

[Shri Hannan Mollah]

on the ground that the construction work was undertaken by their contractors. This is an untenable approach of the Metro Railway Authorities, since there is no other source of water except CMC supplies. I, therefore, request the Minister of Railways to ask the Metro-Railway Authorities to clear the Bill of the Municipal Corporation.

[Translation]

(vii) Need to construct a bridge over Yamuna near Vrindaban

SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH (Mathura): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I want to raise this matter under Rule 377. Mathura-Vrindaban is famous as a place of pilgrimage. Every year devotees from India and abroad go there for sight seeing and taking a dip in the sacred river Yamuna.

For the past one decade citizens of the area have been demanding a bridge over the Yamuna near Vrindaban. This demand is gradually snowballing into a mass movement. Several Ministers of the Central Government and the State Government have assured of all possible help. But it is regrettable that the Government has not kept its word.

In every way the demand for a bridge is reasonable and just. Firstly, such a bridge would provide a direct connection between Aligarh district and tehsil Mant of Mathura district. This will contribute to the economic development of that area. The headquarters of tehsil Mant are situated at a distance of 80 kilometres from the headquarters of Mathura district. Construction of a bridge will reduce this distance to 15 kilometres. Thousands of citizens who commute daily on buses and other means of transport will spend less than half of what they are spending now on fares. Neighbouring districts can have a direct connection with Mathura-Vrindaban. This will promote trade and tourism in the area and citizens of that region will stand to gain in the process.

Therefore, the Central Government is requested to fulfil the long-standing demand of a bridge over the Yamuna near Vrindaban.

[English]

(viii) Need to grant citizenship rights to people who migrated from West Pakistan during 1947-48 and settled in Jammu and Kathua districts of Jammu and Kashmir

SHRI JANAK RAJ GUPTA (Jammu): A large number of refugees migrated from West Pakistan during 1947 and settled on the border areas of districts Jammu and Kathua in Jammu and Kashmir State. But up till now, they have not been given citizenship rights. Their children are not given admission in the professional colleges in the State, as they are not treated as permanent subjects of that State.

I would like to urge upon the Union Government to persuade the Government of Jammu and Kashmir to give citizenship rights and other facilities to such persons.

12.21 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

[English]

RAILWAY BUDGET, 1988-89—
GENERAL DISCUSSION—Contd.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House will now take up further general discussion on the Budget (Railways) for 1988-89. Prof. N.G. Ranga.

PROF. N.G. RANGA (Guntur): The Minister of Railways is not here, but the Deputy Minister is here.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir: I would like to draw the attention of the House and the Government to one aspect which has not been sufficiently highlighted, and that is, the facilities and opportunities given to ordinary Third Class passengers—who are now come to be called as Second Class passengers only in name. In actual practice, these ordinary folk are suffering from most of the disabilities from which the former Third Class passengers used to suffer.

I would request my hon. friend the Railway Minister, and the officials in the Railway Board to realize the feelings and the ex-

perience of these people, as to the manner in which their needs have come to be neglected ever since Government has begun to pay special attention to Railway Extra Specials and so on. It is true they have introduced air-conditioning facilities in most of these Expresses. But what about the ordinary passenger trains? I am not demanding the air-conditioning facilities for them. I am demanding a simple improvement on their ordinary needs—for more space and more passenger trains. They have not given us any information as to whether they have increased the number of ordinary passenger trains; and if so, how many more carriages are being attached to them. Actually, I find that there are so few carriages in these passenger trains. I would like to know whether they have tried to improve the frequency of the movement of these trains.

Sofar as food is concerned, the quality of food that is being made available for these Second Class passengers is not satisfactory. Much improvement is needed. Are any efforts being made at all to improve it; and if so, what improvements are being made, and with what results?

Then, the space that is made available in any one carriage for these people is also being narrowed down. The windscreens are not there. If they are there, they are damaged; they are not useful. Safety is not assured for these people. No effort is being made to improve the security there. On the Express trains, there are the Railway Police. But on the ordinary passenger trains, I would like to know whether any improvement has come to be made at all.

Less said about the lavatory facilities the better. The carriages are not being cleaned, even at the junctions. Platform space and shelter has not been improved, sofar as these people are concerned.

I would like the Ministers as well as the Railway Board to remember that these people, the Third Class or Second Class passengers going by ordinary passenger trains, are also human beings; and, therefore, they should be provided the minimum of courtesy, minimum of facilities and minimum of catering.

Are they invited at all? Are they wel-

come at all? Are they being treated as human beings? In regard to all these, I would like my hon. friend, the Railway Minister, to pay special attention and give, if he has got any answer, any satisfactory answer in regard to these matters. Otherwise, let them study and try to improve their conditions. If they do not do it, then they will be doing injustice to more than 60 per cent of the total railway passengers that are being moved by the railway.

Last year, there are areas—many of our friends have been complaining about it—which are not being served by the railway. It is true that there are not enough of funds. But in those areas, where the railways are plying, there are still places, District Headquarters, even State Headquarters, especially in North Eastern Frontier, which are not being catered to, which cannot be reached by the railway. So far as these places are concerned, I would like the Railway Minister as well as the Railway Board to consider the advisability of having a fleet of buses run by the railways themselves, not through a Contract, by railways themselves, to cater to the passengers, to reach these places with the direct help of the railway, through the railways themselves.

To construct a railway and to run these trains is much too costly just under the present circumstances of financial stringency. Therefore, I would like them to give special consideration to this suggestion. There is specially a great urgency in North Eastern Frontier. Take now Arunachal Pradesh. State Headquarters are not being catered to directly by the railway. People have got to get down from the trains and afterwards fend for themselves if there are any buses or any other car. I would like the railway to undertake that responsibility. They may give subsidy, to the State Governments to construct good enough roads to reach upto State Headquarters. Then they themselves are to ply a fleet of buses, railway-run buses, railway-managed buses, railway-owned buses with necessary sanitary and catering and other social facilities that are being made available generally for third class passengers.

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO (Chikballapur): Karnataka is an important State—I am sorry to say—which has been neglected

[Shri V. Krishna Rao]

for a very long time. This time, even in this budget, Rs. 10 crores have been provided for all the works.

One most important thing is that there are zones to all the States. But I am sorry to say that there is no zone to Karnataka State. Mostly, Bangalore is a very very important place, a business place, the most important city in South India.

In Madras, Hyderabad, everywhere there are zones but unfortunately there is no zone for Karnataka. I request the hon. Minister to form a South-Western zone, for Karnataka. If there is no zone there will be lot of inconvenience. For small items of work, for everything whatever it may be, we have to go to Madras and it is causing lot of inconvenience to Karnataka people. I, therefore, request that the South-Western zone may be formed immediately.

Formerly there used to be non-official Chairmen for the recruitment boards of the railway recruitment committees. For the last six years there was only one recruitment and as a result justice is not being done and Kannadigas are not getting much employment, as it is. I therefore request the hon. Minister to form this recruitment board with a non-official member as the Chairman.

Regarding the pending works, Bangalore-Mysore line has been pending for a very long time. Mysore is a garden city and a number of people, thousands and thousands of passengers, will be travelling from Bangalore to Mysore every day. Every ten to fifteen minutes there is one bus. Most people prefer to go by bus because there is no proper railway convenience from Bangalore to Mysore as the existing line is metre gauge and the broad gauge line has been pending since a long time. I do not know when it will be completed. It may take some decades or so at the rate at which the work is going on now.

SHRI PIYUS TIRAKY (Alipurduar) :
You have to wait for the 21st century !

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO : Not exactly the twenty-first century but it may take some years. I therefore request the Government

to take up this work immediately, speed it up and to complete the conversion work, from metre gauge to broad gauge.

Secondly, there is no electrification of the line from Jolarpet to Bangalore. The time taken to go from Madras to Jolarpet is much less, but 50 per cent not more time is taken to reach from Jolarpet to Bangalore. As such, I request that the Jolarpet-Bangalore line has to be taken up for electrification, urgently. Plans and estimates have been there for a long time, right when Mr. Jaffar Sharief was the Railway Minister. As he has again become a Minister, we have to see when it will be completed.

Chikmagalur is an important place, from where Shrimati Indira Gandhi contested. The line from Kadur to Chikmagalur, for which survey was completed, and the estimates of Rs. 25 crores were prepared, but so far the work has not been taken up, though the distance is only 40 kilometres. I request the Government to take up this work immediately. So also Harpanahalli to Kottur line, is yet to be taken up. My constituency Chikballapur is abundant with potatoes. That potato is an exporting variety. But the fact is from Shimla and other parts 30 to 40 wagons are imported every day instead of making facilities for export from Chikballapur. It is a perishable commodity. If we get that potato a week or so later the whole thing will perish. So, now we have to transport it to Bangarpet and from Bangarpet it has to be exported. It is very difficult.

In my constituency, this is the most important demand. The agriculturists and businessmen used to inform me that Bangarpet line has not yet been converted into broad gauge. If it is converted into broad gauge, we can directly go to Tirupathi from Bangalore, and from Renigunda we can go to any part of the country. I request the hon. Minister to convert Chikballapur narrow gauge line into broad gauge line immediately. Sir, this request is pending for so many years, even before Independence, we have been urging for the conversion of Chikballapur line into broad gauge. So far, it has not been done.

I have travelled in many trains and even today I am travelling in the train. I have noticed that the quality of food which is

being supplied in these trains is not good. Only casserole has been introduced but the quality of the food remains the same.

SHRI D.N. REDDY (Cuddapah) : It is worst.

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO : Anyhow, the quality of the food has to be improved. I request the hon. Minister to travel once in the train and then only he will understand it. This is my personal request.

SHRI H.A. DORA (Srikakulam) : He cannot even touch it.

SHRI V. KRISHNA RAO : Why can't he touch it ?

Sir, the Bangalore-Miraj line which connects South India and North India, is a very important line and it has to be converted into broad gauge.

With these requests, I support the Budget placed by our honourable Railway Minister.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Salem-pur) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak. I shall take just five minutes. Like every year, this year too I thank the hon. Railway Minister for presenting a good Budget. I would, however, like to make some submissions also.

I want the hon. Railway Minister to note that from the very beginning Deoria district has been getting a raw deal. Ten years ago it was decided that the metre-gauge line between Bhatni and Varanasi would be converted into a broad gauge one. To execute this task Rs. 6 crores were sanctioned in the last Budget session. In the present Budget Session an amount of Rs. 8.75 crores has been sanctioned for the same purpose. To what end, may I ask ? The cost of rails alone would be Rs. 40 crores. The total estimated expenditure is in the region of Rs. 71 crores. Rs. 22 crores and 25 lakhs have already been spent. Now Rs. 9 crores have been sanctioned while a balance of Rs. 40 crore remains. May I know from the hon. Railway Minister on which item this amount of Rs. 9 crore can be spent ? When

the expenditure on rails is going to be Rs. 40 crores how and where should we use this amount of Rs. 9 crores ? Last year an amount of Rs. 6 crore was sanctioned. This money is not being utilised properly. The hon. Railway Minister has a great attachment with the city of Varanasi. The people of that area also feel that the hon. Railway Minister has a soft spot for them. On behalf of the Deoria district I request the hon. Railway Minister to at least implement the decision taken 10 years ago to convert the metre-gauge line into a broad-gauge one. I am saying this because when I go to my constituency, people over there complain that I do not argue their case strongly. What else can one do ? With folded hands I have requested, even pleaded. But everything has come to nought. Projects which were commenced later than this one are complete but the Varanasi-Bhatni line has yet to see the light of day.

My second request relates to the Chhitauni-Bagaha bridge, the foundation for which was laid by the late Prime Minister herself. We all look upto the ideals set by the Late Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi and the hon. Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi and follow the path shown by them. About 8—10 years ago our departed leader laid the foundation for a bridge that has yet to be constructed. This had evoked a strong reaction among the people of that area. Will the hon. Railway Minister please set the project in motion without further delay ? Both the Chief Ministers had promised to give their share. This is the work of the Central Government. If the Central Government wanted it could have pressurised the U.P. and Bihar Governments to pay their respective shares and got the work done. I hope the hon. Railway Minister would look into this matter.

My third point relates to tea sold at railway stations. People say that a cup of tea, which cost 0.50—0.60 paise in the market, is available for Re. 1.00 at railway stations. And that too without sugar. The Railway Ministry is not gaining anything out of this. But it is surely losing the goodwill of the people. I request the hon. Railway Minister to help the common man by reducing the price of tea available at railway stations to the original price of 0.50—0.60

[Shri Ram Nagina Mishra]

paine.

Regarding platform tickets I can say that rarely does anyone buy a platform ticket. The Government can make comparisons that sale of platform will increase over its present level if its charges are brought down. Nobody is interested in buying platform tickets at such a high price. So please consider reducing the price of platform tickets.

With these words, I conclude my speech I would, however like to request once again that the construction of the Chhitauni-Bridge and conversion of the Bhatni line should be looked into. It is hoped that work on these projects would be set in motion soon so that we can announce to the people in our constituency that their needs are being looked after. With these words I support the Railway-Budget.

SHRI MANVENDRA SINGH
(Mathura) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I oppose the unfortunate hike in railway fares which would adversely affect the people of low and middle income groups.

I don't agree with you that funds can be raised only through hiking fares. Instead of increasing the fares, administrative expenditure should have been reduced. It would have not only benefited the people but also earned a good name for the railways. The price of a platform ticket has been increased from one rupee to one and a half rupee, the hike in second class fare ranges from Rs 2 to Rs. 15, in respect of parcels it is 10% and it is more than 6% in freights. It is, however, praiseworthy that some exemption has been given in respect of agricultural goods. I also think that the Budget which has been presented would increase inflation and would not serve any purpose.

I would also like to give some suggestions. The traffic on the Central Railway and the Western Railway at Delhi has increased continuously but there are only two tracks upto Palwal. As, many hon. Members have also suggested it should be converted into three tracks so that trains for Delhi may not have to take much time in reaching Delhi and Nizamuddin stations. While speaking on the Budget last year, I emphasized that a suburban railway division must be

created to provide facilities to the large number of people who come to Delhi every day from big cities, industrial towns and small towns situated around Delhi. In the absence of transport facilities, the people have to face a lot of difficulties. Though buses are there but it is costly to travel by buses. The people coming from outside have to stay in Delhi and then the population of Delhi is also increasing fast. If we provide sufficient means of transport, the people would be able to go back daily. Thus the increase in population in Delhi will be checked to some extent.

I would also like to invite your attention towards the plight of cleanliness in railways. The Minister as well as his officers, who are present here, are aware of the fact that there is no proper water supply in the toilets of the first class and air-conditioned compartments. Seats are also torn. Although the condition of some main trains is some what good but the bad condition of other trains is beyond description. There are no window shutters and even if these are there, those can be removed and fitted again. I have written a number of times earlier also that strict instructions should be issued for their proper maintenance and this work should be got done on war-footing. Proper facilities must be provided to the passengers who pay for that.

There is also scope for improvement in the catering arrangements. Although the quality of meal packets supplied in the prominent trains is somewhat good but the catering arrangements in other trains including those running on metre gauge lines are not at all satisfactory. A few days ago, while I was going to Jaipur by the Marudhar Express which runs from Jodhpur to Lucknow. I was offered such a meal as even dog would not like to take. On being told that I am a Member of Parliament, they rushed to bring a well covered plate of fresh food. But I refused to take even that. Therefore I demand an improvement in the catering arrangements. Similarly, when I travelled by the Taj Express, tea served to me was just a mixture of milk, tea leaves and sugar. No attention is paid to its taste. When I advised them to supply these ingredients separately they informed that this practice has been stopped for the last fifteen days under the orders issued by the Railway Board.

I think it is not compulsory to serve such a mixture to foreigners also who travel in air-conditioned and first class compartments of trains like the Taj Express. The fare of air-conditioned class is being increased continuously and this time it ranges upto Rs. 100. The quality of tea should accordingly be improved. I demand an improvement in the catering arrangements.

As I have sent in writing many times, sub-standard things are sold at railway stations and in compartments. Although there are licensed vendors but even unlicensed vendors also sell food articles in trains. When I complained against the supply of substandard lunch and breakfast packets, I was told that these were not supplied by the catering department of Railways. When I asked the conductor, he told me that it was being done with the connivance of the police department and other railway staff. They argue they may loose their lives if they attempt to check it. It should, therefore, be seen that good quality food articles are made available to passengers. Under the existing arrangements food may also be poisonous. In this connection, I have already written to you many times.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, though one crore rupees were allotted for the Mathura-Alwar railway line which was one of the two railway lines proposed by Shri Bansi Lal but no remarkable progress has been made. So I urge that this work should be completed expeditiously. Similarly I have written for the change in the departure time of Mathura-Delhi Shuttle from 4.45 O'Clock to 5.30 or 6.00 O'Clock to make it convenient to the passengers. There are two temporary halt stations viz. Kortban and Nari. On the route from Delhi to Mathura. Both these halt stations should be converted into regular halt stations in order to fulfil the long-standing demand. We had contributed voluntary labour at the Kortban halt on the assurance of the former of traffic member, Mr. R P. Singh that it would be converted into a regular halt station. But the present traffic member says that there would be no halt station. Similarly I have written to the railway officers that several cattle are dying and accidents of tractors are taking place frequently due to lack of railway gate at the crossing near Semari. I request to undertake this job soon. Similarly the number of sheds

at Mathura junction be increased because the trains are longer now.

In the end, I would like to request that the long-awaited demand for the construction of Chhota-Shergarh-Aligarh railway line should now be fulfilled. (Interruptions)

[English]

✓ SHRIMATI BASAVARAJESWARI (Bellary) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank the hon. Minister of State of the Ministry of Railways, Shri Madhavrao Scindia, for providing more funds for Karnataka for the financial year and I hope that he will consider providing some more funds for the completion of the on-going railway projects like Chitaldurg-Rayagarh railway construction, conversion of metre-gauge into broad-gauge lines between Mysore and Bangalore, etc. I think if these projects are prolonged for some more years, I am afraid there will be escalation in the cost of construction and against it will create problems for finding more funds for the projects. Many hon. Members have pressed for the construction of new railway lines, provision of new trains, provision of more facilities in the trains and so on and for all these, they asked the hon. Minister to allocate more funds. In this connection, I would like to appeal to the Planning Commission that they should come forward and provide more funds for the railway budget so that the Government can develop railways and provide facilities to the railway users.

Sir, coming to my own State, that is, Karnataka, when I went through the budget proposal, I was a little bit surprised to find that no fresh or new railway lines have been included for the Karnataka State. Not only that. There are trains running from Karnataka to Andhra Pradesh and other neighbouring States. They are long distance metre-gauge trains, namely, Mahalakshmi Express, Kittur Express, Vijayanagar Express, Venkatadri Express and so on. All these trains are running night times. At least the Minister would have provided some air-conditioned coaches because all these trains pass through the hottest part of the country such as Rayalaseema, northern Karnataka etc. So, I request him to provide some air-conditioned coaches in these long distance metre-gauge overnight trains. If they are

[Shrimati Basavarajeswari]

provided, I think the passengers will have more convenience and comfort during the night time.

I have been reading the complaints book whenever I visited the railway stations. Most of the complaints very much pertain to the late running of trains, cleanliness, security and supply of food and also the beggars' menace. This beggars' menace is the worst part I have been seeing every day at the railway stations. The railway stations are becoming more and more dirty. Not only that, the beggars sometimes cause thefts also. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister on the floor of the House to take immediate action to eradicate the beggars' menace on the platforms.

Cleanliness should also be improved. What we are doing at present, I don't think is sufficient. I think we can employ some more people because when we are spending so much money, it is advisable to spend more money on the cleaning or washing of the platforms and also the waiting rooms because if that environment of cleanliness is not there, somehow we feel the entire area is very much polluted.

Many hon. Members spoke about food saying that it is not up to the standard. Even if you charge a little bit more, I think the passengers can afford, but it is advisable to provide them good food. Now, what is the quality of food they are serving? If you see the puris etc. which they are serving, I don't think any human being can consume such things. When any VIP goes there, they show very good food. If that is the case and if they are serving good food, I have no complaint. But every time it is not possible for VIPs to visit and taste the food. So, the quality of food that is served should be improved. I don't mind if the cost of the food is increased. After all, there are only two types of food—the north Indian and south Indian food—and whatever the passengers require, you can serve them easily. So, this aspect should also be looked into.

Regarding the Second Class sleeping berths, I think the hon. Minister will agree with me and during his reply, he will give

me a favourable reply to this, that all the wooden planks should be provided with cushions. How can the passengers sleep on the wooden planks? Once I travelled in the Second Class as I just wanted to see how the Second Class passengers sleep on the wooden planks. I could not sleep on the wooden plank, it was very difficult. Therefore, the wooden planks should be converted into foam cushions.

Regarding model stations, Bellary, my constituency, has been included as one of the model stations. But there is no improvement till now. The amount which has been provided has not been spent. The plans and estimates have still not been approved. As per schedule, the first stage has to be completed by 1980, but it is not under progress till now.

I congratulate the hon. Minister for having started the overnight Hampi Express. But the bogies are not good. It is very difficult to travel in those coaches. Therefore, they should be immediately replaced. The broad-gauge platforms have to be converted and shelters have to be provided. All this has not been done till now. Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to take action for providing shelter on the broad-gauge platforms early.

13.00 hrs.

About this model station, I would request the hon. Minister to kindly see that the works are in progress immediately and works are completed as per the schedule.

As far as the demands are concerned, I am pressing every time that Harihar-Kuttur line should be taken up. Every time when I speak, there is a reply from the hon. Minister that it is not feasible. Now I would say on the floor of the House that it would be feasible for this reason. Bellary would give a lot of revenue for the railways, if the ores are transported through this route to Mangalore. A lot of iron ores which we are getting in Hospet range are being sent to Madras and the Railways are getting a lot of income. You know, whatever lines are there are not sufficient to carry the entire iron ores to Madras and much of the ore is being dumped in the Railways resulting in heavy demurrage to MMTC and NMDC. If this Harihar-Kuttur line is completed, part

of the ores can be diverted to Mangalore port and it would certainly ease the situation. Therefore, I would request the Minister to reconsider the report and try to get the Harihar-Kuttur line completed early. There is also urgent need for conversion of Bangalore-Miraj line via Hubli. There is also a demand for the creation of separate Zonal railway at Bangalore, namely South-Western Zonal Railway, as early as possible. There is a feeling among the Kannadigas that a separate zone should be created at Bangalore.

Since Mr. Deputy-Speaker is asking me to wind up, I will come to the last point. I thank the hon. Minister for replacing wooden sleepers by cement sleepers, because we are finding very difficult to get wood now-a-days. But at the time of replacing it, priority should be given to the small scale industries like mini cement plants and micro plants in the neighbouring areas to manufacture such sleepers.

With these suggestions, I thank you and support the Railway Budget.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE
 MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY
 AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI SHEILA DIKSHIT) :
 Sir, I propose that we may forego the Lunch
 Hour.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I think, the
 House will accept that. Now, the hon.
 Minister of Railways.

(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : They are
 expecting more, I think.

AN HON. MEMBER : There must be
 some good news.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He will
 always give good news Don't worry.

13.02 hours

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE
 MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI
 MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : Mr. Deputy-
 Speaker, Sir, ancient civilisations germinated
 and flourished along the banks of great
 rivers, whether it be the Ganga or the Nile.
 One of the possible reasons could be the

fertility of land, the abundance and easy
 availability of resources in general. One
 great step in the progress of human civiliza-
 tion was taken when, instead of settling
 down at places where resources were avail-
 able, man started moving resources to his
 place of abode. This is the beginning of
 transportation. Today, like the great rivers,
 the Railway lines stretch across the country.
 Instead of man moving towards resources,
 resources move towards man. In India too,
 the Railways are the largest transporters and,
 therefore, we have a very significant role in
 the movement of freight. I do understand
 that passengers movement is felt directly by
 the people and by the users. But freight
 movement Mr. Deputy-Speaker, has an
 impact which is even more significant to the
 economy, on the public distribution system,
 on prices and on the quality of life in
 general. And, therefore, when we analyse
 the Railway exercise, be it as a critic or
 prioritise our programmes as an administra-
 tor, it is very important that the interests of
 both should be safe-guarded and where there
 is a constraint experienced, priorities should
 be set where the judicious balance is struck
 between the two aspects of Railway
 working.

In my Budget speech, I have already
 outlined the successful result of the efforts
 put in by the Railway family from the
 senior-most to the junior-most on the
 movement of trains.

I have mentioned that for the third year
 in succession, we are confident of going over
 the targets of movement of freight. The
 original target of 313 million tonnes was
 revised mid-year to 316 million tonnes and
 I feel pretty confident to say that we are
 certain to go above that figure provided our
 friends across the floor do not put further
 impediments in our way in the shape of
 bandhs and rasta rokos and rail rokos. I do
 not know if they understand the amount of
 damage they cause to the national economy
 and I feel that this is the time for introspec-
 tion as far as they are concerned. There are
 many ways of demonstrating in a democracy.
 But let us not demonstrate by crushing the
 interests of the common man.

I had mentioned in my Budget speech
 that in wagon utilisation, the Indian
 Railways have surpassed even the developed

[Shri Madhavrao Scindia]

world by displacing Japan last year. I do hope that similar efforts in the future will allow us to retain and maintain such a premier position. On the other hand, we do not ignore the need for additional passenger services to meet the increasing demand and, as I said, our attempt is to strike a balance between the two. Viewing the two together, we have tried to keep the burden of rising tariffs to the minimum and yet safeguard the interests of the system and ensure its viability through modernisation.

The choices before us were obvious. Choice (a) is default on payment of estimated dividend of Rs. 736 crores. Choice (b) is end with the deficit of Rs. 594 crores. Choice (c) is balance the Budget and after absorbing the maximum possible of rise in input cost which this year was about 30% manage to balancing the Budget, keep a reasonable commercial outlook and be able to contribute the mite of the railways to the national exchequer.

The first two options would have meant resiling from our commitment to the national exchequer and merely passing the buck to the Finance Ministry by adding to the deficit in the National Budget and shifting the responsibility of resource mobilisation, to that extent, to them. I feel that this would have meant shirking our own responsibility towards our country. On the other hand, the deficit Budget of Rs. 594 crores would have meant a similar reduction in contribution to our own internal resource generation leading to a shrinking of the Plan.

We have chosen the harder and more difficult but more responsible third option because we believe in facing issues fairly and squarely and not washing our hands off the responsibility of being crucial co-partners in the national exercise.

It has been the freight which has been bearing most of the burden. As I said in my Budget speech, the fare of the II Class Ordinary up to 50 KM had not been increased for the last four years and the fare of this class beyond 50 KM too was also raised three years ago. We have tried to ensure that in the burden envisaged, the maximum proportion, the maximum rate of

increase should be kept to Upper-class and the minimum possible to the Second-class Ordinary and Second-class Mail and Express. Sir, as many as 88 per cent of the total number of passengers travelling on Indian Railways, travel on Second-class Ordinary and the increase therefore has been restricted to a minimum of 50 paise and to a maximum—over 150 kms—of Rs. 3/- and that too after three or four years; in the second-class mail/express, a further 9 per cent of the total traffic travels. In this Class too, we have restricted it to a minimum of Rs. 2/- and to a maximum—over 750 kms—of Rs. 15/-. So, adding these two classes together, we have tried to minimise the burden on 97 per cent of the total number of passengers travelling on the Indian Railways. Similarly, in Second-class monthly season-tickets, even after the proposed increase of Rs. 4/- to Rs. 8/- per month, the monthly season ticket-holder in terms of charging single-journeys for the average of about 50 journeys that he performs in a month, he will be paying 8—17 journeys as compared to 9—25 single journeys that he pays now.

Regarding freight, hon. Member Shri Reddy had expressed a view that the proposed increases in freight will lead to inflation and impose a heavy burden on the common man. It is well-known that freight tariffs are more inflationary than the passenger tariffs and their indirect impact—though not initially felt—would sometimes be much greater. We have tried again to give exemptions to certain classes of traffic, keeping in mind the farmers, the rural areas and the weaker-sections of society. After giving exemption to certain commodities viz. foodgrains, pulses, fertilizers, salt, edible-oils, gur, jaggery, fodder and livestock, the average increase in freight rate works out to 4.8 per cent only. We have done a few exercises and tried to analyse the impact on prices and on individual commodities. We have some interesting statistics. The direct impact of the freight increase on wholesale price index is worked out to approximately 0.10 per cent and even taking the multiplier effect into consideration of the rise in commodities like coal, cement, the total impact on whole-sale price index is estimated to be 0.163 per cent only. On individual commodities, the impact of freight increases and their prices has also been

worked out based on the average lead per commodity. It is working out to the following on Charcoal, one paisa per kilo ; on sugar, potatoes and onions 2 paisa per kilo and on kerosene, per litre, 1.5 paise ; on petrol, per litre, 2 paisa ; on cement per bag of 50 kilos, 55 paisa. On the subject of increase in fares and freights, it may be of interest to the House to know that with 1970-71 as the base, whereas the index of input cost of the Railways has gone up to 631.8 in 1987-88 ; the index of average rate realised from freight has been restricted to 489.2 and that for passengers to 302.4 only, the margin having been absorbed by greater movement of traffic and improved efficiency.

It is obvious that an attempt has been made to keep the burden to the minimum possible and yet run the railways primarily as a commercial enterprise with little dependence on the national exchequer. I would like, in this context, to remind Members regarding the indirect subsidies given by the railways to passengers. This is estimated to be approximately Rs. 1200 crores. Added to this, subsidies on other coaching on movement of essential commodities and on uneconomic branch lines, it comes to total bill of approximately Rs. 1700 crores.

Shri Sharad Dighe quite pertinently raised a point about the operating ratio. The operating ratio is important. But if you want to make a commercial analysis of the working of the railways, you then....

(Interruptions)

PROF. MADHU DANDEVATE (Rajapur) : Mr. Minister, if you don't mind. Many countries have been discussing this question of social burden and quite a good number of them have absorbed the social burden in the General Revenues. I think, if this cushion could be made available to the railways, probably, it will help a lot. I think, you should take up the issue with the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister. It would be a great aid to the development of the railways.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I think, the hon. Member's suggestion, especially coming from an experienced

Member like Mr. Dandavate is indeed a very good one. But, I think, the burden of responsibility has to be shared by both the Finance Ministry and various other Ministries working towards the national goal. But it is a very good suggestion. All that I am saying is that—I am not trying to shirk from bearing this burden—when an important and highly intelligent Member like Mr. Sharad Dighe analyses the railway working, looking at it from a commercial angle, in that working, in that analysis, credit must be given to us for this Rs. 1700 crores before coming to the final figures of operating ratio. And if that credit is given, operating ratio drops to 77.3.

Similarly, it would be very easy to juggle the deficit or surplus by playing around with the depreciation reserve fund contribution. This is not meant by way of criticism. But I feel that I have to elaborate the fact. There may have been other reasons at that time for keeping the DRF so low. In 1978-79, the DRF was 2.9 per cent of the capital at charge which came to Rs. 145 crores. In 1988-89, it has risen to 12 per cent of Rs. 1500 crores. If we depress the DRF contributions from 12 per cent, back again to 2.9 per cent, the amount chargeable would be only Rs. 370 crores and the working expense would come down approximately by Rs. 1,130 crores which would again mean a steep fall in the operating ratio to approximately 80 per cent. But, then where would the funding for our plan come from ?

Therefore, keeping the long term interest of the railways in mind, it is very important that we generate as many internal resources as possible so that the size of our plan remains a reasonable one.

I am very grateful to the hon. Members from the Congress benches and to many hon. Members from the Opposition benches like Shri Basudeb Acharia and Dr. D.N. Reddy for having made a very forceful plea for an increase in the plan allocation of the Railway Ministry. I do know, however, that the best attempt is being made on the part of the Planning Commission and within the constraints of resources, they are trying to give us the maximum possible. I do want to express my gratitude to all these Members for having extended to us their support and spirit.

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Before ending with the subject of fares and freight tariffs, I would like to say that a comprehensive review is required from time to time of railway costing and railway price. The last Rail Tariff Inquiry Committee, the Paranjape Committee was appointed in 1977. Various recommendations of this Committee provided useful support to the railway's effort to raise additional revenue, and rationalisation of tariff during the Sixth and Seventh Plan. I think, that the time has now come to appoint another similar Committee, comprising an eminent transport economist and experienced railway tariff experts to go into all aspects of costing and pricing of rail transport and to give recommendations which could properly serve the needs of a developing economy in the next decade.

Incidentally I would like to point out that the Paranjape Committee had recommended that as much as 80% of the rise in input cost should be charged as tariff increase—be they freight or be they passengers—and Railways have only charged about 70%. So, in fact we have done better than what the Paranjape Committee recommended. We, therefore, propose to appoint a high level rail tariff committee during 1988-89. The proposal indicating terms of reference and names of the chairman and members will be processed in due course. The size of plan this year, as hon. Members know, is Rs. 3850 crores of which as much as 65% is being contributed by internal resources generation and extra budgetary resources. We have again priority-wised our plan expenditure. I have said this a couple of years ago that keeping the long term interest of Railways in mind and keeping the constraint of resources in mind, we have given priority to rehabilitation of the system along with modernisation and the implementation of new technology. The meaningful expansion of the system would have to wait will these three items are first covered fully.

There was no point in recklessly expanding the system unless enough money was generated allocated to restore and maintain the system in good health.

In this regard track renewal is a very important part. Mr. Basudeb Acharia and

Mrs. Prabhavati Gupta made mention of this. I would like to clarify that by 1995 it is our intention to wipe out all the backlog of track renewal which stood at approximately 20000 or 21000 kilometres in the beginning of the 7th Plan. Mr. Narayan Choubey had wanted a clarification as to whether we were taking into account the new arisings every year. Our intention is to renew on an average between 4000 and 4500 kilometres per annum upto 1995. We started with, I think 3570 and this year we should be going above 4000 kilometres and in the subsequent years we intend to step it up even further. The annual arisings are about 2300 kilometres which means that we cover approximately 2000 kilometres of backlog every year and that is how the target of liquidating the arrears by 1995 has been set.

I would like to assure the House that track renewal is receiving our due attention and next year too the percentage of the Plan devoted to track renewal is Rs. 730 crores or 19% ; which ten years ago stood at only 10%.

The expansion of line capacity, new stations, more passenger trains, more rolling stock would all suffer if the Plan were to shrink because of a smaller contribution to the DRF or by a smaller internal resource generation. Therefore, I seek the support of the hon. Members in justifying this hike in tariffs because we have, as I said, tried to keep it to a minimum and yet be able to fund and finance our plan requirements to the fullest extent possible.

Hon. Members have been making, quite justifiably, many demands, many requests regarding new lines entailing expenditure of vast sums of money. This cannot happen unless the Plan is kept to a reasonable amount and unless we are prepared to, in a determined fashion, fund that Plan also to a large extent from our own internal resources.

Sir, my hon. colleague, Shri Mahabir Prasad has very effectively covered the subject of passenger amenities. I do not want to dwell too long on it because I think hon. Members have been well briefed about it. I would just like to say that passenger amenities are covered not only through

direct plan heads but also through various other plan heads. When my colleague quoted Rs. 5 crores and Rs. 18 crores he was referring to direct plan heads. If you take the amounts contributed by various other plan heads the Sixth Plan average works out to Rs. 6.2 crores whereas in 1988-89 the amount works out to Rs. 24.4 crores which is four times the average of the Sixth Plan.

Similarly my colleague has covered the subjects of improvement in inquiry system for prompt and reliable information, passenger terminals at Kurla, Bhandra and Shalimar and the expansion of Hazrat Nizamuddin and New Delhi. In addition I would like to say that last year I had assured the House that 50 new passenger halts would be opened in the rural areas. I am glad to say that by March 31 fifty new halts will have been opened in the rural areas as per our assurance.

Similarly in the next year also I propose to open yet another 50 halt stations to extend this facility further especially in the rural areas. A Directorate of Passenger Amenities will be set-up in the Railway Ministry to ensure effective implementation of policy guidelines in this regard.

There has been some criticism of rise in platform tickets—both for and against. A very wise hon. Member, Mr. K.N. Pradhan had said that great inconvenience is caused to passengers by immense crowds on railway platforms caused by people who are not actually travelling. In fact, he said he would be prepared to support greater rise. However, I would like to somewhat assuage the feelings of the other hon. Members who had asked that this hike should not be undertaken. I have given direction to the Railway Ministry that an exercise should be worked upon where a way should be found by which all the collections in platform tickets at a particular station should be spent on that particular station itself in improving its facilities and amenities. I hope that we will be successful in that.

[*Translation*]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): Then excepting Calcutta, Bombay and Delhi, there will be no improvement at

small railway stations.

[*English*]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I said that it is an exercise. There will be certain suggestions. Lot of outside passengers are also using the metropolitan stations. Maybe we could work out a system with a large portion going to that station and the remaining portion going to the service area around it. That is an exercise which we can work out.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : That will give incentive to the local people to bring more people on the platform.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : It also gives incentive for them to pay for the platform ticket.

Now I would like to come to new lines especially in the North-East areas. The hon. Prime Minister has given a direction to all of us that special importance must be given to the interests of the North-East and in pursuance of that direction last year itself I had assured the House that Prime Minister's guidance and directions in this regard will be carried out by the Railway Ministry. I had assured then that four new lines—we were prepared to complete six new lines in the North-East region within the Seventh Plan period. Unfortunately, there has not been a major response on one particular line concerning Meghalaya Government and on the other line, i.e. Amguri-Tuli line we have been a bit stymie because of some land dispute between the two State Governments. If that land dispute had been resolved I would have been able to assure you that I would be able to complete that also within the Seventh Plan. As far as the other four lines are concerned I would like to repeat my assurance that we would be completing these lines within the Seventh Plan period. That is our target. That is our aim and barring absolutely unforeseen circumstances arising I would adhere to that assurance.

Mr. Dinesh Goswami, Mr. Engti, my hon. friend in Rajya Sabha, Mr. Kamalendu Bhattacharia, and my hon. colleague, Mr. Santosh Mohan Dev, Mr. Ataur Rahman, have been specially stressing from time to time, on the interests of the North-East. I

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would like to assure them that the interests of the North-East will be kept uppermost in our mind and we will respond. (*Interruptions*).

Now, I would mention the focus that we are giving to the metre gauge. There is a feeling that the metre gauge system is a system which is inferior to the broad gauge. I would like to inform the House that in most countries—in the developed world too—the broad gauge system does not exist. It is a system, I think, more or less, unique to India. There may be a few other countries which also have broad gauge, but it is, more or less, unique to India. The metre gauge system is not an inferior system. What is important is that we pay attention to see that it is maintained in such a way that it does not become inferior. I have already assured the House that we are looking into the metre gauge in all its aspects. If there has been some neglect in the past of the metre gauge system, we will try and see that this neglect is no more there. (*Interruptions*).

We are going to strengthen the track. We are providing better rolling-stock. We are providing more powerful and fuel efficient locomotives. Specific upgradation schemes in the Budget are approximately about Rs. 50 crores. I would like to say here that it will be our endeavour not to let the metre gauge system be a constraint for the industrial development of any area. Any inputs to augment section capacity for meeting the growth requirements, including facilities for transshipment, will be provided so that areas served by the metre gauge have improved rail transport facilities for development. This is going to be our endeavour. This is going to be our attempt.

As far as doubling is concerned, I must make mention of one specific doubling because my hon. friend, Mr. Tarun Kanti Ghosh, has been time and time again imploring me to do something about it. I wish to advise the House that the final location survey for doubling of Barasat-Bongaon section of the Eastern Railway was sanctioned in 1987-88. This survey is in progress. In the meantime, doubling of the first patch, Barasat-Dattapukur, has been proposed in the 1988-89 Budget at an estimated cost of

Rs. 6.07 crores.

There was mention made also of alleged neglect of Karnataka. I would like to inform the House that Karnataka is one of the five States in the country which has a railway production unit. There are only five States in the country which have a railway production unit. My colleague, Mr. Jaffar Sharief, had been largely instrumental in establishing the Wheel and Axle Plant at a cost of Rs. 146 crores. As far as this Budget is concerned, there are a number of ongoing projects...(*Interruptions*). In Mangalore, additional terminal facilities are being set up. The Whitefield satellite goods terminal and an inland container depot at Whitefield are also being set up. There are only a very few places which have container depots.

The Bangalore-Mysore conversion has been given as much as Rs. 6.84 crores this year out of a total plan allocation of Rs. 60 crores which is almost 11 per cent of the total conversion budget for the entire country. Incidentally, I would like to add for my friends who have rightly raised the Varanasi-Bhatni issue that there also it works out to roundabout Rs. 9 crores.

So, these two areas have been looked at in a very major way. Now, if you calculate it in terms of South and if you add to this the amount which has been proposed for Guntur-Macherla as much as 50 per cent of the entire conversion Budget has been given to the States of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. I do not really think that hon. Members should grumble keeping in mind the constraint of resources. Of course everyone wants more and more but keeping in mind the limitation of resources, I think we have done the best possible under the circumstances. (*Interruptions*)

He is not still prepared. I have not finished yet. We are doing even more. But you always choose to ignore it and always place a negative picture in front of the people but the people are never fooled by you.

The electrification between Jolarpettai and Bangalore city is also being taken up. We have allocated approximately Rs. 4.37 crores to this electrification work.

I would like to point out here that Mr. Oscar Fernandes, Mr. Janardhana Poojary

and various other Members of Parliament have been pressing for the West Coast line too. The entire survey has been completed and submitted to the Planning Commission. Our recommendation has been that we should start work with Mangalore-Udipi Section but we have yet to receive the green signal from the Planning Commission. It is still being contemplated. I would request the hon. Members like Dr. Venkatesh and my respected elder Mr. V.S. Krishna Iyer to help us in matters where State Government have given certain assurances to the Railway Ministry and where we are experiencing some difficulties.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South) : What are those difficulties ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : When the Wheel and Axle Plant was set up in Bangalore, it was on an understanding of an assured power supply right from the beginning to the Plant and power availability was not supposed to have been a problem. We have faced a lot of problems in this regard. The energy charges are hiked on the basis of the cuts imposed on all industrial consumers. No concession is given to this Public Sector Plant which was put up there, after specific understandings and specific assurances had been received.

Now, Railway Electrification is proposed between Jolarpettai-Bangalore city. I do hope that the State Government will be tying up the necessary arrangements for electric supply and at reasonable rates so that this project also does not run into similar difficulties that we have faced for the Wheel and Axle Plant at Bangalore. I feel efforts in this direction would be well spent and well invested by hon. Members. Kumari Mamata Banerjee has talked about the MTP.

DR. V. VENKATESH (Kolar) : There is an outdated narrow gauge line which is running in my district. He has not said anything about that narrow gauge line.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Shri Priya Ranjan Das Munsi, Shri Ajit Panja, Shri Ashutosh Law, Shri Debi Ghosal and also Mr. Basudeb Acharia have talked about the MTP and the importance of MTP to the city of Calcutta.

I wish to inform the House that it is

not the allocation of funds which is coming in the way of progress of this project. Out of a total length of 16.4 kms., 10 kms. have already been opened. The construction of the remaining part of the project is hampered mainly because of the delay on the part of the State Government of West Bengal in handing over to me or to the Railway Ministry 22 plots of land. The House may be interested to know that, out of these 22 plots, only 10 plots have been made available and that too after I had written to the Chief Minister of West Bengal in July, 1986, December 1986, January 1987, April 1987, May 1987, August 1987, September 1987, December, 1987. In spite of that only 10 of these plots have been handed over out of the 22. Twelve still remain to be handed over. As soon as those plots are handed over, we can expedite construction. The target was December, 1990. But with the non-cooperation on the part of the State Government, this target seems to be difficult to achieve. I would implore upon hon. Members to kindly ensure that the State Government hands over the balance plots to us so that the interests of the people of Calcutta are safeguarded by us. And I would like the hon. Members kindly to cooperate with us. (*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Order please. The Minister is not yielding.

DR. V. VENKATESH : Let the Minister say something about narrow gauge... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI AMAL DUTTA : Very recently, you have appointed somebody to chase the cases up. This should have been done earlier.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I have already told the hon. Members... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI AMAL DUTTA : But now also things are not being done in the fashion they should be, to chase up the court cases. That is the main thing. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : There are a number of cases pending in the courts.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : There is no delay on the part of the Metro Railways. It is due to the non-handing

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over of these twelve plots of land. Once those twelve plots of land are handed over, we will certainly expedite this. *(Interruptions)* We are still working on it. But it is only that area which we cannot work on. *(Interruptions)* As far as the Circular Railway is concerned...*(Interruptions)*

I am not yielding, Mr. Choubey. I am sorry ; I am not yielding.

As far as the Circular Railway is concerned, out of the 13.5 Kms. length of the project, 10 Kms. have already been completed. Now, the hon. Members from West Bengal, from the treasury benches, have always been strongly voicing the fact that this Circular Railway also needs to be completed, so that the interests of the people of Calcutta are safeguarded. The Railway Ministry are doing its best to complete this also. But again, there is a history : 3.5 Kms. remain to be completed, but this work cannot be completed until 566 encroachments on Railway land are removed by the State Government. Despite my writing to the Chief Minister in July 1986, December 1986, January 1987, April 1987, May 1987, August 1987, September 1987 and December 1987 *(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Order, order.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Despite my writing to the Chief Minister on all these occasions, the State Government has yet to take action for removing this unauthorized occupation. No action has been taken. *(Interruptions)* This is where the interests of Calcutta are suffering. I would like to tell the hon. House...*(Interruptions)* Will the hon. Members hear me ?

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : In his reply, the Minister cannot make allegations.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I want to tell the hon. Members that after written so many times...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : You should listen to us. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I am

not yielding...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA : Was there an agreement between the former Railway Minister Mr. Bansi Lal and the Chief Minister of West Bengal, regarding the rehabilitation of the persons who are uprooted...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I am sorry the onus or responsibility is totally with the State Government. There is no point in making ..*(Interruptions)*

SHRI AMAL DATTA : The Railways had agreed to compensate the encroachers in Bombay, but not in Calcutta. Why ? *(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : How agitated were Members like Kumari Mamata Banerjee, Mr. Debi Ghosal and Mr. Asutosh Law about the interests of the city of Calcutta, I know. I am trying to make them understand that the fault does not lie here. The fault lies there. That is what has happened. *(Interruptions)* We must try and work...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I would like to give a positive indication to the hon. Members across the floor. That indication is that once the State Government lives up to its responsibilities, and hands this land over to us, it will be our attempt that within six months, we will complete the work...*(Interruptions)*

Now about Mr. Dennis. I would like to come to some suggestions which Mr. Dennis had made regarding road overbridges. There are as many as twelve in Tamil Nadu. In three cases, the Railways' portion of the work has already been completed. *(Interruptions)*

The work of approaches, which is to be completed by the State Government, is still incomplete. In another four cases, whereas the Railways have already started the work, the State Government have yet to undertake their portion of the work. In another two cases, work is in progress both by the Railways and the State Government. In the balance three cases plans and estimates are under finalisation. *(Interruptions)*

While on the subject of a road over-

bridge, I would like to mention that the hon. Member Shri Ram Singh Yadav has been constantly striving for a road over-bridge at Alwar. He has been constantly emphasizing for the last one and half year that this road-over-bridge should be sanctioned. He has put in an Herculean effort for a road-over-bridge at Alwar. I would like to inform the hon. Member through you that at the end of February, we have finally received the sanction from the State Government of Rajasthan. It was too late for us to include it in this budget. But it will be our attempt to quickly finalise the plan and the estimates.

I would like to stress a point here that the railway exercise, whether it is a success or a failure, is very much dependent on the cooperation it receives from the respective State Governments and from the people in general. We have received co-operation from the people in full. The smooth flow of railway traffic, whether passenger or freight, is essential to reduce many of the inconveniences that people feel in their day to day life.

As the Hon'ble Members are aware, the rail transport capacity in the country is fully stretched. In such a condition any impediment to the smooth flow of rail-borne traffic not only dislocates the railway working but, more importantly, causes serious disturbances in the life of the community.

A single day's bundh denies access to passenger services to over 10 million people. One wonders what gain can be claimed by causing hardship to a common man in the name of...(*Interruptions*)

A bundh or a rail-roko agitation also interrupts the flow of essential commodities, raw materials to industrial units and finished products to the consumption centres.

Such disturbances unleash a chain reaction that affects both passengers and freight traffic not only for that particular day but for many days after that. In fact, in certain high density traffic areas it takes even longer to comeback to normalcy.

It is a pity that just at a time when the Railway have achieved a major breakthrough, again they have threatened us with

an agitation and rail roko.

The direct loss of revenue as a result of a single day's bundh, would amount to about over Rs. 20 crores. I am talking of the railway only. If you take into account the multiple and the indirect effect, they could amount to over Rs. 100 crores— just one single day's dislocation. I do hope that people will take into account this in future also. I came to this subject because Smt. Usha Verma had mentioned to me about the loss on punctuality of Kashi-Vishwanath Express in the month of February 1988. The House may be interested to know what while on certain days, the loss on punctuality was due to foggy conditions, punctuality was also lost as the train had to be diverted over a longer route on account of kisan agitation on Moradabad-Delhi section. So, here is a direct example of the inconvenience caused to the passengers. It was in this context that I am talking about bandhs ; I am not pointing out any particular bandh.

In this budget we have tried our level best to produce a document which takes into account both the short-term and long-term interests of the users. A number of concession had been given. Last year, a 75 per cent concession had been given to all war widows, the widows of those brave men who had laid their lives down for the country ; and this year, 75 per cent had been given to the widows of all those brave police men who had laid down their lives in action against extremists and terrorists.

I would just like to clarify that under the Prime Minister's directive this concession would also be applicable to the widows of the members of the Indian Peace Keeping Force killed in action in Sri Lanka.

I have already told hon. Members that it is our attempt constantly to improve the utilisation of system capacity, extracting the last drop from the system.

In the budget speech I had announced that as far as the passenger services are concerned we have tried to do this through additional fleet of coaches and rationalisation of rakes.

A number of honourable members, in-

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cluding Shri Somu, Dr. Bhoi, Shri Mohan Das, Shri Rambhagat Paswan, Shri Ramoowalia, Shrimati Nirmala Shaktawat and various other members had suggested the restoration of cancelled passenger services. I may happy to say that—these passenger services which were cancelled for various operational reasons—orders have recently been issued for resumption of normal operation of a number of trains and the majority of trains in about one month's time. These are the Awadh-Assam Express, Howrah-Amritsar Express, Varanasi-Dehradun Express, Ahmedabad-Cochin Express, Cochin-Bilaspur Express, Madras-Coimbatore Cheran Express, Cannanore Ernakulam Express and Cochin-Tiruchirapalli Express.

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur) : What about the Kanchenjunga Express ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Please have patience.

In addition to the new services announced in the budget speech, some of the existing services are being re-organised to provide better travel facilities. Mr. Gurudas Kamat, Mr. Murli Deora, Mr. Sharad Dighe, Mr. Sunil Dutt, Mrs. Bali, have been asking for the introduction of a superfast train between Dadar and Madras on five days in a week. This is going to be done on five days in lieu of the present 13/14 Bombay-Madras Express. It is going to be a superfast train.

Similarly, a lot of Members of Parliament have been talking about the Kanchenjunga Express. A number of Members pressed for this and in addition a delegation had come to see me comprising hon. Members of the Upper House, Mr. O.P. Ray and Mr. Kamalendu Bhattacharya, who forcefully demanded for certain improvements in the Kanchenjunga Express. I am happy to announce that the Kanchenjunga Express will run on all the days of the week and will be extended to and from Guwahati.

Now, certain Members, Mr. Saifuddin Soz and Mr. Janak Raj Gupta and certain other Members talked about the introduction

of a weekly express between Jammu Tawi and Kanyakumari via Madras. It is being introduced and will again be called Himsagar Express. There will be some difference in the halts so that it is speeded up a bit.

SHRI ATAUR RAHMAN (Barpeta) : What about the reduction of the travel time of the North-East and the Tin Sukia Express trains ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I will look into that.

A bi-weekly express between Jammu Tawi and Madras in lieu of the present 17/18 Madras-Jammu Tawi tri-weekly Janata Express will be introduced.

Hon. Members from the South, especially from Andhra Pradesh, Shri D.N. Reddy, Shri K.S. Rao, Mr. Bala Goud, Mr. Nand Lal Choudhary and some Members from Madhya Pradesh have asked for a train from Vizag to New Delhi. I am happy to announce the introduction of a superfast service between Visakhapatnam and New Delhi on four days in a week by double heading 927/928 Karnataka Express and introduction of Link Express between Vijayawada and Visakhapatnam in lieu of the present bi-weekly arrangements. Similarly, Orissa Members Shri K.P. Singh Deo and Mr. Harihar Soren also mentioned about Sambalpur-Bhubaneshwar Express.

Sambalpur-Bhubaneshwar Express will we introduced but as a daily overnight service. (*Interruptions*) The present 17/18 Link Express will also continue to run but amalgamated with the Sambalpur Express between Vizianagaram and Titlagarh.

We are giving special attention to the secluded areas and to tribal areas. Mr. Lal Vijay Pratap Singh, Mr. Moti Lal Singh and others have been asking for these services. In order to serve Sarguja region by better train facility, it is proposed to provide the following services by suitable re-organisation :

1. Direct service between Birsampur and Indore via Jabalpur and Bhopal.
2. Shuttle service between Shahdol and

Katni.

3. Direct train service between Chirimiri and Bilaspur and also between Chirimiri and Shahdol.

Mrs. Mavani, Shri D.P. Jadeja, Shri Mohanbhai Patel, Shri K.N. Pradhan and Shri Satyanarayan Panwar have been asking for a new train connecting Central India with the Western region. I am happy to announce the introduction of an Express train between Bhopal and Rajkot via Ahmedabad in lieu of the present Bhopal-Vadodara Passenger.

I am also happy to announce the introduction of an Express train between the Bombay and Pune in lieu of 321/322 Passenger.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : On that side, everything is being done, something on this side also.

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : In conclusion, Sir, we have had an illuminating debate on the Railway Budget and almost a hundred members have spoken and given several valuable suggestions. I thank them all. Inevitably, there has been criticism as well, most of it is constructive criticism, genuinely motivated by the concern to improve the Railways. I welcome such criticism and I assure the House that we shall keep these views prominently before us as we plan and implement various measures to get the best out of the system. In my association with the Railways over the last three and a half years, I have become aware of the tremendous talent and ability that Railwaymen possess from the senior-most to the junior-most.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : What about employment ?

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : It is their endeavour, it is their labour that has to be appreciated. Be it pointsmen, be it gangmen, be it gatesmen, be it cabinmen,

be it fitters—sometimes people tend to overlook these people. (Interruptions) I am talking about the junior-most workmen and staff and you are drowning my voice out and not allowing me...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Here you are praising them but there they are harassed.

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : I would like to remind the House that sometimes the effort put in by these junior staff members is overlooked ; the railway system is taken for granted ; sometimes people overlook the amount of dedication and effort that these people put in. I have also said this in the Rajya Sabha that let us not forget when we are speeding by on our superfast expresses or Rajdhani, in the dead of night in the bitter cold of winter, if you happen to wake up and poke your head out of the blanket when the train is passing a crossing, you will find a man with a green light standing there in the bitter cold of winter for your security. Let us not forget the efforts of such men. (Interruptions). When we are talking about the success of the railway exercise, I would like to pay high tribute to those who work for us day in and day out in far flung areas. It is this zeal and enthusiasm that needs to be appreciated and encouraged.

(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI CHIRANJJI LAL SHARMA (Karnal) : We also expect some favour from you.

[English]

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Your suggestions being constructive in nature will undoubtedly act as a catalyst in this regard and will help us add a new lustre to the railway fabric. On behalf of the Railway family, I can assure the hon. Members that we once again rededicate ourselves to the service of our country and our people for the greater progress and the greater glory of our nation.