

languages are being relayed only by the Radio Stations situated in that particular State and people staying at Delhi do not get the opportunity to listen to the news in their languages. Thus, many persons who are interested in knowing what is happening around the world every day do not get opportunity to know as they cannot get news in regional languages from All India Radio.

Hence, I request the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to direct the All India Radio to relay news bulletins in the regional languages at least morning and evening from Delhi Station of All India Radio.

[Translation]

(vi) Sea erosion in South Canara District (Karnataka) and need for construction of a sea wall on entire Sea Coast.

*DR. V. VENKATESH (Kolar) : South Canara district in Karnataka State has a sea coast of more than 130 kilometres. During monsoon due to sea erosion the people living in the coastal area lose their huts and other small belongings and become paupers. The State Government has sanctioned money to construct sea wall to contain sea erosion. The work has already begun, but the amount sanctioned is insufficient. In some places of this coastal area where the sea erosion is more serious in spite of the wall, the destruction of the properties is continuing. Recently, Kodi of Kundapura Taluk, Tidiyur, Uddavara, Kapu, Muluru of Udipi Taluk have been affected by the sea erosion repeatedly. The people living in the above mentioned places of the coastal area have lost their homes and hearths.

The only remedy for this is the construction of sea wall all along the sea coast of South Canara district. But for such huge project the financial assistance of the Central Government is very essential. Therefore, I urge the hon. Minister for Rural Development to take necessary steps for the construction of sea wall on the entire sea coast to stand against sea erosion.

[English]

(vii) Pollution in Delhi particularly in Chandni Chowk and need to suggest ways and means to solve the problem.

SHRI JAI PARKASH AGARWAL (Chandni Chowk) : Delhi is the capital of India. Chandni Chowk is the heart of Delhi. However, with the economic and technological achievements over the last generation which have undoubtedly brought immense and worthwhile benefits to lakhs of people, this Heart of Delhi. Chandni Chowk has become a major victim of the environmental pollution. Protection of environment which has become rather a global issue, needs immediate safeguards for the Chandni Chowk area.

With the increasing population influx the various kinds of pollution of air, water, land, noise, radiation and odour are increasing in the area day by day. Needless to say, the increasing urbanisation effect, in general of Delhi, has in fact fallen heavily on this area. Traffic jams, irregularity in water supply, increasing noise, radiation and odour, all have brought untold miseries to the people of this area.

Even though there are constitutional provisions and several enactments on the subject of checking pollution, it is suggested that immediately an expert body should be appointed to give succour to the residents of this ancient area. It has been repeatedly stressed that development and environment preservation should go hand in hand. The Parliamentary Environmental Forum needs to be revamped to take up the task of saving Chandni Chowk from the Ghost of Pollution.

13.12 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET 1985-86

GENERAL DISCUSSION—Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Now, we will take up Discussion on Railway Budget.

SHRI V.S. KRISHNA IYER (Bangalore South) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to make a few observations with regard to the Railway Budget. Post-election budget will be generally hard. But the budget of the Railway Minister has been the hardest. The increase in the passenger fare and freight charges would definitely hit the common man. Only yesterday I received a message from my constituency, that is Bangalore, that though these rates will come into effect only from 15 April, the prices of all essential commodities have already begun to rise. You can as well imagine what will happen after this is given effect to.

The hon. Minister has stated that the rise would be only marginal. I am afraid, it will not be marginal. As you could see, the price rise has been unprecedented. We can understand if the hike is marginal. But it is not. 12.5 per cent rise in fare would adversely affect the people. It is really unbearable. The common man is very much hard hit.

I would like to point out the injustice meted out to the State of Karnataka. Many of the hon. members who have spoken, have stated that their respective States are neglected. But here in the case of Karnataka, not only is the State of Karnataka neglected, but a lot of injustice has been done to it.

I am conscious of the fact that very limited time is at my command. I would like to point out a few items wherein the State has been neglected. First of all, I would like to remind the Railway Minister that he has mentioned in his speech several times that he would give priority to on-going projects. I would like to bring to his notice two or three important projects which are going on in the State.

First, I would like to mention about the conversion of Mysore—Bangalore line into broad gauge. This was started in 1976. Nine years have already lapsed. This project costs about 24 crores of rupees. I understand that last year a sum of Rs. 2 crores was allocated. But this year only Rs. 50 lakhs has been provided. I do not know the reason why it is so. Rs. 50 lakhs is only a token amount. I

been done to the State of Karnataka in regard to this project.

The second on-going project is a new line between Chitra-durga and Rai-durga which costs about Rs. 18 crores. Last year more than a crore of rupees has been provided. But this year, only Rs. 10 lakhs have been provided.

I should compliment the Railway Minister for whatever good he has done. I am prepared to concede that. In his speech he has mentioned about the Konkan Railway. It is long due and the people of Mangalore and Bangalore will be happy. It is a welcome step. I am sure, the Railway Minister will take up that project soon because the survey is over. The railways have taken up surveys of certain other railway lines. Some of the surveys are going in for the past several years. There is a preliminary engineering—cum—traffic survey going on so far as Hubli—Bangalore line is concerned; it was taken up long back. I am surprised, this year, to know that no provision has been made for that for conversion of metre-gauge line into broad-gauge line. I do not know for what reason that has been omitted. I request that it should be expedited. Then another survey for conversion of a narrow-gauge line into a broad-gauge line from Alankar to Bangalore is going on. I request the Railway Minister to expedite it. Then another survey for conversion of line from Chamaraja Nagar to Mettupalayam was announced. But no amount has been provided for that during the current financial year and the next year. I want to know why it has been deleted? Then another survey for conversion of a line from Mysore to Markar-150 km.—is going on. I request that it should be expedited. Then another survey for conversion of a line from Kolar to Chikamagalure is going on. I request that it should be expedited. We have got a metre-gauge line between Bangalore and Salem. That has become most uneconomical. Nobody uses that. There is only a single goods train and one passenger train in the evening; and it is most unpopular. No survey has been ordered for conversion of this line and no amount has been provided in the budget for that. That is a very important line. I request the

for that. Then there is another line for electrification between Bangalore City and Jalarpet. The nerve of South India is Madras and Bangalore City for economic activities. That has been neglected. No amount has been provided for during the current financial year. It has come upto Jalarpet. The linking of Jalarpet to Bangalore is very very essential for the economic development of both the States--Tamilnadu and Karnataka. Rs. 24 crores have been provided in the 6th Plan. Last year, I understand that Rs. 1 crore was provided in the budget, but no amount has been spent. I understand that the entire project has been shelved. I want to know from the Minister categorically why no amount has been provided for the current year?

I had brought it to the notice of the Railway Minister during the discussion on the supplementary demands, but it has not found a place in the budget this year that is mass rapid transit system for Bangalore City. Bangalore, as the hon. Railway Minister is aware, is the fifth largest metropolitan city in the whole of the country. We have been urging for the metro-railway for the Bangalore City for the past several decades. The Government of Karnataka have ordered a survey through your transport organisation and the survey has been conducted; and the survey report is ready and has been submitted to the Planning Commission as well as to the expert committee in the railway. But I find in the plan no provision has been made. The salient feature of that report is came to electrify three existing lines that is between Bangalore City and White Field, between Bangalore City and Kengeri and between Bangalore City and HMT. There should be a provision for a circular-Railway in the Bangalore City and also linking of important parts of the city through railway as also underground railway. The whole project costs about Rs. 650 crores. Rs. 25 crores are to be spent annually spreading over 25 years. This is very important. Nearly one-third of the Bangalore City has got Central Government industries, defence establishments and a dozen major industries. It is an important city and the Central Government must take special interest in the expansion

I am glad that you have taken care of big cities like Bombay and Calcutta, but I do not understand how you have neglected Bangalore. That is very strange. I earnestly urge the Railway Minister to make a survey of Bangalore city and suburbs also. Bangalore City is growing like anything now. No other city in India is growing so fast. The last census shows that there was 78 per cent of growth as compared to other cities. I would request the Railway Minister to consider the feasibility of Circular Railway and this report which I mentioned may be implemented.

I would earnestly ask the hon. Minister to withdraw the increase in fares on the Second Class tickets.

SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN (Calcutta South). Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I support the Railway Budget, but never-the-less, I have a few comments to make for consideration of the Railway Minister and the Planning Commission as well. This very morning I was reading in the newspapers about the 'rail-roko' movement in West Bengal and I was trying to refresh my memory, thinking, what has actually gone wrong with Bengal so far as the Railways are concerned.

Now, at the outset I would like to say that between 1976-77 and 1983-84 in Uttar Pradesh 176 km. of railway was increased; in 1977-78 in Andhra Pradesh 106 km. of railway was increased and in Tamil Nadu 129 km. was increased, but in West Bengal 70 km. was decreased. That is to say it got reduced through out of the population of West Bengal increased with the total population of India, if you take that into account, West Bengal's population is about 8 per cent and Calcutta is the largest city in India. Calcutta caters for the organised sector, and 55 per cent of the labour force comes from the neighbouring States of that sector by in flow every day. People come from places like Durgapur, Bardwan, and Kalyani—all these are more than 50 km. away from Calcutta. Those people who are commuting for their service, for their existence, they will have to pay more than what they were paying earlier, whether it is monthly tickets or the daily fare. With regard to daily fare

of the speech as well as the memorandum explaining the proposals for adjustment of freight rates and fares.

Now, 12 and a half per cent surcharge has been imposed, but it has not been stated whether it is the maximum or the minimum surcharge. The figures that I have collected from this very book, show that if a man is travelling in Second Class, Ordinary, he will have to pay for the first 100 km. 15.6 per cent, then 200 km. 16.6 per cent, whereas in the case of 100 km. the increase for the air-conditioned class is 13.48 per cent, while for the 100 km. the second class passenger will have to pay 16.6 per cent more.

So far as the first class AC 2-tier is concerned, the increase is 14.28 per cent for the first 100 km. Similarly, for 200 km. the second class passenger will have to pay 16.6 per cent increase and for the air-conditioned class the increase is 13.13 per cent, and for First Class AC 2-tier it is 13 per cent—all above 12 and a half per cent. Then again, if a person travels 400 km. in second class he will have to pay 13.63 per cent; more air-conditioned class will have to pay 12.55 per cent increase and First Class AC 2-tier the increase is 12.9 per cent. If we go further down we will find that for 1000 kms. the increase is 13.33 per cent for second class, 12.60 per cent for air-conditioned class and 12.75 per cent for first class/A.C. two tier. If we go to 2000 kms the increase is 13.15 per cent, 12.60 per cent and 12.58 per cent respectively. And for 2800 kms the increase is 13 per cent, 12.57 per cent and 12.65 per cent respectively. If we go to 4000 kms the increase is 12.50 per cent, 12.59 per cent and 12.91 per cent respectively. There seems to be a little bit of anomaly so far as rates are concerned. I request the hon. Minister to consider this aspect of the matter because he has stated in the statement that it will be 12.5 per cent surcharge on all classes. I think, this needs a little bit of calculation before fixing the actual fare.

So far as monthly ticket is concerned, charges on season tickets have been increased by Rs. 3 to Rs. 12 all classes. Surcharge for accident compensation, safety and passenger amenities fund has

passenger tickets and 75 paise to Rs. 4 on season tickets. The question will arise: what are the amenities that the passengers are going to get? The amenities have gone down every year. I do not wish to dilate on that point because everything is known to everyone how the amenities have gone down. After all, the railways cannot levy tax. It gets money in return for certain services. If it is specifically made for amenities, then it is better we come to know the special amenities for which this is being paid.

Now, let us see the position of suburban trains. If we look into the condition of suburban trains, either the fans, lights seats and other fixtures are found missing or damaged. In fact, I myself have seen people travelling in second class standing upon bags full of rice. Supposing, a man who is coming every day from Burdwan which is more than 100 kms from Calcutta, Srirampur, Kancharapar, Kolyani and Kharagpur which are more than 50 kms, for carrying out his service, he has to stand in the same compartment with the goods. The passengers have to stand with or upon the goods and the vegetables. They have to stand on the vegetables. Daily fight, daily quarrel, daily irritation is taking place. Railway is the nation's property. So, people remove fans, etc. because as they say everybody belongs to the nation.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Please wind up.

SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : My suggestion is that the benefits of not increasing the fare upto 50 kms, should be given to the commuters travelling upto 150 kms, because Calcutta Metropolitan town is 540 square miles. Peoples living in these 540 sq. miles cannot afford to live in Calcutta because neither the Government nor anybody can provide accommodation to them. Therefore, this has to be considered.

Regarding ticketless travel, I have found that in 1983-84 61.99 lakh cases were detected and Rs. 10.69 crores were realised as fine. If the ticketless travel could be stopped, either by proper checking or by reorganising or rebuilding "the stations, then, of course, it might have helped the revenue

With regard to the freight rate, it has been mentioned in the Railway Minister's Budget speech that there will be an increase of about 4.4 paise per kg. in respect of grains and pulses from 1st May. It has also been said that there will be a levy of supplementary charge of ten per cent on goods traffic except goods moving up to a distance of 500 kilometres. By virtue of reclassification mentioned in paras 36 and 37 of Annexure V, page 12, the freight rates on foodgrains have been increased by 4.4 paise per kilogram for average distance. But I have gone through the figures and find that since some of these goods, such as pulses, grains, paddy, salt, etc. come from Punjab or from Andhra Pradesh, the distance travelled by them will be about 1,000 kilometres or so. Therefore, the additional cost for bringing these commodities will be about 16.5 per cent. Similarly, if the average distance to be covered is 1,500 kilometres or 2,000 kilometres, the increase will be 16.5 per cent. It will, therefore, be impossible to bring paddy, etc. without realising the increased cost from the customers. This increased will be 16.5 per cent and not 4.4 paise as is mentioned in the Budget Speech.

Now I would like to say something with regard to electrification. As the hon. Railway Minister knows, only one per cent of the total railway track could be electrified during the period 1980-81 to 1983-84. Now that the price of diesel has gone up, we will be in real trouble. Please electrify more and quickly.

13.33 hrs.

[Shri Zainul Basher *in the chair*]

So far as the Metro Railway is concerned, the recommendation of the Railway Reforms Committee was that the project should be finished by 1987-88 by spending Rs. 100 crores every year. In spite of that recommendation, the amount that has been allotted by the Planning Commission or by the Railway Minister is much less, that is, about Rs. 10 crores. I would, therefore, request the hon. Railway Minister to kindly expedite the work. This is a gaping wound in Calcutta which is the largest city in India, with a population of nearly one crore. Only six per cent of the built up area consists of road and the

line is going under an arterial road. We cannot travel on this road because it is completely opened up and is creating obstruction to the traffic. Therefore, this point has also to be considered. Another aspect of the matter is that from Tolly Gauge to Garia, three kilometres of the line will be underground and the remaining five kilometres will be overground. So, the completion of this portion will not cost very much; it will be less than Rs. 100 crores. This portion should, therefore, be completed as quickly as possible. The other two projects which have been recommended and which are on the envial. are Salt Lake to Ramrajatala and Dakshineswar to Thakurpukur. The initial work on these projects, that is, survey, acquisition of land, etc. wherever necessary should be started because otherwise the cost will go up and we shall be lagging behind. People who have to go around Calcutta, are not able to move in these sections easily. Sometimes it takes them one hour to 1½ hour just for travelling two to three kilometres. It is earlier to walk than to travel by car. The buses are overful, the taxis you cannot get and it is now becoming very difficult to move about in the largest city of India.

I have gone through the recommendations of the Railway Reforms Committee says that we are lagging behind, we anticipate that the population will increase vastly and, unless we take advance action, Calcutta will not be able to breathe, what to speak of moving about smoothly and quickly. Only this morning our Prime Minister said, though of course in a different context, that Calcutta must be improved; he was speaking in connection with the foreign tourist traffic.

The whole world has abandoned Calcutta airport, which was the busiest airport, the best airport, the first constructed international airport in India. It is being abandoned internationally, because at the Calcutta airport the conditions are bad. So, Calcutta has to be improved, the first thing that has to be done by the Central Government is to improve the transport system, especially the railway system, and do it fairly quickly.

The original estimated cost for the

metro was Rs. 120 to 140 crores. Now the latest estimate is Rs. 750 crores. If we go on delaying taking a decision and then its implementation, the expenses will go up and it will be found impossible to implement it.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He has taken too much time. He should conclude now.

SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : I will conclude in one minute.

I have got figures from Government publications 91 lakhs is the population of Calcutta, as against 82 lakhs of Bombay, whereas in nearby Patna it is only 8 lakhs. Why do people come to Calcutta? People come to Calcutta for various purposes. It is the gateway to the eastern States. People in search of employment from the rural areas flock to Calcutta.

In this context, I would request the Minister to consider the feasibility of mono rails in Calcutta, though I have not studied it myself. It is difficult to acquire land in Calcutta and it is impossible to build roads or railway lines, because of the existence of so many old houses in narrow lanes. There are so many houses in the 9 km. municipal area. So, the mono rail seems to be the answer for it. When a foreigner gets down at Dum Dum, he can go to South of Park street, maidan side, by mono rails. I had an occasion to use them while I was in Germany. It does not touch the land at all, it moves on ropes. I am not saying that you should immediately start the work. But the Minister may advise the Planning Commission that this is another mode that can be considered.

I was talking of the benefits given to commuters of the 50 km stretch. It should be increased to 150 km and made co-extensive with the monthly ticket.

I was going through the records and I found that intra-city transport is being subsidized by very many States in Europe—in Barcelona, London, Berlin everywhere.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Will he conclude now? He has taken too much time. Many other Members are waiting for their turn.

SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : I am very sorry. But West Bengal is the only State.....

MR. CHAIRMAN : The hon. Minister is aware of the problems of Calcutta, we are all aware of Calcutta's problems.

SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : Rail roko has started only in West Bengal. We are afraid of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN : You have made your point very well. Please conclude.

SHRI BHOLA NATH SEN : I have been waiting for the last three days to get an opportunity to speak.

Well, my request to the Hon. Minister is to consider the point that the intra-city transport is always subsidised. The income from the passengers and freight is always more than the expenditure. Even in the advanced European cities like Barcelona, Helsinki, Berlin, everywhere they have been subsidising the intra-city transport, not inter-city. So, I hope the Hon. Minister will in consider my observations and subsidise commuters travel the city of Calcutta which is about 540 square miles in area.

SHRI VIJAY N. PATIL (Erandol) : I would like first to complement the Hon. Minister for presenting such a good Budget. He deserves complements especially for the concessions given to the Youth and planning for increasing the goods traffic by about 30 million tonnes. Although there has been a reduction in the number of accidents—e.g. in 1981-82 there were 1130 accidents, in 1982-83 there were 797 and in 1983-84, they further came down to 654—he has proposed to increase the contribution to safety fund from Rs. 9 crores to Rs. 27/-crores. He has also kept in mind the application of modern technology in the working of the Railways, but I would like to caution him that while thinking of purchasing computers, especially for co-ordination of the goods movement, there is a need for first increasing the goods traffic. We are not able to increase the speed of the Railways and we are purchasing the computers. Whatever the speed was there for the Super-fast railway earlier, that even has been cut down. We are not able to replace majority of the outdated rail tracks and even for some more years we will have to face this problem of arrears in track renewals. The Railway Reforms Committee has suggested that the introduction of 4,500 tonne heavy railway trains

is not possible. With all this and when there is very slow increase in the goods traffic, I fail to understand the role of the computers in coordinating the goods movement. Moreover we will have to purchase these computers after taking a World Bank loan. While on this we are also to think in another term for applying this technology. My friend, Shri Bhola Nath Sen has also spoke about the electrification of lines. In 1951 we had started with 338 kilometres of electrification lines and by 1984 we could reach only up to 5,000 kilometres. The major amount of electrification lines was done only in the Third Plan period. During that period 1,700 kilometres of lines were electrified. But the pace has been slowed down since then.

The increase in the price of diesel and coal also leaves us with no other alternative but electrification. And if the railways are electrified, the speed of the trains will also increase. The long plan for electrification of the Bombay-Delhi line via Bhopal or via Kota has not yet been done and it seems it will take a long time for completion of this job. I hope the Hon. Minister will devote his attention to this and see that it is completed at the earliest.

Now, I come to the question of steam engines. In the First Plan there were 8,000 steam engines and we have been able to reduce their number to 600. My suggestion is that if we produce more of diesel engines and electrical locomotives, it will be a good conversion and contribute to real modernisation. There is already sufficient capacity in the Chitaranjan plant and in that factory we can produce more diesel locomotives. There also we have to give proper attention.

Lately we see that the growth in the passenger traffic is very stunted and there also I would like to suggest that proper attention should be given to the movement of passenger trains. It is a regular phenomenon that passenger trains run hours and hours late so that the short distance travellers who use these passenger trains find it very difficult and they will try to use other means of transport like buses and trucks and sometimes they travel even on foot between short distance stations.

Lately we have seen that although

accidents have been reduced, a new factor has come into existence leading to accidents. The new factor is that the axle gets heated because of lack of proper lubrication and we find that some bogies are set on fire. It also happens more in the case of goods trains. Also because of less lubrication the axles get bent, because of which there are many cases of derailment. We find that derailment is on the increase day by day and we do not calculate the number of man-hours lost because of derailment, the amount of money indirectly spent because of the late running of trains or sometimes cancellation of trains because of derailment of goods trains. So, here also I would like to request the Minister to see that proper punishment is given to persons who are responsible for such type of smaller accidents and derailment of goods trains and passenger trains.

Regarding the development of States as far as Railways are concerned, different friends from different States have suggested some measures and some lines. I come from Maharashtra and as you all know, 130 years ago the first Railway was started between Boribandar and Thane. It was only a 35-kilometre distance that was covered at that time. But if you see from the time of Independence, you will find that Maharashtra has not got its due share. What I see in the allocation of railway budget for construction of new tracks is that three criteria were adopted. The first criterion is strategic point of view. If there are border States like Rajasthan, U.P. or Punjab, from the defence point of view we plan. The other criterion is that we plan tracks for the movement of coal and minerals. And the third criterion is the home State of the Minister. If the Railway Minister happens to come from some State, that State gets some consideration in the starting of new lines and after he goes, again the construction stops at that. I have seen the same in the case of Prof. Dandavate also and on this side also we find the same things happening and because of that many projects which are taken in hand, the on-going projects, are not completed and new projects are taken up, as for example, the Etawah—Gwalior line, and other projects you have proposed in this Plan. So, I would like to request

that let us have the emphasis on completion of the on-going projects, and in that there is a project, Manmad-Hyderabad conversion of metre gauge into broad gauge. There is the Konkan railway project. I am glad that you have suggested Bombay to Mangalore line. You are going to revise the survey and allocation also. At the same time, as the Railway Reforms Committee suggested, in high density areas, you have to double the track. I suggest one more line for Surat-Bushaval which falls en-route Ahmedabad-Bangalore, Ahmedabad-Calcutta and Ahmedabad-Hyderabad. As far as Maharashtra is concerned, there are so many Railways which run passenger trains and goods trains in this State. But as I have mentioned earlier, since independence, excepting the Bombay Metropolitan Railways, Maharashtra has not received allocations for construction of new lines. We have not addeven 35 miles of railway line, to what was first laid 130 years ago. So, for the State of Maharashtra, we request the hon. Minister to look into the matter of construction of new lines.

Of course, the overall addition of track is very limited. It is not up to the expectation. We situated with 53,596 kms. railway track in 1951 and now we have reached 61,460 kms. in 1984. Our investment in the Railways has increased 10 times from Rs. 85,552 millions to Rs. 88,822 millions that is about 10 times we have increased the investment. Our Plan allocation has also grown from Rs. 217 crores in 1951 to Rs. 5,100 crores in 1981, i.e. 25 times. But if you compare the figure of passengers travelling, it has only increased three times. That is, from 1,284 million passengers who were travelling in 1951, it has come to 3,300 and odd million passengers travelling today. We have to find out the reasons for this growth. We have moved 93 million tonnes of goods in the First Five Year Plan. Now, we have come to 237 million tonnes of goods traffic in the year 1984. You are proposing to increase it by 13 million tonnes. If we fall short in achieving this target, we only blame the strikes in coal mines or breaches in communication and other factors. But I would request the hon. Railway Minister to have co-ordination between the various Ministries. We should have co-ordination between the Coal Ministry and the Railway

Ministry. There should be co-ordination between the Communication Ministry and the Railway Ministry. Then only, we can minimise the cost and increase the efficiency. Men like Shri Bansi Lalji who has got the experience of handling the State affairs, bringing co-ordination between various Ministers as the then Chief Minister of Haryana, would improve matters a lot in this regard. I am sure he will be able to bring in a co-ordination between different Ministries at the Centre.

At the same time, I also want to suggest that there should be good co-ordination between the States and the Centre for the construction of new lines and if some proposals are taken with the help of the States, wherever the State may come forward by giving free land, by providing earth embankment under Employment Guarantee Scheme for the employment of labour there and provision of metal, if new lines are taken, that would be very good. I would request the Minister to consider these things.

Our Railways are the fourth largest in the world and largest in Asia. But the concept of; mono rail or running at a speed of 250 kms. and above is still a dream. Our Railway Budget is the Budget of rehabilitation and consolidation. I hope, with the bold decision of Bansi Lalji and guidance from the young Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, within 10 years, let us have a Budget of development and march-forward instead of a Budget of rehabilitation and consolidation.

With these words, I support the Budget prepared and presented by the hon. Railway Minister.

SHRI V. KISHORE CHANDRA S. DEO (Parvathi Puram) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, as I rise to speak on the Railway Budget we are almost at the end of the debate. I would not like to repeat what other hon. Members have said during the last two days. I would like to stress only on a few aspects which I hope the hon. Minister and his Ministry will take note of.

I would like to mention that this Railway Budget has imposed the highest hike in recent times as far as freight and passenger traffic is concerned. The in-

crease in freight is bound to have its repercussions on the common man because this will directly affect the prices of even essential commodities. While increasing the fares, the hon. Minister has given an exemption upto 50 km. for Second Class passengers. But the season ticket fares have been increased simultaneously. So, I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that those who hold season tickets are the ones who normally commute between 50 km. or may be less. So, the exemption which has been given for passengers upto 50 km. will not be enjoyed by many genuine travellers. This is a short distance which is normally covered by season ticket holders. I would, therefore, like to appeal to him to remove the hike in season tickets and increase the exemption from 50 km. to 150 km. or 160 km. or 100 miles.

The hon. Minister has projected an increase in the movement of both passenger and freight traffic during the next few years. Along with this, I hope, the maintenance of tracks which have been in bad condition will be undertaken by the Railways on a war footing. There was a proposal by the Railways to replace wooden sleepers specially in certain areas where the soil is weak by concrete sleepers and also by having welded fish plates instead of the present ones which are fitted with nuts and bolts, I would also like the Railways to introduce automatic safety signalling system at least at important junctions. I earnestly hope that the Railway Ministry will take these matters seriously and step up their activities in order to keep its pace with an increase in the traffic movements that are expected.

The Railways is the largest public undertaking in our country. I am one who personally feels that computerisation is something which is absolutely necessary specially in the railways sector. If one has to look at things with a slight foresightedness, I personally feel that computerisation will in the long run only facilitate and improve the freight and the passenger movements. There is a lot of confusion due to lack of coordination, due to time gap and due long distances. It is high time that we go in for computers now. This has been done in several other countries. Even we are going in for computers in various other

fields. I think, the Railways should give top priority to computerisation in the Railways and I hope, the Home Minister will take steps to see that at least in a phased manner the computerisation is undertaken by the Railways to regularise both freight and passengers movements.

While talking about new railway lines, the hon. Minister in his Budget Speech has mentioned that due to the constraints in finances it may not be possible to take up new railway lines. But however he had also stated that the lines which are already in progress will be given priority and these will be undertaken expeditiously. I would like to mention that there was one railway line from Koraput to Rayagadha, The hon. Minister had mentioned in this speech that Koraput-Machigida station will be taken up in the coming year.

I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that initially two surveys were undertaken. One was for a direct line from Koraput to Rayagadha and another was for a line from Koraput to Rayagadha via Parvathipuram. The line via Parvathipuram is actually 85 km. shorter in distance and would have obviously cost less for the Railways. But due to unknown reasons, although I had several times represented this matter to previous Ministers holding the portfolio of Railways, it was given a go-by and the Railways ultimately took a decision to have a direct line from Koraput to Rayagadha. The reason which I was given for non-feasibility of a shorter line was that the ruling gradients were not favourable. The line from Rayagadha has 1/100 gradient while the shorter route from Rayagadha would have 1/80 gradient. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Minister that 1/80 gradient is not a falling gradient. Already, on the Kurandol line, gradients of 1/60 and 1/40 exist. There is not much difference between 1/80 and 1/100 gradient of 1/80 would at best apply to short stretch of only 2 km. on the shorter route.

14.00 hrs.

The line will have to go via Machliguda and for both routes it will be common up to Machliguda. I request the hon. Minister earnestly and sincerely to re-examine the proposal of this new railway line and to see

Machliguda Via Parvatipuram because Parvatipuram-Raigarh line already exists. This line is mainly used for freight movement. It is mainly to cater to Nelco and to other industries that are coming up in that area. 85 MK is quite a long stretch. Ultimately it will be a loss, the Government will have to bear this extra freight cost, for all time. There are other constraints like diesel and coal which can be saved by shorter routes I hope that the hon. Minister would get this proposition re-examined and then restore this old line which was originally surveyed and also about to be sanctioned from Koraput to Raigarh Via Parvatipuram rather than the present line which is much longer. This new line also goes through forests. While the shorter this line would open up certain tribal areas in both Orissa and Andhra Pradesh to railway traffic. This is an aspect which I had represented as early as 1978 and Prof. Madhu Dandavate had got the route surveyed. I had been continuously bringing this to the notice of the Government. I had given various representations in the Railway Consultative Committee. I am not convinced with the replies that I have got and I hope that the hon. Minister will give me an assurance on this.

Apart from that, safety is one thing which has been haunting Indian railways, the safety of passengers and certain lines. As the hon. Minister knows, there are certain priority routes and certain routes which are actually given the go-by in practical terms. I hope the hon. Minister will take necessary steps and also personal interest to see that not only these main lines, the trunk lines, the priority lines but also the other several interior lines, the backward areas are given priority and that measures are taken to see that there is passenger safety in these lines even though they are less important and they may not be fetching larger revenue to the Government.

This is all I want to say. Other matters have been mentioned by the earlier Members. I hope that the hon. Minister who is very dynamic and practical will also give a specific direction to the railways and see that it progresses to provide the necessary infra-structure for the country development and, progress.

[*Translation*]

SHRI KEYUR BHUSAN (Raipur) :
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Railway Budget and would like to express my views on it.

Each hon. Member who has spoken has felt that the Minister of Railways has adopted a constructive approach and there is unanimity about it among the ruling party Members and the Opposition. I congratulate him for this. The reason is that till now, due attention had not been paid to the backward State of Madhya Pradesh where there is pre-dominance of Harijans and Adivasis. As this State is located in the middle of the country, only those railway lines passed through it which were essential, but it is for the first time that provision has been made in this budget for certain backward areas of this State. Besides, improvement has also been made in Chhatisgarh Express, which was a neglected train. Earlier this Express train was run by using old and rejected rolling stock. The appearance of this Express train now conforms to its name. I congratulate you because the trains pass through my constituency.

I would also like to draw your attention to the increase in fares and freight. If this increase serves your purpose, then everybody in the Lok Sabha as well as outside will support it. If the proposed increase in fares and freight is intended to be used for the development of the Railways, and if the revenue is used properly then I feel the entire complexion of the Railways and the Railway Department will transform. But the situation so far has been just the reverse of it.

During the last budget the realisation of revenue had been less than the envisaged. You will have to look into the reasons therefor. There is increase in the traffic but according to your figures there has not been any consequent increase in revenue. You must look into the reasons as to why it is so. Now, if revenue is realised as anticipated in the budget and it is utilised for the items for which it is earmarked, there can be tremendous improvement in the Railways.

I would like to draw your attention to the present state of affairs in the Railways.

You try to improve its management. There has been some improvement particularly in punctuality of trains. But there is still much to be done in this regard.

The people do not take the Railways seriously anymore. Twenty years ago people used to correct their watches with the timings of the trains. For the labourers in villages, trains used to serve as a clock. With the arrival of a train they used to know how much of duty they have done. But now the situation is quite different. Now people take it for granted that the train would be late by two to four hours and if perchance the train is in time they are not able to catch it. You will have to correct this image of the Railways in the minds of passengers by restoring punctuality.

There is arrangement for breakfast, lunch, milk and tea in the trains. There was a time when people used to prefer meals in the trains to their own food, because they expected better stuff there. But today the situation is quite different. You don't get Milk in the trains these days and if at all it is provided the mother things twice before giving it to the children, lest they should fall ill. People used to go to the Railway Station to get good tea and milk but now people are afraid of buying eddibles from the Railways lest they fall sick. You will have to change this situation. When you are levying taxes on the common man you will have to provide them better facilities.

I would like to tell you that you are providing minimum facilities to the class you are representing. People travelling by passenger trains belong to weaker sections and therefore kindly provide them more facilities. The increase made in the passenger train fares should be withdrawn completely because only such people travel by it who have no other facility. The travellers of passenger trains should be provided the same facilities as one given in other trains. In the passenger trains, passengers are left to their fate. The condition of toilet is so bad that no gentleman would like to use it. There is no provision of water and electricity there. The seats are not in a proper condition. There is also first class Compartment in the passenger train but the condition of seats there also is unsatisfactory. It is my

submission that it is the Common man who travels in passenger trains whose facilities, should also be taken care of and the increase in the fares should be withdrawn.

The Railways should not be run with profit motive. Similarly, several other departments are also not being run on profit basis, such as education and health services. This service is for the weaker section so this should not be run on profit or loss basis rather it should be run with a view to give more facilities to the people.

Now I want to draw your attention towards backward areas. I represent the backward area. Chhatisgarh is a backward region with which you have also been connected. You have some affection for that region so I want to say something about it. Firstly, there is an industrial belt and secondly the area known as Bastar a backward area inhabited by tribals. The area abounds in minerals. There are deposits of iron. Baladilla project and Bhillai are situated there. Both of them should be connected. This will result in the development of the area. Similarly the other area is Chotta Nagpur of Bihar where there are Coal deposits. It should also be connected with Chhattisgarh. By taking this step, the development of this area can be ensured. Sambhalpur is a backward area of Orissa. It should also be connected with Chhattisgarh. All these areas abound in minerals and forests. The transport problem is acute there. By connecting these places, the development of the area can be ensured. Besides, the Railways will earn revenue on account of minerals and forests wealth.

You should also give due attention to the workers of the Railway department. What powers you have given to the guards who have been posted for security purposes? They have to take the help of the Police. The security guards should be given enough powers to enable them to detect thefts in their areas and to bring one culprits to book. Similarly, the Central Government employees working in central services in the States do not enjoy the facilities provided by the concerned State. For example, if employees belonging to scheduled castes and scheduled tribes working in the Railway department are posted in Madhya Pradesh, they are deprived the facilities

provided by the State Government. This should paid due attention so that the employees are not deprived of the facilities.

Lastly, I will draw your attention to a recent incident of fire in a train. Most of the passengers who lost their lives in this fire belonged to my area. A marriage party had arrived in my area Raipur. The bride was going to her in-laws for the first time with great expectations. But 23 persons out of the whole marriage party consisting of 26 persons died on spot. Besides, those labourers also perished who were travelling to earn their livelihood. You might be knowing that the people of Chhatisgarh go outside for earning their livelihood. Whenever the issue of bonded labourers is discussed, this area receives maximum coverage; those bonded labourers were also killed in the fire. It seems that an enquiry into the causes of the fire is going to be held. But what has become known seems to be very pathetic. It is understood that the short-circuiting caused the fire or the fire was caused by the burning coal and everything was reduced to ashes. You should ensure that such tragedy does not recur. I think the improper maintenance is the cause of it. In case the bolts comes out, there is nobody to check it. There is a wagon repair factory in Raipur. You propose to set up wagon repair factories at other places also. Only a few wagons are turned out in Raipur. You can expand it. Raipur falls in the centre, so its expansion will benefit the whole country. There is no dearth of land there. It can be developed fully. You should pay attention to backward areas. The incomplete project should be completed expeditiously. Raipur is divided into two parts. A railway bridge is lying incomplete there. It was ten years back that the work on it was started. That area was known as Telghaninaka but now it is known as place of ghosts. The accidents take place there quite often. Some days back, two deaths took place there as two persons ended their lives by throwing themselves before the trains. So its name is being linked with ghosts. This bridge should be completed expeditiously. The incomplete works should be completed without delay. With these words I support the budget.

[English]

DR. A.K. PATEL (Mehsana) : Mr. Chairman, I am thankful to you for giving me this opportunity of expressing my views on the Railway Budget which the hon. Railway Minister has presented to this House. Sir, the hon. Minister has proposed the rise in freight and fare rates which will finally affect the poor masses in the country. I fear that under the pretext of rise in diesel rates, which was proposed in the General Budget, there may further be rise in the freight and fare rates. I request the hon. Minister to give an assurance that there will not be any further rise in freight and fare rates in the name of the increase in the rates of diesel. Actually, there was no necessity to increase these rates. There would not have been any need to take this step had they practised economy in operation and also fuller utilisation of the capacity. There appears to be an alarming increase in the percentage of electric and diesel locomotive lying idle in the workshops. On page 37 of the Annual Report of 1983-84, it has been mentioned that 24% of broad-gauge electric locomotives remained idle and about 14% of the diesel locomotives remained idle. The percentage in respect of diesel locomotive lying idle is not small. If you improve upon the performance of the two types of the rolling stock, you will be able to decrease the expenditure both on diesel and electric engines considerably. I have a suspicion that there is a conspiracy to retain steam engines unnecessarily because, first it ensures demand for high positions of the mechanical people on the Railways and second, there is every danger of large-scale pilferage of coal from the Loco Sheds. We want an assurance that the hon. Minister would take steps to stop the malpractice of pilferage of coal and even of diesel. On these two items you can save crores of rupees every year if you take stringent measures in plugging the pilferage of coal and diesel.

Your officers will tell you that there is an actual shortage of passenger coaches. You please also ask them why these passenger trains are kept idle at terminals for a very long time. I would cite an example. At Bombay VT station, the train Bombay-Ferozpur Mail, that is Punjab Mail, is detained for more than 28 hours. Why

don't you better utilise the passengers racks and provide more rolling time for the rolling stock giving facility to passengers.

I would also request you to treat the railway passengers as your customers and not as your servants. They are the pay masters. There is total absence of any customer service by the railways. If you go on increasing the freight and fares every year and this state of affairs does not improve, I warn you that the peoples would not longer tolerate this.

The Railway Reforms Committees has strongly pleased for broadgauge line from Delhi to Ahmedabad. Why has no money been provided in the budget this year for this expansion? In fact, this time no money has been provided for development of railways in Gujarat State. Why this step-motherly treatment for Gujarat? In fact, Gujarat pays maximum taxation and contributes a lot in terms of freight and fare to railways.

14-20 hrs.

[Mr. Deputy Speaker in the Chair]

A number of accidents have occurred during the last one month. Special care need to be paid to prevent these accidents.

I would also like to mention that a number of trains have been following a very old time-table. This needs to be revised. I would cite an example. The distance from Ahmedabad to Vijapur in Gujarat is 75 kms., and train takes almost five hours to cover that. For the last several years, railways passengers' associations have been writing to the Railways, but no notice has been taken of that. May I expect some response?

Then, cities like Ahmedabad should be provided with suburban railways. The peoples are faced with a lot of difficulties because of increased population. A suburban railway would take care of that to a large extent.

A word about unhygienic conditions in the railways. The stalls provided at the stations are in a State far from hygienic conditions. Railways must take care to

provide unpolluted drinking water to the passengers. In the end, I would request the hon. Minister to think about these points seriously, provide more facilities to the passengers and obtain better utilization of electric and diesel loss, passenger train makes and wagons.

[Translation]

*SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, I stand to support this Budget. Our Railway Minister is a very experienced administrator and I am sure that he will be able to steer the railways towards greater progress. It is true that the Railway Budget does not contain any new project. Of course, it is a meaningless exercise if new schemes are taken up without completing the ongoing ones. That is why he has decided to complete the ongoing projects within the resources available. The allocation for 1985-86 clearly bears out this fact. The allocation for this year is only Rs. 1650 crores which is the same as of last year. We can see that constraint of resources is the main reason behind it. However, this situation must change. Many States in our country have not been developed to the extent necessary. This is the reason why regional imbalance is growing. Railway is not merely a commercial undertaking. The biggest public undertaking in the country, i.e., the railways has certain social responsibilities to fulfil. If these responsibilities are ignored that will lead to disintegration of the country.

So far as the increase in passenger fares and freight is concerned I must say that this will adversely effect the long distance passengers as well as the consumers of essential commodities who are living in far off places. A person who travels from New Delhi to Trivandrum in 2nd class has to pay Rs. 20 more as a result of increase in the fare. This is rather a heavy burdom, Therefore, I would request the hon. Minister to reconsider this increase. Similarly, freight rates have been raised 10% which will push up the prices of essential commodities. When the Railway Minister levies 4 paise on kilo of rice the consumer will have to pay 40 paise. This being the experlenced of the common man I would request the Minister to exempt the essential commodities, from the increased freight charges.

*The speech was originally delivered in Malayalam.

I refer to regional imbalance earlier. In this context I can't help drawing the attention of the Minister of the general feeling in Kerala that it is being neglected in the matter of railway development. During the last two decades not a single new line could be completed in Kerala. There was a proposal for the construction of the coastal railway between Ernakulam and Alleppy. Of course, some amount has been provided in this year's budget but I want the hon. Minister to provide adequate funds for the completion of this Railway line. Similarly, there has been a demand for the construction of the Kuttippuram-Guruvayur railway line. Shri Kamalpathi, Tripathi the then Railway Minister had assured that this line would be constructed. A survey was conducted but nothing further has happened. If this line is constructed it will help lakhs of pilgrims who visit the famous Guruvayur temple. Therefore, I would request the Railway Minister to include this line at least in next year's budget.

Another proposal for the construction of a new line is the Madurai-Palani line. This line if constructed, would link famous temples in Kerala like Guruvayur, Paramakvu, Tiruvamb-Adi etc. with the important temples in Tamilnad. This would also serve the areas like Kollengodt Altur, Trichur etc. So far no decision has been taken in this respect. I want the hon. Minister to order a survey of this line.

Sir, Kerala is a State where the problem of unemployment among educated youth is very acute. Employment opportunities are very scarce in that State. Railway can solve this problem to some extent if some investment is made there. There was a request from Kerala for setting up a railway coach factory there. The neighbouring States have more than one railway undertaking whereas Kerala has none. Kerala contributes substantially to the railways revenues but it has not received adequate attention from the railways. The Government has taken a decision to set up a coach factory and a Committee was appointed to examine the probable sites for this factory. The Committee has been of the opinion that Palghat is a very suitable place for this purpose. A final decision in this regard has not been taken and I would request Shri Bansi Lalji to set up this factory in Palghat itself.

I now come to the question of electrification of railway lines in Kerala. Kerala in fact supplies electricity to the neighbouring States where electrification has made some progress. But not a single line in Kerala has been electrified so far. Requests after requests have come from the Government of Kerala for electrification. In fact the State Government has promised to bear 50% of the power charges but I really fail to understand why no decision has been taken in this regard. The Budget provides for electrification on trunk routes only. I would request the Minister to undertake measures to electrify the lines in Kerala in the 7th Plan.

Finally, I must say a word about the condition of the coaches in the trains running in Kerala. Most of these coaches are old and dilapidated. These coaches should be replaced by new coaches and more amenities like drinking water, lighting etc. should be provided. Before I conclude I want to bring to the notice of hon. Minister the need for introducing an AC coach in the Parasuram Express which runs from one end of Kerala to the other. A large number of tourists travel by this train and AC coach will attract more tourists and thus will help the railways earn more revenue. Therefore Parasuram Express should be provided with an AC coach.

I hope the hon. Minister will consider favourably the points which I have raised. I conclude by supporting the budget once again.

SHRI CHITTA MAHATA (Purulia) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I want to say a few words about the Railway Budget presented by the Railway Minister Shri Bansi Lal. After getting unprecedented mandate in the Lok Sabha elections, the Railway Minister has reciprocated the gesture shown by the Common man by enhancing railway fares and freights! It is the second steep hike in the history of Railways. The earlier increase was 15 percent and now the fares have been increased by 12.5 percent and the freight by 10 percent.

The Railway Minister has stated that a revenue of Rs. 153 crores and Rs. 342 crores will accrue from passenger fares and freight respectively. In this way the Railways will earn a total revenue of Rs. 495 crores. Had the steps been taken to eliminate

pilferage and corruption in the Railways, these would not have been any need to increase the freight to such an extent. The common man would not have been burdened. The increase in the freight would result in the enhancement of cost of transportation. The burden will fall on consumers. This shows that the financial position of the Railways is getting worse day-by-day. This year is being celebrated as International Year of the Youth. The Railway Minister, Shri Bansi Lal has provided facility to the youth but he has treated the youth like a trader. The trader enhances the rate of merchandise and gives reduction at the time of sale e.g., they give 15 or 20 percent discount for purchasing goods worth Rs. 100. Similarly, Bansi Lalji has enhanced the train fares and given excursion facility to the youth. But a condition has been attached to it that for availing of this facility a group of ten persons must travel together and the distance should not be less than 1,000 kilometers. I will urge upon the Railway Minister to reduce the number and also the minimum limit of 1,000 kilometers.

The former Railway Minister, while presenting the last year's budget, had said that his motto was safety, security and punctuality. But the past year was marked with railway accidents. The incidents of loot and dacoities continue. Regarding punctuality, the less said the better. The Rajdhani Express always runs late resulting in the inconvenience to the passengers.

Now, I come to West Bengal. The Railway Minister has meted out step-motherly treatment to West Bengal. The Railway Minister had given assurance that the ongoing projects will continue. But surprisingly there is no mention of projects in the railway budget. The Chief Minister of West Bengal, Shri Jyoti Basu had sent some proposals on the recommendations of the State Government such as railway line from Eklaklin to Belurghat and New Jalpaiguri to Siliguri, Ring Railway etc. But ~~take~~ the case of Ring Railway this year the allocation has been reduced to 50 percent. Only Rs. 4 crores 80 lakhs have been allocated.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, my constituency is Purulia area of West Bengal. It is mostly inhabited by adivasis, harijans and people of backward classes. The former Railway Minister Shri Kedar Pandey

had given an assurance that the line from Purulia to Kotshilla will be converted from narrow gauge to broad gauge. But no provision has been made in the budget for it.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Already, we have taken more than ten hours for discussion. The time allotted was only ten hours. After the Minister's reply, we are going to discuss another item on Railways. At that time, the members, who have given their names, can continue and speak regarding Railways. Therefore, due to lack of time, I cannot call other members to speak now. Now, I shall request the Minister to reply to the debate.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANSILAL) : Sir, I am very grateful to the Hon'ble Members of this House for the keen interest they have shown in the discussions on the Railway Budget and for the valuable suggestions they have made. Their suggestions have been noted for examination and further action. It may not be possible for me to cover each and every point raised, for want of time. I shall try to cover some of the more important issues raised.

The railways provide basic the infrastructure for the growth of the economy. The beneficial effects of good performance by other sectors of the economy will get diminished if the Railways do not provide the necessary support. Hence it is very essential that the railway system is maintained in finefettle, both physically and financially.

Opening the debate Shri Bhattam Sreeram raised a very fundamental question of why there is a separate Railway Budget and what special purpose is served by this arrangement. As Shri Sreeramamurthy may be aware, the Railway Finances were separated from the General Finances by a Resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly in 1924. The separation of the Railway Finances from the General Finances was made generally with an idea of introducing a system of finance which, while maintaining un-impaired the centre of the Parliament on Railway Finances and while ensuring to General Finances a fair return

on the money invested by the Government, would at the same time be more suited to the needs of a vast commercial undertaking. The most notable features of the "Separation Convention" are firstly the fixation of a definite annual contribution from the Railways to the General Revenues and secondly the establishment of Depreciation and other Reserve Funds. It was expected that the arrangement would introduce the necessary flexibility in the administration of Railway Finances so essential in the case of an undertaking of a commercial nature. This arrangement has been generally approved by the later Railway Convention Committees of Parliament with modifications in the method of calculating dividend and reliefs as was found necessary. These considerations still hold good and I am of the view that it would not be in the interest of the General Finances as well as the Railway Finances to merge the Railway Budget again with the General Budget.

There is a near unanimous view held in the House that the Plan allocation for the Railways in 1985-86 is inadequate. I am able to appreciate the Hon'ble Members' anxiety to speed the pace of completion of on-going works as also of track renewals and other replacements, not to speak of taking up new lines in different States. While noting their sentiments in this regard, I would like to draw attention to what I had stated in the Budget Speech, viz, that I am seeking adequate outlay in the Seventh Plan on essential schemes that cannot be postponed. In the meantime, in 1985-86, due to severe scarcity of resources, we have live within the limits of finances allotted to the Railways.

As Hon. Members are aware, the Plan outlay on the Railway consists of two components namely the budgetary support given by the General Revenues and the internal resources generated by the Railways. As I have already mentioned, even though the Plan allocation for the year 1985-86 is at the same level as in the current financial year, the component of Plan outlay financed from internal resources has gone up to Rs. 950 crores and correspondingly the component of the budgetary support received from the General Revenues has come down. The budgetary support is used to finance works such as new lines,

electrification, doublings, gauge conversions, metropolitan transport projects and other new items of work. With the reduction in this component in 1985-86, the financing of such works has been affected to that extent.

In this context, I note that Professor Dandavate referred to what he considers as the unproductive use of scarce resources by comparing the Plan head-wise allocations made in 1985-86 with those in 1984-85. He referred particularly to the reduction in allocations under 'New Lines', 'Gauge Conversions', 'Rolling Stock', and 'Signal and Telecommunication'. As I have already mentioned in my Budget Speech, the total allocation for 1985-86 is at the same level as for 1984-85. In drawing up priorities, I had to give importance to 'Track-Renewals' and 'Electrification' and consequently it became absolutely necessary to review and reduce the allocations under other heads.

While making such reductions great care has been taken to see that even with the reduced level of allocations, the distribution between works is done in a judicious manner so that project oriented lines, strategic lines, works in an advanced stage of progress, etc., are not very adversely affected. Besides, minimum production programmes in the various production units of the Railways like Chittaranjan Locomotive Works Diesel Locomotive Works and Integral Coach Factory had to be provided for, in order to enable large traffic envisaged in 1985-86, to be carried. I quite appreciate that with additional allotments, track renewals could have been stepped up further. So also is the case with electrification, and several other important Plan heads.

Shrimati Jayanti Patnaik and S/Shri G.L. Dogra, R.S. Yadav, Basudev Acharya, Prof. Prashar, Narain Choubey, P.R. Das Munshi, Dighe and other hon. Members had expressed unhappiness over the low allotments made in respect of some of the railway projects in their States. I would like to assure the hon. Members that the allotments to the various projects have been decided upon following the guidelines indicated in my Budget speech. The overall constraint of resources has been such that we have been forced to make token allotment to many projects, some of these

pending clearance from the Planning Commission. We have necessarily to be guided in such matters by the Planning Commission who take an overall view of the transport requirements and development of the country.

Some projects in West Bengal come under this category, where Planning Commission's approval is awaited.

Some Members have expressed unhappiness at the shortfall in achieving targets in the Sixth Plan particularly in regard to track renewals, electrification, new lines, etc. As the hon. Members are aware the original outlay in the Sixth Plan for the Railways was Rs. 5100 crores. It is now expected that the outlay during the Plan period would end with about Rs. 6572 crores. In spite of utilisation of allotted monetary resources fully, there have been shortfalls in physical achievements in some areas, mainly because of rise in prices as was the case with rails and other track components.

Shri Banatwala was extremely critical of the performance of the Railways pointing out that it hardly showed any growth as compared to the performance of 1976-77. It may be recalled that the Railways after achieving a target of loading 212.6 million tonnes of revenue-earning goods in that year crashed down to 193.1 million tonnes in 1979-80. It was only in 1980-81 that the recovery began when the new Government came into power. As Members will appreciate, it takes time to effect recoveries once a system has slid backwards. Nevertheless there were remarkable increases in the subsequent years.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur) : Do not consider the movement of traffic in terms of million tonnes, but consider it in terms of tonne kilometres. In tonne kilometres 1977-78 performance was the record performance. That had been stated in the bonus agreement signed with the employees.

SHRI BANSI LAL : But what happened in 1979-80 ?

In 1984-85 we hope to achieve a loading figure of 237 million tonnes in goods traffic which is 21 per cent more than the level achieved in 1980-81. This, to my mind,

is a good achievement. In passenger kilometres also there is an appreciable increase.

The achievements in regard to opening of new lines, gauge conversion, doubling electrification, track renewals, acquisition of rolling stock, and introduction of new trains have been enumerated in my Budget speech as also in my predecessor's Budget speech while presenting the Budget for the year 1984-85. These are no mean achievements considering the allocation made to the Railways and also the fact that nearly 50 per cent of the Sixth Plan outlay which works out to more than Rs. 3000 crores, are met out of internal resources generated by the Railways.

In addition, the Railways are paying dividend to the General Revenue to the extent of about Rs. 1,580 crores during the Plan period. I am sure, Shri Banatwala would appreciate all this.

I am quite aware of the fact that we have still a long way to go in the matter of providing adequate amenities to passengers. Improvements to existing amenities and provision of additional amenities, such as, provision of waiting rooms, retiring rooms, refreshment rooms, water supply arrangements, etc, are carried out on a programmed basis in accordance with the availability of funds. This is a continuous process. Railways have been spending annually about Rs. five crores on the provision of such amenities. Even though there has been no increase in the total Plan outlay for 1985-86, the allocation for passenger amenities has been increased from Rs. five crores to Rs. six crores. I have noted the feelings of the Members in regard to improvements in passenger amenities. It shall be our constant endeavour to see that more and better amenities are provided.

Shri Manvendra Singh referred to the unsatisfactory state of railway catering. Railways are constantly striving to improve the standard of catering services, including the quality of food. Steps taken in this direction include preparation of meals under hygienic conditions in the base kitchen equipped with modern gadgets, intensive checks of catering units, procurement of food ingredients through standard stores, training of staff, etc.

Shri Tapeswar Singh referred to an important point regarding provision of suitable protection to Railway staff and officers, who have to deal with anti-social elements. I shall have this looked into.

Shrimati Krishna Sabi, referring to the conversion on the Katihar—Barauni Section, stated that there were no additional services being run on these sections and that the Assam Mail was being terminated at Barauni even after the conversion.

For lack of adequate coaches and also line capacity on the route, it may not be possible to accede to these requests immediately. However, as soon as the position improves, the feasibility of introducing more trains and extending the Assam Mail will be taken up.

I am very grateful to the hon. Members for their suggestions regarding safety measures. As a matter of policy, Railways are laying only hot-welded rails or long-welded rails wherever renewals are being carried out. Up to 31.3.1984, about 43,000 kilometres of track have been laid with welded rails. More and more welded rails are being laid every year.

Railways have been manning hazardous level crossing at their own cost. In 1982, additional 1,600 hazardous level crossing were identified for manning in a phased manner and the Railways undertook to man 1,200 level crossings at their own cost. Of these, 500 level crossings have already been manned.

Due to inadvertent clearance of signals without physical verification of the reception lines, serious accidents can take place. It was, therefore, decided that as safety aid, provision of track circuits on the run-through lines should be progressively provided. Out of 2,400 stations, about 1,950 stations have already been equipped with main line track-circuiting and the remaining stations are proposed to be completed during the next few years.

The work of providing Auxiliary Warning System is in progress in Howrah-Burdwan chord and main line section of Eastern Railway and Churchgate-Virar suburban section of Western Railway. With the introduction of Auxiliary Warning System, the accidents due to driver's passing the

signals in the 'On' position would be controlled.

Some of the hon. Members have suggested that Railways should, by improving efficiency and bringing about economies, be able to keep the expenditure low in the interest of the travelling public. I may assure the hon. Members that we have tried our utmost to restrict working expenses as also to increase earnings. Several economy measures are already in force on the Railways. Creation of new posts, filling up of vacancies, etc. is subject to severe restrictions.

Several innovations have also been made to economise on materials and energy in the railways to make optimal use of their assets—segregation of freight stock, end to end running, closure of intermediate yards, phasing out of steam traction, closure of steam sheds in a big way, introduction of heavier freight and longer passenger trains etc. Constant reviews are undertaken to locate areas where further economy is possible. The accent is on improvement in productivity. There is a pressing need to improve productivity in the context of the new and improved forms of traction, modernisation of workshops and track maintenance etc.

Prof. Dandavate referred to the need for fixation of monthly targets for earnings and closely monitoring them along with expenditure. I may inform the hon. Member that there is already a system of monthly appraisal of performance, both physical and financial, with reference to the budgeted targets, so as to take corrective actions whenever adverse trends are noticed.

Some hon. Members have expressed concern over what they called 'the unprecedented hike in fares and freights.' I had already explained in my budget speech the reasons as to why this became necessary. With the current financial year closing with our inability to pay dividend to the General Revenues to the extent of Rs. 266 crores, I came across a situation where, in spite of the projected increase in passenger and goods traffic to be carried in 1985-86, the rate of growth in earnings was less than that of expenditure. In other words, this meant that the input

costs, which go into the operation of the railways, have risen more steeply. Added to that, I had to provide realistically for depreciation, so that our current replacement needs of important assets, like tracks, bridge, rolling stock, plant and machinery etc. are taken care of. All these would have left the railways in the next financial year with a deficit of Rs. 403 crores at current rates of tariff. A commercial organisation, like the Indian railway system, ought to be healthy, capable of generating sufficient resources to met the cost of operation and to enable it to render satisfactory service to the travelling public. I am aware that raising of fares is not a very pleasant task, but hon. Members will appreciate that there is no option for me.

Even while raising the passenger fares, I have taken care to exempt from the increase, those travelling upto 50 km by second class mail, express or ordinary trains. The distance of 50 km may look small, but I may mention to the hon. Members that the majority of the passengers in the Indian railways travel only upto about 50 kms, and thus, they have been exempted from the levy of the surcharge.

The proposed increase in passenger fares has made it possible for me to allocate a sizable amount to Accident Compensation, Safety and Passenger Amenities Fund, out of which we meet the expenditure on important safety works. This is in conformity with our policy of giving importance to safety.

I quite appreciate the anxiety of the hon. Members in regard to the hike in freight on the essential commodities. As I mentioned in my budget speech, the lowest three classes in the Goods Tariff, namely, classes 65, 70 and 75, have become uneconomical, because of constant escalation in the cost of inputs, thus resulting in sizable losses in their transport. The social burden, which the railways are bearing on account of passenger traffic and carrying low-rated commodities, is increasing year by year. Hence, in order to reduce the gap between the expenditure involved in carrying such commodities and the freight earned, it became absolutely necessary to re-classify them as proposed. As I have already mentioned, even after

this re-classification, the impact of the increase in freight is very marginal, because the element of freight in many items forms a small percentage in the cost of the item itself. The incidence on the price of essential commodities would range from 1.57 paise to 3.7 paise per kg. at a distance of 1,000 km. I hope the hon. Members will appreciate the compulsions which have necessitated re-classification, without unduly burdening the consumer.

I may mention here that the railways carry sizable quantum of parcel traffic, consisting of commodities, which are required in the daily use of the common man, such as milk, vegetables, fish, meat, eggs, medicines, stationery etc. Though the transport of this traffic is resulting in a loss, I have not proposed any increase in the freight rates for the parcel traffic, with a view to avoiding a further burden on the common man.

Some Members have referred to the increase in monthly season ticket fares. Because of the highly concessional nature of the monthly season tickets, Railways have been incurring continuing losses over the years which are as follows :—

1970-71	...	Rs. 12 crores.
1975-76	...	Rs. 24 crores.
1980-81	...	Rs. 34 crores.
1983-84	...	Rs. 70 crores.

As Members will appreciate, this cannot be allowed to continue indefinitely. Several committees which went into this subject have come to the same conclusion that the concessions which the season ticket holders now enjoy cannot be allowed to continue in the present form.

Even after the proposed revision, the season ticket holders will continue to enjoy a substantial concession when compared with passengers on single journey tickets.

While elaborating on the social aspect of the increase in the monthly season ticket fares, Prof. Dandavate had suggested separate legislation for enabling contributions from the employers towards the cost of suburban travel in urban areas. I am told

that RTEC had made a similar recommendation, but after examination in the Board this was dropped in view of practical difficulties anticipated in the implementation of such a recommendation.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE : Why not refer it to the State Governments ?

SHRI BANSI LAL : We will examine that as well.

There have been repeated request from both sides of the House for a reconsideration of the proposed increase in fares and freights. Any reduction in the enhancement proposed would affect adversely the resources position of the Railways. Nevertheless, in deference to the numerous appeals made, I have decided to reduce the proposed levy of surcharge of 'twelve and half per cent on all classes of passenger tickets to ten per cent. I am sure the Hon. Members will appreciate the difficult position the Railways are in and would not press for any further reliefs in the proposed increases. I am not for the present reducing the budget figures of earning and the figures of dividend payable etc. in the hope that the resultant effect on net revenue will be covered by increased earning and reduced working expenses in the coming year.

I once again thank the Hon. Members for the valuable suggestions they have made in the course of the general debate on the Railway Budget 1985-86.

14.58 hrs.

RESOLUTION RE : RAILWAY
CONVENTION COMMITTEE
AND
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS
(RAILWAYS), 1985-86
AND
SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR
GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 1984-85

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The House will not take up the Resolutions regarding constitution of the Railway Convention Committee 1985 discussion and voting on

Demands-for-Grants, Railways, for 1985-86 and Supplementary Demands for Grants, Railways for 1984-85, for which four hours have been allotted.

Hon. Members whose cut motions to the Demands for grants have been circulated may, if they desire to move their cut motions, send slips to the Table within 15 minutes indicating the serial numbers of the cut motions they would like to move. Those cut motions only will be treated as moved.

A list showing the serial numbers of cut motions treated as moved will be put up on the Notice Board shortly. In case any Member finds any discrepancy in the List, he may kindly bring it to the notice of the Officer at the Table without delay.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI BANSI LAL) : I beg to move :

- (i) "That this House do resolve that a Parliamentary Committee consisting of 12 Members of this House, to be nominated by the Speaker, be appointed to review the rate of dividend which is at present payable by the Railway Undertaking to General Revenues as well as other ancillary matters in connection with the Railway Finance *vis-a-vis* the General Finance and make recommendations thereon."
- (ii) "That this House do recommend to Rajya Sabha to agree to associate 6 members from Rajya Sabha with the Parliamentary Committee to review the rate of dividend which is at present payable by the Railway undertaking to General Revenues as well as other ancillary matters in connection with the Railway Finance *vis-a-vis* the General Finance make and recommendations thereon and communicate the names of the members so appointed to this House."

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Motions moved :

"That this House do resolve that a Parliamentary Committee consisting of 12 Members of this House, to be nominated. by the Speaker, be appointed to review the rate of