani type, which, in any case, would benefit only a select minority. For this purpose, a long-range perspective plan should be drawn up, in place of what appears to be an *ad hoc* approach as at present. Clear-cut priorities for future investment both in respect of passenger and goods movement should also be laid down. The Committee trust that our Railways, realising that Rajdhani and similar runnings, while by no means unwelcome, cater to limited and privileged sections of the travelling public, will leave no stone unturned till a truly people-oriented railway service is made available to all.

[Sl. Nos. 1, 2, 3, 13, and 20 Paras 1.74, 1.75, 1.76, 1.86 & 1.93 of
195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

In order to make a technical break-through in regard to the maximum permissible speed of Passenger trains on Indian Railways and to provide our Engineers with the necessary technical expertise in a new field of high speed technology, a Pilot Scheme of introducing a high speed train on a section requiring minimum of expenditure on track, signalling and rolling stock was undertaken. These Howrah-New Delhi and Bombay-New Delhi Rajdhani trains are only Pilot Schemes of technological advancement in our desire to experiment with the higher speed which is in line with other countries of the world. New Delhi-Howrah and New Delhi-Bombay Rajdhani Expresses run at a maximum permissible speed of 130 KMPH and 120 KMPH respectively. Although these trains are popular, it has been decided not to extend such express trains at high speeds of 130 and 120 KMPH for the present in view of limited resources both in the matter of availability of rolling stock and in the matter of funds, required for improving track strength and signalling above the normal requirements, and for providing specially constructed coaches to meet the needs of high speeds.

For running at this speed, air-conditioning is a pre-requisite as otherwise the dust nuisance will be insufferable to the passengers and the locomotive can haul only this much of load at such speeds. If it is possible to introduce such fast trains in future to other State Capitals, they can be more or less on the same model.

However, within the existing facilities, the maximum permissible speeds of 1 up/2 Dn Howrah-Delhi Mail, 1 Dn/2 Up Howrah-Bombay Mail via Nagpur on Howrah-Durg section and 153/154 Samastipur-New Delhi Jayanti Janata Express on Mughalsarai-New Delhi section have been raised to 110 KMPH.

2. It is the policy of Government to introduce more Janata/Jayanti Janata Express trains to provide faster and comfortable travel for second

class passengers. Upto March 1969, 16 pairs of Janata trains were introduced. During 1969-70 to 1974-75, 1 pair of Janata and 3 pairs of Jayanti Janata were provided. During 1975-76, more such trains have been introduced viz. 159/160 biweekly Jayanti Janata train between Nizamuddin and Secunderabad and 81/82 Bombay-Ernakulam|Mangalore Jayanti Janata twice in a week and a biweekly Janata Express between New Bongaigaon-Howrah have been introduced. The frequency of 131/132 Nizamuddin-Cochin/Mangalore Jayanti Janata Express has been increased from triweekly to five times a week, and that of 115/116 Bombay-Lucknow Janata Expresses from biweekly to triweekly. Additionally 17/18 Madras-Delhi Janata Express have been extended to/from Jammu Tawi and 153/154 New Delhi Samastipur Jayanti Janata Expresses have been extended to /from Muzaffarpur. The intention is to spread the net work of Janata trains and, wherever possible to increase the frequency where it is not daily at present.

3. As regards running of air-conditioned express on two days in a week on North-South trunk route depriving the passengers of ordinary second class accommodation prior to 1957, there were only two pairs of trains viz. G. T. Express with slip coaches to Hyderabad and Janata Express between Madras and New Delhi/Delhi. With effect from 9-2-1957, a biweekly Deluxe Express was introduced between these points. In 1964, another biweekly train (Ordinary) called Southern Express to the path of the Deluxe Express was provided and subsequently the frequency of the Southern Express was increased to five times a week, thereby providing a daily service in AC/Southern Express. In April, 1968, when both AC/Southern and G. T. Express trains had been put under diesel traction, the names were interchanged. Deluxe train now runs in conjunction with G. T. Express. It will, therefore, be seen that the service on 5 days in a week has been provided as an additional service.

Even this A. C. Deluxe Express carries as many as six second class coaches. This apart, on these two days when Deluxe Express runs, 17/18 Madras-Jammu Tawi Janata Express and 21/22 (and 51/52) New Delhi-Hyderabad Madras Express providing second class accommodation are available. As mentioned earlier, two Jayanti Janata Expresses—one between Nizamuddin and Cochin/Mangalore and another between Nizamuddin and Secunderabad have also since been introduced on this route. The A.C. Deluxe rake has been de-linked from the Grand Trunk Express service which is being run daily with an ordinary rake. A fast triweekly train to Madras with the Deluxe rake and with limited stoppages covering the journey in about 30 hours is being introduced from 7.8.76.

4. A long range perspective plan for both the passenger and freight traffic is already being developed by the Railways as a Corporate Plan covering the period upto 1988-89.

While a specific approach for meeting the requirements of each major route will have to be developed, the broad strategy would be to gradually switch over the long distance trains to diesel or electric traction. This will enable an increase in the load per train, and at the same time provide for a speedier and better quality passenger service.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195 (1—3, 13 & 20) dated 13-8-76/13 Sravana 1898]

Recommendation

1.77. This is a state of affairs that needs to be remedied as soon as possible. While the Committee are not unaware of the constraints under which the Indian Railways operate, they are of the view that at least some of the difficulties are by no means insurmountable. It is distressing, for instance, to learn that though there is no dispute over the gains that would accrue to the Railways in particular and the nation at large by speedy doubling of the North-South Trunk route, this doubling programme would take another seven to eight years to be completed. What is even more distressing is the indifference in this matter on the part of the Railway Board. The Committee had the misfortune to find the Board almost deriving comfort from the fact that since the doubling of the Bombay-Delhi route had taken twelve years, their performance in the matter of doubling the Delhi-Madras route was not a matter of undue concern.

[Sl. No. 4 Para 1.77 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee are noted. Out of a total distance of 2186 kms. between Delhi and Madras, double line is already available on a total of 1782 kms. and the work is in progress and likely to be completed by the end of 1976 over 26 km. portion of this route. This will leave a balance of only 378 kms. in certain patches which have yet to be taken up for doubling, which is approximately 17 per cent of the total route length.

The phasing of the doubling of the North-South trunk route was so planned that bottle-neck sections, where capacity had already become saturated, were taken up on priority, with a view to getting urgently needed relief. While the need for doubling of the balance portion of the G.T. Route, as well as of other important routes is indisputable, the Railways have been experiencing a serious constraint of resources, particularly during the last few years, with the result that it has not been possible to make satisfactory progress on various works, including some of the more important works, already in hand. The resource availability not being unlimited, the Railways have to necessarily strike a balance between different areas of Railways Development Programme, such as procurement of rolling stock to handle increased freight and passenger traffic, develop

line capacity by the cheapest means possible, construct new lines to open up new areas and connect new projects/mines, railway electrification, replacement of overaged assets, etc.

Keeping in view the relative priorities, it has not yet been possible to take up balance portions of the G.T. route for doubling. However, having regard to the need to develop additional capacity on this route, the doubling of the remaining sections also will be suitably programmed, within the resources made available to the Railways.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195(4) dated 13-8-1976/22, Sravana, 1898.]

Recommendation

The position in regard to augmentation of terminal capacity at major metropolitan cities in the country is no better either. Though a number of work studies and traffic-cum-engineering surveys have been carried out in various metropolitan areas, specific steps for increasing the terminal capacity from a long range point of view are yet to be taken in concrete manner and many of the surveys remain reports on paper. Even the site for the location of a third terminal in the Delhi area is yet to be finalized. Similarly, in the Calcutta area, where the problems have accumulated excruciatingly, the second phase of the work of remodelling the Sealdah station yard and constructing a new station building, work on which commenced as early as 1960-61, is expected now to be completed, after more than 15 years by June, 1976 but the fate of the rest of the scheme regarding the Sealdah complex remains hanging in mid-air, mainly perhaps on account of the non-availability of funds with the State Government. Surveys for the remodelling of the Bombay V.T. main line and suburban station and for the provision of another terminal in the Parel-Dadar area as well as for providing additional terminal facilities in the Bombay Central Yard and at Madras Egmore are still only 'under examination.' In the absence of timely progress, the cost of the projects undoubtedly escalates and the demands of passenger and goods traffic continue to far outstrip availability. Temporary palliatives and *ad hoc* solutions, too often at considerable cost, further tarnish the picture.

[Sl. No. 5, Para 1.78 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The meagre availability of funds for traffic facilities as allotted by the Planning Commission has been coming in the way of improving the terminal capacity at the various metropolitan areas. Even though for traffic facilities an amount of Rs. 500 crores has been provided in the 5th Five Year Plan, the actual allotments so far during the various years in the 5th Plan have been considerably less than the proportionate amount of Rs. 100 crores per year. During 1975-76 and 1976-77 sums of Rs. 51.61 and Rs. 60.17 crores respectively only have been allotted under the head

traffic facilities, which besides terminal facilities includes various line capacity works such as doublings, gauge conversions, yard remodellings, provision and extension of loops etc. Further, the Planning Commission have given low priority to the works connected with Passenger traffic while allocating the limited funds allotted for traffic facility works among different schemes. It will, therefore, be difficult to improve in any significant way the terminal facilities at the various metropolitan areas unless the funds allotted are substantially enhanced. The Railway Ministry have been trying their best to get additional outlays. However, within the availability of funds, some limited works to provide immediate relief to the various terminals has been taken up as per the details given below.

DELHI.

It was earlier proposed to locate the Third Terminal in Delhi area at Hazrat Nizamuddin. This site however had to be dropped in view of the objection that this will affect the serenity of the historical monuments. An alternative site at Barar Square is now under consideration. Most of the land required at this site is under the possession of the Ministry of Defence, who have some vital installations in this area. The Ministry of Railways are actively pursuing with the Ministry of Defence regarding transfer of land in this area. As an interim measure additional facilities at a cost of Rs. 23.12 lakhs have been provided at Hazrat Nizamuddin. This has enabled the introduction of 3 additional pairs of trains at this station. The repacking shed at Nizamuddin has also been shifted to Tughlakabad which has enabled this station to deal with two more terminating trains. In respect of New Delhi it has now been possible to obtain the approval of D.D.A. and other local authorities for the shifting of soft coke, fruit and cement traffic from New Delhi. The work of shifting this traffic from New Delhi at a cost of Rs. 1.15 crores and provision of additional passenger terminal facilities at New Delhi at a cost of Rs. 0.55 crores has been included in the Budget for 1976-77. Substantial outlays have also been proposed for these works in the Budget. On completion these facilities will provide some immediate relief to the passengers by enabling the introduction of some more additional trains.

A survey for examining the shifting of the balance goods traffic from New Delhi and providing additional coaching facilities at New Delhi has also been included in the Budget for 1976-77.

A detailed survey for assessing the additional facilities required at Delhi (Main) is in progress and is expected to be completed shortly. The possibility of providing some facilities at Shahdara as a part of the Shahdara-Sharanpur new B.G. line is also under consideration.

BOMBAY

A detailed survey for remodelling of the Bombay V.T. yard and other terminals in Bombay area was conducted. As a first phase of the scheme,

the provision of an additional platform at Bombay V.T. and remodelling of Mazgaon yard has been included in the budget at a cost of Rs. 1.33 crores. To meet the immediate requirements, platform No. 8 has been extended to accommodate 16 bogie trains. The work of conversion of engine line into washing siding of 16 bogie length and provision of two stabling lines at Mazgaon at a cost of Rs. 15.86 lakhs has also been completed. A new train from Bombay to Cochin has already been introduced with effect from 26-1-1976. A sum of Rs. 19 lakhs is proposed to be spent on this work during 1976-77. The existing maintenance facilities at Kalva and Kurla Car Sheds are proposed to be enlarged for maintenance of the additional EMUs as a part of the optimisation scheme and these works are included in the Budget for 1976-77.

In respect of Bombay Central, a detailed survey has been done and detailed proposals for developing additional facilities have been formulated. The work has, however, not yet been taken up due to shortage of funds.

CALCUTTA

It has been proposed to provide a new suburban terminal at Howrah which will release some space at the existing Howrah terminal and facilitate introduction of some more long distance trains. The total cost of the scheme is Rs. 12 crores at 1973 prices. The first phase of the scheme consisting of shifting of Signal Workshops and General Stores to clear the area for the provision of this suburban terminal has been included in the budget at a cost of Rs. 1.48 crores. However, in view of the extreme limitation of funds an outlay of Rs. 5 lakhs only could be provided for this work in 1976-77 and hence it has not been possible to make much progress on the scheme so far.

A survey is in progress for assessing the requirements of facilities at Sealdah and also for a new suburban terminal of the South Eastern Railway near Padma-Pukur.

MADRAS

Detailed surveys for the requirements of terminal facilities at Madras Central and Madras Egmore stations have been completed. The acquisition of land at Madras Central at a cost of Rs. 2.69 crores has already been included in the Budget. However, this is tied up with the shifting of the Madras Zoo and Moore Market, which has not yet been approved by the State Government. This matter is being actively pursued by the Railways. In view of the likely delay in land acquisition, provision of an additional platform and ancillary works at Madras Central at a cost of Rs. 76 lakhs has been included in the Budget for 1976-77. The provision of a pit line and washing platform at Madras Egmore at a cost of Rs. 8.7 lakhs has also been included in the budget for 1976-77. An outlay of Rs. 18.95 lakhs has been proposed for these works in the budget for 1976-77.

SECUNDERABAD-HYDERABAD AREA

The following works are already in progress which after completion will provide relief to the existing terminals:

- (i) Additional facilities in the M.G. Area at Secunderabad at a cost of Rs. 59 lakhs.
- (ii) Terminal facilities in Hyderabad-Secunderabad Area at a cost of Rs. 51 lakhs.

It has also been proposed to acquire land for provision of additional facilities at Hyderabad and Khairatabad stations at a cost of Rs. 34.6 lakhs.

PATNA AND DHANBAD

The provision of additional coaching facilities at Patna and Dhanbad have already been approved at cost of Rs. 55 lakhs and Rs. 47 lakhs respectively. Substantial outlays for these schemes are also proposed in the budget for 1976-77.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195(5) dated 23-7-76]

Recommendation

1.81. Yet another accepted programme for improving the basic transport demands of the country which has been rather tardy in implementation is the dieselisation of the passenger services so that the number of coaches on a train can be increased without detriment to the average running time. The Committee find from paragraph 9 of the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India for the year 1972-73, Union Government (Railways) that full production of diesel locomotives by the Diesel Locomotive Works at Varanasi has not yet been attained despite the lapse of nearly a decade since the unit commenced production. The Audit Report points out that as against the production target of 307 diesel locomotives envisaged by 1967 in the abstract estimate for the project only 116 broad gauge diesel locomotives had been produced by 1966-67. Similarly, though, as per the project report, 941 broad gauge locomotives or equivalent should have been manufactured during 1963-64 to 1971-72, the actual outturn was only 427 broad gauge locomotives and 80 metre gauge locomotives. Till the end of 1973-74, 549 broad gauge locomotives and 148 metre gauge locomotives had been produced by the unit. Consequently there are not enough diesel locomotives to be put on the passenger services. In the meantime, the prices of petroleum products have also increased manifold, necessitating a rethinking over the dieselisation programme.

[Sl. No. 8, Para 1.81 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee are noted.

Necessary corrective action in respect of the areas and constraints coming in the way of increased production of locos from DLW has been taken. Regular monthly meetings are held by Member Mechanical, Railway Board with the Additional Members Mechanical and Electrical, Director Railway Stores and other officers to review the production of DLW and corrective action as found necessary is taken without delay both at the Railway Board's level and in the production units (CLW & DLW). The only constraint now remaining in raising the production level at DLW is the limitation of funds which can be made available.

The prevailing prices of petroleum products have been kept in view; however, taking into account the overall economy it has been decided not to revert back to the manufacture of steam locomotives. Considering the traffic offering, it is necessary to operate through goods trains on trunk routes with high density of traffic, which have not been electrified, with diesel power. On such sections operation of selected long distance Mail and Express trains with diesel locomotives is also necessary to enable load augmentation and reduction in journey time to meet with the pressing demands of traffic. Plans are being made accordingly.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) U.O.I. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195(8) dated 31-7-76/9 Sravana, 1898.]

Recommendation

Para 1.82. Unfortunately, the electrification programmes of the Railways, which could facilitate the cheaper and quicker movement of passenger and goods traffic, have also, not made much headway on account of difficulties in finding the necessary financial resources for these programmes which are essentially highly capital intensive. The Committee have been informed that, on account of the financial constraints acceleration of the pace of electrification 'does not seem to be in sight'. In addition to the Railways' own financial constraints the dearth of electric power has also affected the electrification programmes. The Indian Railways therefore appear to be placed in an unenviable position and with these constraints in operation it is unlikely that the problems of congestion in, and slow speeds of, passenger trains would be satisfactorily solved in the near future. This, in the opinion of the Committee, is an unhappy situation which needs to be gone into immediately so as to devise suitable remedial measures. The Committee urge Government to review the situation and take effective steps to retrieve the situation.

[Sl. No. 9, Para 1.82 of 195th Report of P.A.C. (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Electrification schemes have slowed down in the recent years on account of constraint of resources and consequent inadequate provision of funds. The Railways had initially suggested to the Planning Commission a target of 1800 RKMS to be electrified during the Fifth Plan period. A provision of Rs. 120 crores was suggested for this purpose. The Planning Commission had accepted this target and provision for the Railways Draft Fifth Plan. The Planning Commission are currently engaged in finalising the Five Year Plan. Though the final position is yet to emerge, the electrification target is likely to be reduced.

It is recognised by the Planning Commission that electrification should receive due consideration in relation to dieselisation in the present difficult oil situation. However, electrification programme has to be planned and executed, keeping in view the overall constraint of resources, particularly as electrification is highly capital intensive.

As regards power supply for the sections yet to be electrified, Ministry of Railways have already advised various State Electricity Boards about the likely requirements of power for electrification and has requested them to take this into account while planning their schemes for power generation and distribution.

However, despite the constraints on electrification, the Railways are continuing their efforts to reduce congestion/overcrowding and speed up passenger trains by progressive dieselisation, introduction of additional trains, extension of existing trains as also by adding more coaches to existing passenger services.

[Ministry of Railways (Rly. Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195(9)
dated 21-8-76/30 Shrawana, 1898]

Recommendation

1.84. Viewed against this broader background, the running of the Rajdhani Express trains however attractive and important it may be, is open to question. Though it has been claimed by the Railway Board that the Rajdhani Express has a role to play in the sphere of tourism, the Committee find that apart from a few visiting foreign delegations who are sent by the Railway Board by this prestigious train, only 17 foreign tourists had travelled by the air-conditioned first class by the Rajdhani to Bombay and another 17 to Calcutta during the six months from January 1 to June 30, 1975. It has also been admitted by the Railway Board that as the Rajdhani Expresses do not stop at places of tourist interest and foreign tourists have to plan in advance to travel by these bi-weekly services, they prefer to avail of other suitable trains or air services. The Committee are also of the view that a misplaced emphasis in this regard is perhaps

being placed by the Railway Board as well as the Department of Tourism. It is well known that quite a large number of foreign tourists, particularly the young among them, wishing to have a taste of India's natural beauty and her ancient culture prefer cheaper modes of travel and reasonable accommodation and food tariffs. Besides, the more affluent tourists, spanning the globe with their tight schedules and itineraries generally prefer the faster air travel. It would, therefore, be worthwhile for the Railway Board to review critically the pattern of travel by foreign tourists within India and to assess whether, in a country like ours it is proper to place excessive emphasis on luxurious rail travel for 'attracting' foreign tourists. The Committee would like to know what is being done in this regard.

1.89. Pending the economic reappraisal of the Rajdhani service suggested above, the Committee feel that it should also be possible to effect certain economies and increase earnings by (a) the replacement of the airconditioned first class coach either by a chair car or by a two-tier air-conditioned sleeper coach so as to provide accommodation to a larger number of passengers, (b) augmentation of the existing capacity of the train by at least an additional chair car, and (c) switching over to electric traction from diesel as early as possible. The Committee find that during the period from 1973 to 1975 (upto June), the occupancy of airconditioned first class in the Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani ranged respectively from 79 to 100 per cent, 44 to 100 per cent and 37 to 87 per cent. On the other hand, the occupancy of the airconditioned chair car during the same period ranged from 88 to 100 per cent, 73 to 100 per cent and 72 to 100 per cent respectively. Though the total earnings from airconditioned first class might have increased on account of the increase in fares which has made travel by this accommodation even more expensive than air travel, the occupancy rate has decreased drastically. The Committee would urge the Railway Board to take a fresh look at the need for providing such opulent accommodation on the Rajdhani which could, perhaps, be substituted either by a two-tier AC sleeper coach or a chair car which would cater to a larger number of passengers.

[Sl. Nos. 11 & 16 Paras 1.84 and 1.89 of 195th Report of PAC
(5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Rajdhani Express between New Delhi and Howrah was introduced in March 1969. Another similar train was provided between New Delhi and Bombay Central in May 1972. These trains enable a passenger to undertake the journey after completion of his day's work at one city and reach the other city before the start of the next day's work. These trains have been provided with limited stoppages enroute and a comfortable dust-free overnight rail journey for passengers moving between the Union

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capital of India and the two important metropolitan towns, *i.e.*, Calcutta and Bombay. With the present available traction, the Rajdhani Express trains carry 6 passenger coaches including 5 air-conditioned chaircars and only one AC first class sleeper coach in addition to one pantry car and 2 power-cum-Brake vans. As has already been explained, the trains are extremely popular, with occupation nearly 100 per cent particularly after reduction in fares from 1-5-76 and in the summer season the waiting list is also high. Foreign tourists have also availed of the services. The occupation of these trains is, however, kept under constant review and composition revised according to fluctuations in traffic.

2. While the pattern of general travel by foreign tourists in India, whether by air, rail or road is analysed by the Department of Tourism, special care is taken by Railways to afford requisite facilities to foreign tourists for their rail travel in India, *e.g.*, booking of rail accommodation/retiring rooms in advance on receipt of their itineraries; provision of Tourist Guides at important stations, provision of tourist cars/saloons of the class desired. Whenever there is bulk movement or organised tour of foreign tourists by rail, special arrangements are made to run extra coaches/special trains including Air-conditioned to meet their requirements and itineraries.

3. With regard to the running of Rajdhani Express, the Department of Tourism has observed that this train cannot be regarded as luxury because the tourists who are unaccustomed to heat, dust and smoke would regard the Rajdhani Express as a minimum necessity. A copy of the note received from Department of Tourism under U.O. No. 4-TT.II(4)/76 dated 28-6-76 is enclosed as Annexure 'A'. The Department of Tourism is of the view that continuance of Rajdhani Express is necessary not only for the foreign tourists but also for domestic tourist traffic.

4. The rail fares for Air-conditioned Class and Air-conditioned Chair Car have been reduced with effect from 1-5-1976. With this reduction in fares, the occupation of accommodation in these classes has been picking up satisfactorily, and there is, a fair-sized waiting list at originating stations.

5. Board have instructed RDSO to carry out oscillation trials with WAM-4 electric locos fitted with modified axle boxes for operation of New Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani Express at a maximum permissible speed of 130 Kmph (booked speed of 120 Kmph). These trials are in progress and are expected to be finalised by RDSO during the next 3 to 4 months. After the successful completion of these trials, the question of switch over to electric traction for the Rajdhani Express and augmenting the payload capacity of this train will be decided by the Board.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195 (11 & 16) dated 4-8-1976/13, Sravana, 1898]

ANNEXURE 'A'

Note given by Department of Tourism

So far as tourist traffic is concerned, the Rajdhani Express cannot be regarded as a luxury because tourists who are unaccustomed to heat, dust and smoke, would regard the facility of the Rajdhani Express as a minimum necessity.

A growing number of tourists travel by rail due to the high cost of air travel. According to the I.I.P.O. Survey of Foreign Tourists in India, about 20 per cent of foreign tourists visiting Delhi and Calcutta came by rail. Nearly 31 per cent of tourists visiting Madras came by rail, while 12.2 per cent of tourists going to Bombay arrived by train.

We do not have figures of tourists utilising Rajdhani Express but their number would increase if there was better publicity and increased frequency of their services. Railways have, recently, announced that w.e.f. 1-3-1976 holders of return tickets for travel by air-conditioned and air-conditioned chair car, will be given a rebate of 15 per cent on normal tariff on such tickets. It is expected that it will draw many more Indians and foreign tourists to travel by Rajdhani Express.

Based on a general assessment on account of our day-to-day contacts with foreign tourists, it has been observed that they (foreign tourists) have expressed their desire to travel in the Rajdhani Expresses as the same provide convenient connections between important centres like Delhi/Calcutta, Delhi/Bombay and vice versa in the shortest possible time by rail.

The needs of domestic tourist traffic also have to be given their due share of importance. Home tourism serves as a base for developing facilities for international tourism, promote national integration, assists the local economy and helps in flow of income from the more affluent to the less affluent sections. The Rajdhani Express is an important link in the infrastructural base for domestic tourism also.

The Indian Railways being the major means of mass transit in India, Rajdhani Express stands out as milestone of our progress in the right direction and is the result of our sustained efforts to provide faster and comfortable mode of transportation to the public at reasonable cost.

In a wider socio-economic perspective, the Rajdhani Express also meets the challenge of the rising expectations of the public to have faster and comfortable means of Transport.

The Department of Tourism, is, therefore, of the view that continuance of Rajdhani Express is necessary not only for foreign tourists but also for fare-paying domestic tourist traffic.

A SURVEY OF FOREIGN TOURISTS IN INDIA
1972-73

The Indian Institute of Public Opinion, New Delhi

Tourists visit to places by Transport used to reach that place—All Ports.

<i>Name of the place</i>	<i>Rail</i>
Delhi	20.2
Bombay	12.2
Madras	29.6
Calcutta	31.0

Recommendation

1.85. The Railway Board have tried to justify the introduction of the Rajdhani Express trains on grounds of financial remunerativeness as well. The Committee are aware that this 'prestige symbol' has caught the fancy of the better-placed passengers who can afford to pay for the comforts the train provides. The earnings of the two Rajdhani Express trains have also exceeded the direct expenses in all the years of their operation. This, however, presents only a partial picture of the economics of the matter. The earnings from Rajdhani have been compared only with the readily identifiable direct costs of operation without taking into account the indirect, distributable elements of cost such as provision and maintenance of permanent way, signal and telecommunication, other equipments and facilities, cost of train passing staff, coaching yard staff and over-heads which are common with other services. The Committee have been informed that it had not been possible so far to estimate the cost of these distributable items of expenditure in the absence of a scientific system for the assessment of the unit cost of coaching services. Even before the introduction of the Rajdhani Express, only an estimate of the out of pocket expenses or direct costs of running the train had been made to determine its financial remunerativeness. In the circumstances, the Committee feel that it would be incorrect to accept at its face value the incomplete financial justification of the Rajdhani Express furnished by the Railway Board.

[Sl. No. 12, Para 1.85 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha)]

Action Taken

Here it is a case of introduction of a new service on an existing section. The indirect expenditure on provision and maintenance of track, signalling,

cost of train staff, yard staff etc., is by and large in the nature of fixed costs incurred on behalf of the traffic as a whole and, irrespective of the fact whether the new services is introduced or not, such expenses would continue more or less at the same level. Therefore it is but proper—and as a matter of fact this system is universally adopted—to justify a *new* service on the basis of additional expenses directly attributable to such a service. In such cases, the profitability is measured by an appraisal which gauges the extent to which revenue added by the new service exceeds expenses which could be avoided by its elimination.

Assessment of Unit costs for coaching services is nearing completion and when once these cost data are available, fully distributed costs of running the Rajdhani Expresses would be worked out.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195(12) dated 3-8-76/12, Sravana, 1898.]

CHAPTER III

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN THE LIGHT OF THE REPLIES OF GOVERNMENT

Recommendations

As regards the suggestion of augmenting the existing capacity of the train by providing at least an additional chair car, the Committee have been informed that the speed of the train would be reduced from 130 km. to about 110 km. by such addition, and that it should be possible to haul three more coaches and also maintain the same speed only when the entire route is electrified and a more powerful electric locomotive is utilised to haul the train. However, in the context of an immediate solution to the problem of congestion in passenger services, and for a better utilisation of the available resources, the Railway Board should consider how far the augmentation of the capacity of the Rajdhani by an extra chair car may not, perhaps, through some rationalisation, affect the running time too badly. Such a stop, besides increasing the direct earnings of the service, would result in certain tangible benefits in the sphere of goods movement as well by reducing detentions *en route*, particularly to the super express goods trains and improving wagon turnround and availability.

Substitution of the diesel locomotive which hauls the Rajdhani Express at present between Howrah and Delhi by an electric locomotive assumes particular significance in the context of the present energy crisis and the high cost of diesel traction. Though 85 percent of the Howrah-Delhi route (upto Tundla) is already electrified, the Railway Board, at the time of introduction of the Rajdhani Express, appear to have preferred to modify a diesel locomotive for attaining the high speed of 130 km. at a cost of Rs. 45,000, mainly with the objective of eliminating dual traction and a change of locomotive in between, which, according to them, would have affected the running time of the train. The Committee also note the opinion expressed by the Research, Designs and Standards Organisation that it would be undesirable to have dual traction for the service which would affect the utilisation of electric and diesel locomotives, particularly the latter and also affect the overall running time. The Committee have been informed that an electric locomotive capable of speeds upto 160 km. has been designed and that after the completion of necessary proving trials which have been programmed to coincide with the electrification of the entire Delhi-Howrah route. to be completed a year hence, it would be possible to switch over to electric traction for the Rajdhani Express. The Committee can only express the hope that this schedule would be adhered

to, so that the direct expenditure on fuel can be reduced and the payload capacity of the train increased as early as possible.

The Committee find from the Economic Appraisal of the Delhi-Howrah service by the Research, Designs and Standards Organisation that modifications and trials on a WAM2 electric locomotives to suit the high speed of the Rajdhani Express are in progress. Although work on this locomotive is in progress, the RDSO study has opined that the WAM4 locomotive is to be preferred for the Rajdhani service, especially in view of its capability of hauling a heavier payload. The study goes on to observe that even the switch over to a modified WAM4 locomotive, with maximum speed restricted to 120 kms. per hour would be quite advantageous as compared to the present arrangement. The Committee would like to know the specific steps taken by the Railway Board in pursuance of these observations and the reasons for selecting the WAM2 locomotive in preference to the WAM4.

[Sl. Nos. 17, 18 & 19, Paras 1.90, 1.91 & 1.92 of 195th Report of PAC-5th Lok Sabha]

Action Taken

The observations of the Committee have been carefully examined and Railway Board would submit as follows.

2. The augmentation of the composition of Rajdhani Express between New Delhi and Howrah by an additional chair car, without much change in the present journey time and under diesel traction, has not been found feasible. The payload capacity of the train will be suitably augmented when electric traction is introduced on Delhi-Howrah route and the train is hauled by a more powerful electric locomotive.

3. It will not be correct to say that the Railway Board have selected WAM2 Electric locomotive for operation of this train. Certain trials were conducted earlier by the R.D.S.O. with WAM2 Electric locomotive in 1971; the haulage capacity of this locomotive is however less than that of WAM4 type Electric locomotive.

4. Recently, RDSO, Lucknow, have been asked to carry out oscillation trials with more powerful WAM4 electric locos fitted with modified axle boxes for operation of New Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani Express at a booked speed of 120/130 kmph and a maximum speed of 140 kmph. These trials are in progress and are expected to be finalised during the next three to four months. As soon as the WAM4-electric locos are cleared for a booked speed of 130 kmph, only then, the question of hauling Rajdhani Express by WAM4 electric locos in lieu of WDM4 Diesel electric locos will be considered and the payload capacity of the train suitably augmented.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/
195 (17—19) dated 23-7-76]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS REPLIES TO WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

Recommendations

Para 1.79. One immediate solution that suggests itself to the Committee for alleviating the problem of congestion in some of the existing mail and express trains is the provision of more accommodation for the non-affluent class of passengers by minimising the expenditure on providing airconditioned first class accommodation which, in any case, has proved unremunerative in recent times after the September 1974 hike in rail fares. A recent sample survey of the occupancy rate of airconditioned first class in some of the 'prestigious' trains such as the Deluxe and the Rajdhani by different categories of passengers reveals an intriguing picture. During the period January 1 to June 30, 1975, the average occupancy of airconditioned first class on the Deluxe trains to and from Madras was respectively 75.5 per cent and 64.4 per cent. Of this, on the down direction from Madras to Delhi, while 2.8 per cent and 0.8 per cent of the berths were occupied respectively by Ministers and Members of Parliament and Legislative Assemblies, Railway Officers accounted for as high an occupancy as 20.5 per cent and other Government officers travelling on duty 1.4 per cent. Occupancy on non-Government account and by foreign tourists was only 38.4 per cent and 0.5 per cent respectively. The position was no better on the up direction towards Madras, the corresponding figures being respectively 2 per cent, 1.9 per cent, 12.2 per cent, 0.7 per cent, 56.5 per cent and 2.2 per cent. Similarly, on the Deluxe trains to and from Bombay, occupancy on non-Government account was only 62.9 per cent and 37 per cent, with as many as 159 berths and 200 berths out of a total utilisation of 1390 and 1021 berths being occupied respectively on the up and down trains by railway officers. The Deluxe trains to and from Calcutta tell a similar tale of distress with only 35.6 per cent and 40 per cent of the total utilised berths being occupied on private account while Railway Officers account for 8.4 per cent and 11.1 per cent of the occupancy.

Para 1.80. It is apparent that a large portion of the available airconditioned first class accommodation is utilized on Railway and Government accounts, with the public exchequer bearing the cost, without any readily quantifiable corresponding benefits. Government would, therefore, do well to review the need for providing such a costly mode of travel to a small

minority of public servants and evaluate the feasibility of reducing airconditioned first class accommodation on trains, if not eliminating them altogether, so that the accommodation so released can be utilised to fulfill the more pressing social objective of providing additional accommodation for the weaker sections of the travelling public. The Committee note that certain steps such as a reduction in the frequency of airconditioned first class coaches or their discontinuance on some of the trains, discontinuance of the construction of new airconditioned first class coaches on additional account, introduction of the new two-tier airconditioned sleeper coaches, etc. have now been taken by the Railway Board. These steps by themselves would not solve the problem unless there is some fundamental rethinking on the part of the Railway Board and the Government. Travel by the new two-tier airconditioned sleeper coaches, for instance, is still beyond the reach of the common man, and the operation of such coaches, not in lieu of but in addition to the airconditioned first class on the Deluxe trains, would only further widen the gulf between the haves and the have-nots. It could also be of interest to analyse the extent to which the capacity in these new coaches are being utilised on non-Government account and on Government account, either by officers travelling on duty or by those travelling on Leave Travel concessions, with Government bearing the bulk of the cost of travel. The Committee would also like to be informed of the economics and occupancy of these new coaches.

[Sl. Nos. 6 & 7, paras 1.79 & 1.80 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha).]

Action Taken

Para 1.79. The observations of the Committee have been noted. The accommodation provided on important Mail/Express trains in various classes *vis-a-vis* utilisation thereof is reviewed from time to time. Wherever the utilisation in higher classes is not adequate, the composition of the train is changed suitably to cater to the needs of traffic. The higher class coaches thus withdrawn are replaced by second class coaches. A few instances relating to the year 1974-75 and 1975-76 are given below:

South Eastern Railway.

First class accommodation was withdrawn on 6 pairs of trains and replaced on 12 pairs of trains by second class on Howrah-Khargpur route.

Eastern Railway

On 19 Up/21 Up, one composite FCS (First-cum-second) was replaced by one second class.

Southern Railway.

On 56 trains (both B.G. and M.G.), one F.C. was replaced by one G.S. Coach.

Para 1.80. The new type of Air-conditioned 2-tier sleeper coaches with carrying capacity of 48 passengers during day and night have been introduced on Deluxe trains in replacement of corridor type First Class coaches with 22/24 berth capacity. As these coaches provide Air-conditioned dust-free comfortable travel with first class fares only, passengers prefer travel in these coaches to that in ordinary first class coaches. These new coaches thus carry more accommodation, give considerable consumer satisfaction and bring more revenue to Railways. The occupation of A.C. 2-tier coaches during December 1975 to February 1976 was as under:—

	25 Dn	26 Up	81/103 Ac Exp.	82/104 Ac Exp.	15 Dn.	16 Up
(i) Total No. of berths available.	3120	5888	3120	3120	1248	1920
ii) Total No. of berths utilized	2838	5442	3103	2703	1213	1743
Percentage	91.0	92.4	99.4	86.7	100.0	95.8
(iii) Total No. of berths utilised by :						
(a) Ministers	2	2	1	..	..	8
Percentage	0.1	..	..	..	..	0.4
(b) MPs & MLAs	25	89	227	256	116	92
Percentage	0.8	1.5	7.3	8.2	9.3	5.1
(c) Railways officers on Privilege and Duty passes	445	893	563	641	181	302
Percentage	14.3	15.2	18.0	20.5	14.5	16.6
(d) Other Govt. officers on duty	64	34	92	18	251	74
Percentage	2.0	0.6	3.0	0.6	20.1	4.1
(e) Private account	2266	4421	2214	1786	689	1261
Percentage	72.6	75.1	70.9	57.2	55.2	69.3
(f) Foreign Tourists	36	3	6	5	11	6
Percentage	1.2	..	0.2	0.2	0.9	0.3

As already mentioned, the present policy is to cut down Air-conditioned accommodation on trains where it is not adequately utilised and there is at present no programme to construct any new I class air-conditioned coaches on additional account. It is proposed to build more air-conditioned coaches of popular types *i.e.*, composite with Chair Cars and 2-tier sleeper etc.

As already indicated in reply to 195th report of the Public Accounts Committee, Recommendation Nos. 14 and 15 (Paras 1.87 and 1.88 of the same report) after completion of the costing of coaching services for Passenger services, specific studies of economics of A.C. Sleeper class will be undertaken and the results communicated to the Committee in due course.

[Ministry of Railways (Rly. Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195
(6 & 7) dated 30-7-1976/3, Sravana, 1898]

Recommendations

Para 1.83. In view of the fact that the electrification programmes of the Railways are also vitally dependent on the power generation schemes of the State Governments with their own financial constraints and limitations, the Committee feel that an integrated approach to the entire problem would be necessary if these programmes are to be given effect to. The Committee learn that the Railways have drawn up some proposals for establishing their own power stations and that site studies and preparation of feasibility reports in this regard have already been completed and are awaiting approval and allocation of funds by the Planning Commission. The Committee consider that it would be desirable to establish real coordination for this purpose between the Central and the State Governments and a pooling together of the available resources. Such a step would ensure that our scarce resources are not expended in avoidable duplication of effort. Government should also examine the feasibility of providing institutional finance to meet any shortfalls in the provision of the requisite funds for the joint venture which should give an added impetus for the speedier implementation of projects of vital importance. The Committee attach considerable importance to this recommendation and desire that the Planning Commission should process it early and initiate the necessary follow-up action.

[Sl. No. 10—Para 1.83 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha).]

Action Taken

The recommendation of the Committee has been noted. The matter relating to power supply for railway electrification programmes will be coordinated suitably between the State and the Central Government Departments so that the available resources are pooled together to the best advantage and there is no duplication of effort.

[Ministry of Railways (Rly. Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/195(10)
dated 19-8-76/28, Sravana, 1898.]

CHAPTER IV

RECOMMENDATIONS/OBSERVATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH GOVERNMENT HAVE FURNISHED INTERIM REPLIES

Recommendations

According to a study of the economics of the Delhi-Howrah Rajdhani Service undertaken by the Research, Designs and Standards Organisation of the Railways, (which, however, has not been accepted by the Railway Board), the total cost of running the train during 1971-72 was Rs. 84.07 lakhs while the gross earnings (including cost of meals) were Rs. 76.08 lakhs. The Committee find that this study is not a very accurate indicator of the true economics of the train in view of the fact that on account of the non-availability of separate unit cost of passenger services, the combined figures of goods-cum-passenger unit cost have been adopted in the study, thereby vitiating the figures to some extent. However, in the absence of more accurate data in this regard, the RDSO study at least suggests that the Rajdhani Service is, perhaps, not as remunerative as it is made out to be. The Committee emphasise the importance of knowing the total cost of operating a service from the point of view of better financial management and, therefore, desire that the Railway Board should compute as early as possible the total cost of the Rajdhani service and reassess its financial remunerativeness on a more scientific basis.

[Sl. No. 14 para 1.87 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha.)]

Action Taken

The methodology for working out unit costs for coaching services has been finalised and the Railways are at present evolving unit costs for the latest year for which final accounts are available, viz., 1974-75. When these are finalised, assessment of indirect costs will be feasible. Meanwhile, a fresh study has been undertaken for estimating the direct expenditure on the Rajdhani Service.

This has been seen by Audit.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC V/195(14) dated 12-5-76/22, Vaisakha, 1898.]

Recommendations

1.88. The Committee have learnt in this connection that a methodology for determining, in a reliable manner, the variable, distributable costs of train operations, which would facilitate the introduction of train-wise costing on the Railways, was likely to be evolved by the end of 1975. The Committee trust that the various difficulties earlier encountered in working

out separately the costs of goods and passenger operations would have been overcome by now and would like to be apprised of the findings. The total cost of operating not only the Rajdhani service but the Delux service and the Kalka Mail between Howrah and Delhi should be worked out expeditiously and intimated.

[Sl. No. 15, para 1.88 of 195th Report of PAC (5th Lok Sabha.)]

Action Taken

The methodology for evolving unit costs for coaching services has since been finalised and circulated to the Zonal Railways in December 1975. The unit costs for 1974-75—the latest year for which final accounts are available—are at present being worked out by the Zonal Railways. After the finalisation of unit costs, the indirect costs of running of the coaching services will be estimated. A study has also been undertaken to reassess the direct expenses. Thereafter, the total costs of operating Rajdhani Express etc. will be worked out as desired by the Committee. The PAC will be advised of the cost of operating Rajdhani Express, the Deluxe Service and the Kalka Mail when the exercise is completed.

This has been seen by Audit.

[Ministry of Railways (Railway Board's) O.M. No. 76-BC-PAC/V/
195 (15) dated 12-5-1976/22 Vaisakha 1898]

NEW DELHI;

November 16, 1977.

Kartika 25, 1899 (S).

(C. M. STEPHEN)

Chairman,

Public Accounts Committee.

APPENDIX

Main Conclusions/Recommendations

1	2	3	4
Sl. No.	Para No.	Ministry concerned	Recommendation
1	1.4	Railway	The Committee expect that final replies to those recommendations/ observations in respect of which only interim replies have been furnished so far will be submitted expeditiously after getting them vetted by Audit.
2	1.8	Do.	The Committee are not satisfied with the response of the Railway Board to their recommendation on the need for speedy doubling of the North-South Trunk route. It appears that out of a total distance of 2186 kms. between Delhi and Madras, a double line is already available on 1782 kms. and the work on another portion (26 kms.) of this route, is now in progress and is likely to be completed by the end of 1976. This leaves a balance of no more than 378 kms. which is approximately 17 per cent of the total route length. That the Railway Board cannot even at this stage make a firm commitment in regard to the doubling of the entire North-South Trunk route, the need for which is indisputable, would imply that the priorities are not perhaps realistically kept in view. The Committee would urge on Government to take a more positive view and by overcoming what seem to be routine constraints create soon the additional capacity which is sorely needed in one of the country's principal trunk routes.

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I. 14

Do. The Committee are unhappy that the Railway Board appear almost allergic to their suggestion for a rethinking on the provision in important trains of airconditioned first class accommodation which has become largely unremunerative. A substantial proportion of the available airconditioned first class accommodation in important trains is seen to be utilised on Railway and Government account, the public exchequer bearing the cost and without any readily quantifiable corresponding advantage to our railway system. Obviously, the need for providing such a costly mode of travel to a microscopic minority of public servants calls for a review. The Committee had particularly desired that the feasibility of reducing air-conditioned first-class accommodation might be explored with a view to more pressing social objective of providing additional accommodation for the overwhelming majority of the travelling public. Although the Railway Board have stated that accommodation provided an important Mail/ Express trains in various classes was reviewed from time to time in the light of its utilisation, no specific analysis of the position as suggested by the Committee has so far been made. The Committee would reiterate that the Railway Board should undertake a specific feasibility study to ascertain whether airconditioned first class accommodation on any of the important trains could be eliminated or at least reduced in the larger interest of providing much needed additional accommodation in the cheaper categories. The idea of providing more AC 2-tire coaches, which has proved highly attractive, should also be further pursued. A full report in this regard may please be intimated to the Committee.

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I. 15

Do.

In regard to the Rajdhani Express trains the Committee had suggested that in the interest of providing the facilities of these trains to a larger

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Railway
Planning
Commission

section of the population, the need for substituting the air-conditioned first class accommodation with a two-tier AC sleeper coach or a chair car might be examined by the Railway Board. The Committee regret that this has not been done. They would desire that the feasibility study suggested by them in paragraph 1.14 above, for ascertaining whether air-conditioned first class accommodation on important trains could be eliminated or reduced in the larger interest of providing much needed additional accommodation in the cheaper categories, should also cover specifically the substitution of air-conditioned first class accommodation on Rajdhani Express by a two-tier sleeper coach or a chair car.

The Committee regret that a serious recommendation intended to ensure coordination between the Central and State Governments and to avoid duplication of effort in the matter of power generation schemes, has apparently drawn a perfunctory response. It was in the context of the Railway Board's proposal for setting up some captive power stations, that the Committee had wanted the Planning Commission, as the central coordinating agency to have a fresh look at the power generation schemes sponsored by the Central and State Governments as well as the Railways with a view to having an integrated approach to the problem. It had also been suggested that Government should examine the feasibility of providing institutional finance to meet any shortfalls in the provision of funds for such ventures. The Railway Board have merely noted the recommendation and stated that the matter relating to power supply for railway

electrification programmes would be coordinated suitably between the State and Central Government Departments and the available resources pooled together to the best advantage and without any duplication of effort. The Committee would particularly ask the Planning Commission to give serious thought to the suggestions made in paragraph 1.83 of the 195th Report and intimate the specific action taken in this behalf at an early date.

It appears neither the Railway Board nor the Department of Tourism have grasped the real import of the Committee's recommendation. By citing the example of Rajdhani Express the Committee had only attempted to focus attention on the exaggerated emphasis sometimes placed on the more glamorous elements of tourism development in the country. At present, however, many foreign tourists, particularly the young among them, keen on savouring India's natural beauty and perhaps to them exotic attractions prefer cheap modes of travel and reasonable accommodation and food tariffs. It was in this context that the Committee had wished the Railway Board and the Department of Tourism to review critically the pattern of travel by foreign tourists within India and to assess whether, situated as we are, disproportionate emphasis on luxurious rail travel for 'attracting' foreign tourists was not to be purposefully avoided. While Rajdhani may, in foreign eyes, be no luxury, it happens to be so in our Indian conditions. The Committee by no means disapprove of Rajdhani, on the contrary they wish it well. But a review at depth of the optimum utilisation of our still scarce railway resources is certainly due. The Committee consider that such a review is required, not only for reasons of economy and efficiency in the provision of tourist facilities but also to attract tourist traffic by rail on a wider basis.



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7	1.25	Railway	<p>The Committee are anxious that the economics of the running of the Rajdhani Express is worked out expeditiously. It is common knowledge that unfortunately in our country rail travel is by no means a very happy experience for the weaker sections of the population, which means the lower-whelming majority. There is scope, certainly, for such prestigious trains as Rajdhani Express, since our railways must not lag, in elegance and efficiency, behind the more advanced countries of the world. The Committee stress the need of maintaining a high standard for Rajdhani Express and the provision therein, efficiently and without discrimination among passengers, of the facilities proudly promised and so far welcomed by our not very exacting public. Even so, it is imperative that Rajdhani Express, popular as it has proved to be, should pay its way and should not be a drag on the exchequer. The Committee urge that the economic appraisal of Rajdhani Express be completed without delay and intimated to them. If properly run, the service should on no account be found an unremunerative proposition.</p>
8	1.28	Do.	<p>The Committee note that the Railway Board recognise the need of a long-range perspective plan for an integrated development of passenger and freight traffic. Some action appears already to have been initiated for the formulation of such a plan for the period upto 1988-89. The Committee would urge that the comprehensive perspective plan should be finalised soon and clear-cut priorities for future investment called for thereby laid down. It may be added that if railway planning for our</p>

country is to be worthwhile, it must be aimed at providing truly people-oriented service. The Committee expect that no effort will be spared to see that in the matter of railway facilities, the benefits of technology are made available as largely as possible to the masses of our people.
