

MR. CHAIRMAN : We shall now take up the amendments made by the Rajya Sabha. The question is :

"Clause 1

1. That at page 1, for lines 9 to 10 the following be substituted, namely :—

Short Title and Commencement. "1. (1) This Act may be called the Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (Determination of Conditions of Service of Employees) Act, 1988.

(2) It shall be deemed to have come into force on the 2nd day of July, 1988."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"New Clause 4

2. That at page 3, after line 10, the following be inserted, namely :—

Repeal and Saving. "4. (1) The Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (Determination of Conditions of Service of Employees) Ordinance, 1988, is hereby repealed.

(2) Notwithstanding such repeal, anything done or any action taken under the said Ordinance shall be deemed to have been done or taken under the corresponding provisions of this Act."

The motion was adopted.

MR. CHAIRMAN : Now the Minister.

SHRI BRAHMA DUTT : I beg to move :

"That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

MR. CHAIRMAN : The question is :

"That the amendments made by Rajya Sabha in the Bill be agreed to."

The motion was adopted

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS) 1988-89 Contd

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN : We shall now

take up further discussion and voting on the Supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 1988-89.

Mr. Dora has to continue his speech. He is not present. Now Prof. Ranga may speak.

PROF. N. G. RANGA (Guntur) : Sir : May I have your permission to say a few words in support of these Supplementary Demands. We have had a full discussion on the unhappy event that took place not so long ago in Kerala, in which a number of people, scores of them, died suddenly for no fault of theirs. Such railway accidents have taken place in the past, with equally untoward results; and

the present Railway Minister was conscious of his responsibilities so well that he immediately reacted to it by offering his resignation, as a symbolic protest at the mismanagement of the Railways by the railwaymen themselves on the one side, and as an expression of regret on behalf of Government as well as this Parliament. I appreciate the gesture; so did the Prime Minister. Therefore, we have been content that he continues to be our Railway Minister. But what about the actual position in regard to the Railways? What are the steps that the Railway Minister, with the cooperation of the Planning Commission and the Finance Minister taken? Have they so far come forward with their proposals in order to ensure that similar tragedies of such magnitude would not take place in our country? Till now, they have not come forward with any concrete proposals. It is high time that they do apply their minds to this factor and then prepare their plan and assure Parliament as well as the country that all that can be done has come to be done; and what is it that has to be done?

The most important thing is, to safeguard the Permanent way and nobody knows how, to what an extent, the Permanent Way has been neglected. They have not made any definite survey. We would like that survey to be made. From time to time they have been saying, "Yes, yes. It is very necessary." They should see to it that the bridges are properly safeguarded, that the railway track itself is properly strengthened, the sleepers and girders and all those things that are necessary are being renewed and so on. The renewal process itself has not been completed, has not been fully surveyed and reported upon and they have to protect.

Most unfortunately, we are very badly in need of the funds for the extensions of Railways. We do not have enough money. We are also in need of converting the metre gauge into broad gauge. We are not able to take up that.

Should we not at least give priority to the safeguarding of the permanent railway track, and for that, set apart sufficient

funds and if necessary, by borrowing from international sources? Now, I would like the hon. Minister to apply his mind specially to these aspects of this Railways.

Then, I come to another, a small point, we have been asking for the conversion of at least the minimum area, or minimum mileage of metre gauge into broad gauge from Katpadi to Tirupati. For years, we have been asking for it. Till now the hon. Minister has not been able to give any kind of an assurance.

There used to be a railway line from Kakinada to Kotipalli. It was dismantled. It has to be restored. All the rest, the needed minimum equipment is available. The spaces, the railway stations and all the rest are there. Only the gauge or the railway has to be restored. It ought to have been restored long time ago. Many friends from our side, and from all sides also have been asking for it. I would like to reiterate that demand once again.

Sir, in my own Constituency, my hon. friend was good enough to assure the House through his own proposal and also a letter to me that the metre gauge between Guntur and Macherala was being converted into broad gauge. I would like to know how soon and when it would be cleared.

Secondly, there was a railway line, which was being built up from B binagar to Nadikudi. They say that it would be completed within one year, this year I suppose. I do not know the latest position. I hope that too would be completed soon and opened for traffic. It has to be done not only from Bibinagar upto Krishna river but right upto Nadikudi. I would like the Minister to assure us when it is going to be completed.

Lastly, apart from the ordinary railway track, the bridges have to be repaired,

examined and strengthened. We have to assure the country that so far as the bridges are concerned, accidents similar to what happened or even to any extent should not be allowed to take place.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : If our hon. Member Prof. Rangaji would kindly take the trouble to read my reply on the Quilon Railway accident, then most of his doubts would be set at rest. He also would be able to see it a clear evidence that we are giving maximum priority to rehabilitation and for the permanent way.

Sir, I would also like to clarify that we have received a report from the Commissioner of Railways (Safety), in which he has clearly said that in no way the track was to be blamed and the bridge was not involved in that particular accident. However, his valuable views will be certainly taken note of.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura) : Sir, the Minister has come forward with the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways).

During his Budget Speech, he informed that he is going to constitute Railway Freight and Fare Committee to go into all the aspects of freight and fare of the Railways. Earlier there was a committee—Railway Freight Enquiry Committee under the Chairmanship of Paranjpe. The Committee submitted its report in the year 1985 and it has made certain recommendations. We were told that as per the recommendations of that Committee, fare and freight was increased. What are those recommendations? I would like to know whether those recommendations have been implemented.

Sir, he has asked for sanctioning of a project in the Western Railway—i.e. doubling of Bercha, Selavi. Abodia sections.

15.00 hrs.

I want to know when this survey was made and when it was felt that the volume of traffic would increase on this section. If it was surveyed long back and the need

of it was felt long back, then why was it not included in the last Budget? Only a sum of Rs. 1 lakh has been sanctioned for doubling this section. We always object to this sort of approach. Whenever you take up any project, you must finish it within the time schedule. But you sanction first Rs. 1 lakh and then Rs. 1 crore. The total cost is Rs. 22 crores. In this way, this project will remain pending for several years. There are 22 pending projects and to complete all these projects an amount of Rs. 200 crores will be required. Whenever you take up any project, you should try to complete that within the time schedule. Otherwise, there is cost escalation and the project remains pending for years together.

We have RDSO—R & D organisation of the Railways. It was set up 30 years back. But what is this RDSO doing? It is not working on any new technology. For the last 30 years it is only working on the adoption of foreign technology by improving that technology. RDSO should work on developing our own technology. They should not merely confine to adopting foreign technology in our conditions.

You want to purchase CT scan for Varanasi Hospital. It is essential. But what is the condition of railway hospitals, particularly divisional hospitals. There essential and life saving drugs are not available. There are no specialists in the divisional railway hospitals. Their conditions should be improved.

Since 1950-51 the passenger traffic has increased to 178 per cent but the increase in passenger coaches is 126 per cent only. The number of coaches is gradually reducing. In the year 194-85, there were 27,825 passenger coaches, which have now been reduced to 27,664 coaches. The volume of passenger traffic is increasing but the passenger coaches are being reduced and the over-aged coaches, which are to be abandoned, are now being used. Similarly, there is a reduction in the number of wagons also and defective wagons, even over-aged wagons are being used. The Sixth Five-Year Plan was called

[Shri Basudev Acharia]

'Rehabilitation Plan'. Rehabilitation of old and over-aged assets is necessary because one-third of our railway track is sick and is to be replaced. The amount was also increased as per the recommendations of the Railway Reforms Committee. This backlog should be cleared and the over-aged track should be renewed. Track renewal work should be done on war-footing. The over-aged rolling stock should be replaced. Also the bridges which have crossed their life should be reconstructed. Will it be possible to replace all the over-aged track by the end of this century? The tracks are being renewed. Some kilometres of track have become sick and need replacement.

Then, Sir, I come to the locomotives. We have to phase out some locomotives by the end of this century. The twenty-first century will not be able to see steam locomotives on the railway track. Since 1971-72, their production has been stopped. But the pace of electrification is slow. The Sixth Five-Year Plan target was 2,800 kilometres, but only 1,500 kilometres could be electrified. The target for the Seventh Five-Year Plan is 3,400 kilometres. I do not know whether this target can be achieved by the end of the Seventh Five-Year Plan. In the three years of the Seventh Plan on an average about 500 kilometres have been electrified per year. Still we are lagging far behind in the matter of electrification of railway track. Only eleven per cent of our 61,000 kilometres railway track could be electrified.

If we compare ourselves with other countries, we are lagging far behind in the matter of electrification of railway track. In Austria it is 48 per cent, in Belgium it is 32 per cent, in France it is 27 per cent, in Great Britain it is 22 per cent, in Italy it is 48 per cent, in Japan it is 48 per cent, in Sweden it is 62 per cent, in Switzerland it is 99 per cent, in USSR it is 29 per cent but in India it is only 11 per cent. We have to phase out some locomotives. On an average 500 kilometres of railway track is being electrified per year in order to electrify these tracks, that is 61,000 Kms.

you have to spend your foreign exchange. But at the same time, to save these railway tracks, you have to electrify them. This is the cheapest mode of transport, though initially the cost is more, the recurring expenditure is less. In order to save, in order to conserve, the energy, you will have to electrify 61,000 Kms. of railway track, at least 90% of route kilometres. But with this pace of say 500 Kms. per year, imagine how many years it will take to electrify the targeted route length of railway track. You are phasing out the steam locomotives. Although there is scope for improving the efficiency or haulage capacity of the steam locomotives, we are not doing that. We have decided to phase out the steam-locomotives. When all these steam-locomotives will be phased out, when the steam loco-sheds will be closed down, there will be about 22,000 workers—out of job. Though they are called contract workers, they have been doing perennial nature of job. Some have been working for years together, loading of the coal, picking up the coal from the pits, doing the coal handling work, etc. They have been doing the work for years together for 20 or 25 years. The Railways are not taking any responsibility for them. Railways, being the principal employer, have their responsibilities. Where will they go after 20 or 25 years of their service? They belong to Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe community, most of them. Now, they are being thrown out of their job. They will starve.

15.12 hrs.

[SHRI N. VENKATA RATNAM
in the Chair]

Similarly, in regard to casual workers the commitment was given in this very House that they would be absorbed and decasualisation will be done. Till today there are 2,22,000 casual workers in the Railways. How long will they remain as casual workers, although assurance has been given in this very House that they would be regularised?

Now, Sir, you are demanding from them ITI pass certificate. They have

joined the Railways some 15 or 20 years ago. They were appointed as casual workers and now you are demanding from them pass certificate for their absorption. Where will they get these ITI pass certificate from? That means, you don't want to absorb them. You don't want to de-casualise them although the Government had given assurance in this very House that they would be regularised.

Coming to the passenger amenities, over-aged coaches are being used, the number of coaches has been reduced from use and over-crowding has increased. There is over-crowding in every train. It is natural that when there is an increase in the passenger traffic to the extent of 178% and decrease of passenger coaches to 126%, there will be over-crowding. So, Sir, you have to take care of the passenger amenities. You have increased the fare in the last Budget, but these amenities are being deteriorated day by day; over-aged coaches are being used, also coaches without any light or fan or proper sanitary arrangement are being used. And you are increasing the fare day by day!

Sir, an assurance was given by the Minister that all those trains which were withdrawn for army mobilisation in the year 1987 in the month of January, will be restored. No. 397 and 398—Asansol-Puri passenger was introduced 10 years back. It was a very popular train, poor people used to travel by that train, they used to go to Puri in that train. The train was restored, but it was restored from Asansol to Kharagpur and from last May the train from Asansol to Agra was withdrawn. Now it has been converted into Agra-Kharagpur passenger. Instead of increasing the number of passenger trains you are reducing gradually the number of trains.

Varanasi-Tata Express is a Weekly Express. The train was withdrawn in the year 1987, but it was not restored. Connecting Dhanbad with Tatanagar, I do not know how much money is required. There is no direct connection from Dhanbad to Tatanagar though Dhanbad and Tatanagar are important towns—one is a coal town and the other is a steel town. There is even an electrified railway track also.

With a little investment a passenger train can be introduced in this route and it will connect Dhanbad with Tatanagar.

Then conversion of Purulia-Kotshila also requires about Rs. 6 crores. We always get the reply that due to constraints of funds this project cannot be taken up. Only Rs. 6 crores are required for the conversion of this narrow gauge from Purulia to Kotshila. This will connect Purulia with the Bokaro Steel city which will change the economy of the backward tribal concentrated district of West Bengal.

Sir, as he is the Head of the Railway family, I must tell the hon. Minister that there was an agreement with loco running staff in the year 1973 and this was stated in this very House. This was an agreement for reducing their duty hours to 10 hours from signing on to signing off. But they had to wait for 7 long years. When it was not implemented, they had to go on strike. In the year 1981 then went on strike. Hundreds of employees were dismissed and were put behind the bars. Sir, various High Courts and even the Supreme Court have given judgment that inquiry should be made and that they should be allowed to make an appeal. Most of the railway employees have made an appeal but those appeals were not still disposed of. Recently the Calcutta Administrative Tribunal in its judgement quashed both the charge-sheet and the dismissal order imposed against 36 workers of South Eastern Railway and ordered for their reinstatement. But up till now, after 70 days of the judgement which was passed, none of them was reinstated. Railways are now preferring appeal in the Supreme Court. These Administrative Tribunals were constituted for expeditious disposal of cases. In each and every case, if Railways prefer appeal in the Supreme Court, how can those cases be expeditiously disposed of. Already a large number of employees are discharged. Although after the judgement of Gauhati Administrative Tribunal, 32 employees were reinstated in Northern Railway, in South Eastern Railway, the railways are not abiding by the judgement of the Administrative Tribunal and they

[Shri Basudev Acharia]

are preferring appeal in the Supreme Court. I request the hon. Minister that he should consider reinstatement of those employees where Administrative Tribunals have passed and given judgement in favour of reinstatement of those dismissed employees. You should consider those cases sympathetically and reinstate those employees who were compelled to go on strike as the agreement reached with them was not implemented.

So, I request the hon. Minister to consider reinstatement of those employees and not to go to the Supreme Court to delay the disposal of the cases.

[Translation]

SHRI JANAK RAJ GUPTA (Jammu) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands moved by the hon. Minister of Railways. Railway is the biggest, cheapest and most convenient means of transport in our country. I think that the members of opposition find meaning only in opposing and criticizing the Government actions. Whereas I have been traveling by train to various parts of the country and I found that a number of facilities are being provided to the passengers. This improvement urges me to congratulate the hon. Minister. The Government have laid a railway net work and provided adequate facilities to the public. In spite of all this, the State to which I belong viz. Jammu-Kashmir is the most backward State. The residents of this State are deprived of these facilities. It is our bad luck that we are deprived of these amenities. Only 70 km. of the total area in our State is covered by railway track. No other State faces similar situation.

I would like to bring a couple of things to the notice to the hon. Minister Jammu-Kashmir is called heaven in India. Lakhs of tourists go there. About 20 lakh devotees go to Vaishno Devi every year, a large number of devotees pay visit to Amarnath and many go there for rest and recreation but as compared to this railway facilities are quite inadequate. We have repeatedly urged that more facilities can be provided there. The Railway, should

start one more train in the early hours of morning from Delhi which should reach Jammu in the evening and again start from Jammu in the morning and reach Delhi in the evening because at present passengers have to wait for hours and face a lot of inconvenience. I do not understand the difficulties confronting the Railway Department in this regard. I would like to urge the Government to re-consider the matter. It is our long standing demand which would provide great relief to the passengers, if acceded to. The Hon. Prime Minister is anxious to extend the rail facilities to Jammu-Kashmir. The work for laying the railways track upto Udhampur has already started. But the funds allocated to the project are so inadequate that it will not be possible to complete the job even in 15 years. The Government should try to complete it on priority basis. Jammu, which is a winter capital of Jammu and Kashmir, should be given priority and it should become a model station which should serve as an example. Jammu and Kashmir enjoys special importance and the Railway Department is doing good job but I would suggest that there is a need to build a number of fly-overs, rest houses and various other things which require improvement. The Railway Station of Jammu should be improved in order to extend the railway track upto Kashmir. I may suggest that local train should be introduced in Kashmir valley until Jammu is linked with Kashmir through railway line. It is often observed that a large number of people who go there for rest and recreation are stranded for days together because roads are blocked owing to landslides. In the light of these facts I would urge that if the Government extends the railway line through tunnels and if it is done, than it will mitigate the suffering of the people. Local train can easily be run in the plains of Kaji-Kund to Uri. The incidents of land slides cause road blockade. But the train moves smoothly through the tunnel which remains unaffected by landslides. I can assure the hon. Minister in this regard. I hope that the hon. Minister would pay attention towards this matter.

Beautiful paintings of scenic beauty like temples of Maharashtra and other places

are displayed at railway stations as well as coaches. I submit that there are a number of spots of scenic beauty in our State also which can be displayed at railway stations and elsewhere. The display of pictures of holy places like Vaisbno Devi, Amarnath and various other tourist spots would help in attracting the maximum tourists to this backward state and local people will be benefited.

The hon. Minister is very good and efficient person. His staff is also dedicated to the work. I personally suggest to give some encouragement to the staff by granting an additional increment etc. so that they may do their job still more efficiently.

I congratulate the hon. Minister and his staff for working efficiently. They are doing their best to improve the working of railways. I congratulate the Hon. Prime Minister also for the same.

With these words, I support these Demands for Grants.

SHRI VIRDHI CHANDER JAIN (Barmer) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants of Railway Department for the year 1988-89. During the discussion on Railway Budget in the House, I had objected to the increase in the rate a platform ticket to Re. 1.50. I conducted a survey and found that the passengers at the railway stations of Barmer and Jodhpur were against the proposed increase. Its rate should be Re. 1.00 only. People get 50 p. back after purchasing a ticket with great difficulty. The Railway Department is also incurring loss in revenue. I would request you to make it Re. 1.00. I am sure Railways would get more revenue if my request is acceded to.

I had asked a question on 29.8.88 and in reply I got the statistics regarding the cancellation of trains in Jodhpur in the months of June and July. The train No. 97 Jodhpnr-Barmer remained cancelled for 30 days in June and for 19 days in July, the train running from Balotra to Barmer remained cancelled for 13 days in June and for 8 days in July, Balotra-

Pachpatrasalt remained cancelled for 30 days in June and for 31 days in July.

The trains remained cancelled in desert areas like this due to the sand deposits caused by dusty storms. But the situation can be averted if the railway officials and engineers work efficiently. There has never been such an instance in the last 40 years. Officials and engineers work efficiently and the railway track is cleared within hours or maximum in one or two days. But this time, neither bulldozers were arranged in time nor adequate number of labourers were engaged to remove the sand from the railway tracks. Due to the carelessness of the railway officials thousands of passengers had to face a lot of inconvenience and travel by bus. People have criticised me also for taking inadequate measures in this regard. I would like the Government to conduct an impartial enquiry in the matter and take action against the culprits. I have already made a request to solve the problem of Barmer-Balotra and Jodhpur Jaisalmer routes. Permanently through afforestation programme.

Besides, I want to submit that coaches should be increased from 11 to 14 in train running from Barmer to Agra Fort. At present the train is in the worst condition. But recently when I travelled in this train I found certain improvements in the coaches. I am thankful to you for this.

The cause for the damage of coaches is that this train runs as an express train from Barmer to Jaipur and thereafter it is converted into a passenger train, due to which racks though of fine quality, get damaged. I would suggest that this train should be given connection at Jaipur to 'Hawa Mahal' which reaches there at 5.40. 'Hawa Mahal' leaves at 6.00. Being superfast train, it would enable the passengers to reach Agra Fort conveniently and in time. In order to remove the inconvenience to the passengers, the railway authorities should introduce a passenger train between Jaipur and Agra.

I have repeatedly urged the Government for the modernisation of Barmer

[Shri Virdhi Chander Jais]

Balotra and Jaisalmer railway stations. Though some measures have been taken in this regard yet they are not enough. The buildings of railway stations are 50 years old. The platforms are old, sheds and rooms are also old. Since Jaisalmer is an important tourist spot, effective measures should be taken in this regard.

Before concluding, I would like to draw your attention towards one important point. In 'Sonu' area of Jaisalmer district, lime-stone of very fine quality is found, and we supply it to Bokaro and Rourkela steel plants. But due to lack of good transportation facility, a lot of inconvenience is faced in its supply. This job cannot be executed without proper transportation. Line stone is used in the production of steel. The department of Steel have offered to contribute upto 50 per cent of the total cost of the proposed scheme. The Ministry of Defence, Indira Gandhi Canal Department and the Railway Department are likely to contribute their shares. Thus, the Government should take measures to start work on the Bikaner-Jaisalmer and Jaisalmer-Ramgarh scheme formulated by the Department of Steel and Mines with an outlay of Rs. 500 crores. The train running between Pachpadra and Balotra remained suspended for 21 days in the month of July and for all the 30 days during June. It is now more than 7-8 month since the running of this train was suspended. The traders engaged in supplying salt to other parts of the country are facing great inconvenience due to this. This service should be restarted without any further delay. The salt industry has been doing quite well but the material is being transported by trucks. The railway department should arrange for the transportation of salt for the development of salt industry. Besides, the train service between Pachpadra and Balotra should be re-started. With these words, I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants.

[English]

SHRI V. S. KRISHNA IYER : (Bangalore South) : Mr. Chairman, Sir, we

expected a lot from this young and dynamic Minister. It seems the Planning Commission has let down the Railway Ministry and in turn the Railway Minister has let down almost all the States. I will confine myself to my State. The hon. Minister knows very well that Karnataka State has been demanding so many things. The first and foremost things is that we should have South-Western railway zone. I am not advocate of the idea that every State should have a zone but unfortunately the State of Karnataka is now being governed by three zones. In practice it is almost five zones. Administratively it is impossible for the South Zone to look after such a vast area including Karnataka. I would request the hon. Minister to favourably look into this because the previous Railway Minister in Shrimati Indira Gandhi's regime had openly declared that South-Western Railway Zone will be established soon at Bangalore. The infrastructure is already there. There is a beautiful building and another two floors have to be added to it.

Another point I would like to request the hon. Minister is that once Railways takes a decision they should as far as possible stick to it. I want to quote only one or two instances. First I come to Hubli-Karwar railway line. Nearly 100 years ago the feasibility report was prepared by the then British company. An investment of Rs. 1.0 crores then would have brought this line. But now some Railway Board officer has announced...it is going to be shelved because it is not economically viable. It is quite surprising. Even common-sense says that it is really more economic. I have no time at my disposal. But I can prove by statistics. The Hubli-Karwar is the shortest route to carry ore from Bellary District. It will save nearly hundred rupees per tonne. This has been proved beyond doubt. While laying the foundation-stone of the Sea Bird project, the Prime Minister assured that Hubli-Karwar line will be taken up. On what authority, the railway officials have now said that it is not economically viable. It has caused resentment in Karnataka. When a survey has been conducted, we should stick to it. Why should you go on conducting the surveys again and again? The topography remains the same, I am

sure, the hon. Minister will bear this in mind.

The thrust of the Seventh Plan is on modernisation and to complete the ongoing projects. I would like to bring to the notice of the hon. Railway Minister that in Karnataka there are two-three ongoing projects which have not received adequate attention. I will quote one example. The doubling of the railway line between Kuppam and Whitefield has not been taken up. The line was sanctioned. 75 per cent of the work is over. Now I received a letter from the Railway Ministry saying that it is not remunerative and, hence, they are not in a hurry to complete that. When 75 per cent of the work is already over, how such a reply should come from the Railway Ministry?

With regard to Chittardurga and Raidurga new line, the work was started. Now I understand that the Railway Ministry feels that it is not economical'y viable. Some people say that it was taken up only due to political reasons. Is it a *tamasha*? I am surprised that under the leadership of Mr. Madhavrao Scindia such a thing should happen.

Another thing is about the model stations. Hon. Minister *suo motu* informed me that Bangalore station will be a model station. But I learnt from the authorities concerned that it is yet to start. This work should have been started during 1987-88 but still it is a non-starter. I would request the Minister to take up the work early.

Another demand is about the Karnataka Express. You have got Andhra Express, Tamil Nadu Express, etc. But Karnataka Superfast Express is a misnomer. It is not at all a superfast train. The previous Karnataka Express used to take 36 hours but now it takes 43-44 hours, that too, if it arrives according to the scheduled time. Originally, there used to be 22 bogies with double engine. Now there is one engine with 16 bogies. Therefore, there is no speed. I request the Minister to restore the original timings and the number of bogies with double engine.

One more point is in regard to the

railway accidents. During the budget speech, the hon. Minister stated that accidents have decreased. The other day when the railway accident took place in Kerala, he also submitted his resignation on moral grounds. That is a different matter. But so far as this Kerala accident is concerned—where 100 people died—the report of the Railway Safety Commissioner says that it was due to human failure. It is a very serious matter. The railways must take a serious note of that point. If it is a fact, then there is something wrong somewhere. The hon. Railway Minister must rectify the situation so that such things do not happen again.

Now I come to the passenger amenities. The hon. Minister was pleased to announce in his budget speech that a directorate for passenger amenities will be set up soon. I do not think that they have constituted the directorate so far. If it is not so, why should there be a delay? I do not want to go into other details.

The Mysore-Bangalore gauge conversion is an ongoing project. So far, out of Rs. 40 crores, you have spent only Rs. 10 crores. So, I request the hon. Minister to look into the matter and take necessary steps. Everyday Members have been writing to him. He is also replying promptly to the letters. All the Members have imposed confidence on him. I request the Minister to see to it that he retains the confidence which the Members have on him and he deserves the same.

[Translation]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS (Jhaujharpur):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would confine myself to a few points only.

I had submitted a memorandum about the damage caused to the railway link due to floods in my constituency last year. As a result, the Hon. Prime Minister and Shri Scindia took action and railway line was repaired immediately. I as well as the people of my constituency are grateful to them for this.

However, I would like to say that we

[Dr. G. S. Rajhans]

are facing a permanent problem. As a result of the action taken by the hon. Minister, the railway tracks on Samastipur-Darbhanga line were being laid. The line upto Bhojpur was laid. But before the work was completed, one of the Ministers went there and ordered uprooting of tracks. He got the railway line laid in his own-constituency instead. Can there be a greater injustice than this?

I would like to urge that the hon. Minister has approved a number of projects. But he is not going to hold the portfolio of Railways permanently. Imagine the gross injustice that would be there if his successor gets a railway line shifted to his own constituency. We are very simple people.

[*English*]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY :
Bihari Brahmins are always dangerous.

[*Translation*]

DR. G. S. RAJHANS : We are not able to put forward our demand forcefully. But the fact is that the people of our constituency have suffered a lot. A similar project can be approved for another place, if there is need. But approval of one project at the cost of other is not justified. At least one broad gauge line must be laid there. The need for a railway line can be judged from the fact that the Government as well as big industrialists hesitate to set up industrial units there due to non-availability of proper transportation facility, because raw-material needs to be transported to that place from other parts of the country and finished goods too are required to be supplied to other parts of the country. Transshipment causes great inconvenience.

Moreover, that area was hit by the severest earthquake recently. Earthquake of such intensity was not experienced during the last 50 years. When the voluntary agencies were contacted to be provided relief assistance, they expressed their inability to provide the commodities beyond the Samastipur railway station.

The Government will have to arrange for the transshipment of goods besides making other arrangements. I have studied the whole matter with a cool mind. The only demand of the people of that area is that the industrial development of the area is possible only if a broad gauge line is laid there. The labourers migrate to Delhi, Punjab and Haryana only because there is no industry. You provide a railway line there and I take the responsibility of getting industries set up there. Industrialists would also come forward to set up industries. It is not an expensive project. The migrant labourers, then wouldn't create problems for the Government in the States of Haryana, Punjab and Delhi. In the light of these facts, I urge the Government to lay broad-gauge line at the earliest.

Secondly, I would submit that justice has never been done to Bihar. Even the prosperous and industrially developed areas of Chota Nagpur and Santhal Pargana, are not linked with a broad gauge line. Railway facilities are not available even at district headquarters there.

The project to construct a railway bridge at Patna has been lingering on since long. Railway bridge must be constructed at Patna or Bhagalpur.

The work relating to the constructing of double line from Bhagalpur to Sahibganj and Bhagalpur to Kiul is running at a very slow speed. It needs to be accelerated. It would enable to solve numerous problems.

In the end, I would like to submit that the hon. Minister had assured in the House that the workers at Jamalpur railway factory would not be retrenched. But I find that new staff is not being recruited to replace those who are retiring. People are terrified due to this. They feel that it may ultimately result in the closure of the factory. In order to provide employment to the people, the Government should take measures to start some new project at Jamalpur Railway factory where the manufacturing of steam locomotives has since been stopped.

In the end, I would submit that as long as I remain the Member of this House and get opportunity to express my views on the railways, I would reiterate that injustice has been done to us. Railway line from Samastipur to Darbhanga must be laid.

SHRI MOHD. AYUB KHAN (Jhunjhunu): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all I support the supplementary demands of grants of Railways. Besides, I am also obliged to our hon. Prime Minister under whose statesmanship we have got such a perfect Minister of Railways who has shouldered the responsibility of the railway department so well. It is due to him that India ranks high on the world railway map. Our hon. Minister and his colleagues have a major role in promoting railway technology. We have often seen his colleagues arguing in the P.A.C. meetings and we have come to know that they have a good knowledge and they deserve to be congratulated for this. Our countrymen are proud of the railwaymen because from the watchmen to the officers, everyone works devotedly.

Now, I would like to draw your attention to my own constituency. I hail from an area which is called Shekhawati. You must have seen it in the T.V. serial today. This is the place where Shershah Suri was born. Not only this, the people of this area have shed their blood for defending the honour of their country. But our area is quite backward from the point of view of railways. There are places in this area where people have never even travelled in train. There is only one train from Sikar, which is the hon. Speaker's constituency, and from Jhunjhunu to Delhi. This train arrives at night and leaves the next evening.

I had written a letter to the hon. Minister regarding Bikaner Express which starts at 8.30 A.M. and goes to Ratangarh. The way the hon. Minister has replied to my letter it seems that either no one has told him of the real situation or else he has replied in hurry.

16.00 hrs.

He has mentioned in his reply that

there is no facility, of shunting at Loharu, whereas at Labaru itself the shuttle attached to Bikaner Express is detached and latter attached to the Shekhawati Express. So when shunting is possible for Shekhawati Express why cannot 8 to 10 coaches be attached to Bikaner Express from Delhi which could be detached at Loharu. These coaches could be sent from Loharu to Jaipur. The same coaches can be attached to Bikaner Express once again after returning from Jaipur and can run from Loharu to Delhi. My submission is that one more train should be provided for Shekhawati area, which would also cover Sikar and Jhunjhunu. If the railway line from Dabra to Singhana which is meant for Khetri Copper Project is improved a little, then that area, which has been deprived of railway facility so far, can avail of it now. There is some work of improvement on that railway line. Our State Government is prepared to do that work and is ready to contribute its 50 per cent share if the hon. Railway Minister gives approval for improving the Dabra to Singhana railway line. This would enable passenger coaches to run on that line and the people of that area would be benefited.

The entire area of Rajasthan is deprived of the facility of broad gauge line. Due to the absence of broad gauge line facility, the capital of Rajasthan, Jaipur is not connected with Delhi. The hon. Minister has provided a broad gauge line from Bikaner to Suratgarh but that line goes further on I would request that at least Jaipur should be connected with Delhi on the broad gauge line.

In the end, I would appeal that there is a need for further improvement in our railways. There should be communication not only between the engine driver and the guard but also between the driver and the next station so that accidents could be averted. Arrangements should be made for the entire train route to be visible on the computer system so that a vigil could be maintained. There are some stations which do not either have sheds or drinking water facility. My submission is that in those stations, specially Nua,

[Shri Mohd. Ayub Khan]

Buraigarh, Mukundgarh and Bagar stations, arrangements of sheds and water taps should be made and permission of constructing platform should also be granted. The people of our area would be grateful to you for all these things.

My area Shekhawati falls in the tourists triangle. Tourists visit this place because there are a number of ancient forts and mansions which are architecturally beautiful. But this area is not conveniently connected by trains. Therefore, I would like to request that for the convenience of tourists and the people of that area, one more train should be started besides Shekhawati Express. A shuttle should be introduced between Loharu and Jaipur and these coaches can be reattached to Bikaner Express on its way to Delhi at Loharu once again. If this facility is provided the people of the entire Shekhawati area, which includes Sikar and Jhunjhunu will be extremely grateful to you.

* SHRI A J V B MAHESWARA RAO (Amalapuram) : Mr Chairman Sir we are discussing the supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of the Budget (Railways) for 1988-89. The allocations are made every year and we discuss them in the House. Various suggestions are being made for improving passenger amenities, but there is no improvement. The Railways Department continues to ignore improving the amenities for the passengers who travel by train. The train fares have gone up steeply. But the facilities offered to them continue to be poor. The amenities offered to passengers in no way match the enhanced fares. The train fares continue to shoot up while the amenities continue to plummet.

Sir I represent Amalapuram constituency in the House. Amalapuram perhaps may be the only constituency in the country which does not have even a single railway line. Repeatedly I have been requesting the Hon'ble Minister to provide atleast one railway line to this totally

neglected constituency. Once again I request the Hon. Minister now to be provide a railway line to this Constituency. Amalapuram can be connected either with Rajamundry or with Narsapuram or Kovvur. Amalapuram, thus can be brought into the map of Railways. I earnestly request the Hon. Minister to take the decision to link Amalapuram either with Rajamundry or with Narsapuram or Kovvur.

During the past 41 years of our independence, no new railway line has been added in Andhra Pradesh except the addition of a more 200 Kms. People in Andhra Pradesh are very much worried about the partiality meted out to them. Many new lines have been identified in the State. They should be taken up and completed as early as possible. This way the fear lurking in the minds of Andhriles can be removed. The feeling that they are being neglected in allocation of new lines has to be removed now. I hope hon Minister would do justice to the Telugu speaking people.

Sir only the other day, there was a zonal meeting of South Central Railway. I brought several issues to the notice of the Minister. I request the Hon. Minister to take immediate steps to solve them.

The population in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad has increased enormously. The transport problem is becoming more and more acute now. In order to ease the traffic congestion, the State government has submitted a memorandum to the Central Government proposing a circular railway system for the twin cities. The State Government have even suggested how the money needed for the circular railway could be raised. This proposal is still pending before the Central Government. The decision to construct circular railway should be taken up immediately. Circular railway is the only solution to solve the transport problem in the twin cities and hence the matter should not be delayed any further. Kazipet was selected for setting up of a Coach factory long ago. But the factory has not come up so far. The proposal has been gathering dust in the shelves of the Ministry of Railways. It is yet another

*Translation of the speech is originally delivered in Telugu.

instance to show how the Central Government has been neglecting the State. At least now, action should be initiated to set up the coach factory at Kazipet. The step-motherly treatment meted out to Andhra Pradesh should come to an end.

Sir, the people of Amalapuram have to go to either Rajamundry or Kakinada which are more than 150 Kms away to catch a train. The population is around 10 lakhs in this constituency. A reservation counter was opened at Rajob at request. I thank the Hon Minister for this gesture and request him to open two more such counters at Mummadiwaram and Kothapeta. Opening of the reservation counter at these places will help the people a lot.

Rajamundry is an important station. Several super fast trains pass through this station every day yet, the reservation quota available at Rajamundry for various trains is very negligible. Hence the quota available at this station should be raised for all the super fast trains.

Samarlakota is an important commercial centre. People have to travel all the way from Kakinada to Samarlakota junction for travelling by train. Kakinada is fast growing up as an industrial centre. Godavari and Nagarjuna fertilizer factories are fast coming up there. Many industries have already come up. There is a proposal pending before the Railway Board to connect Kakinada by a railway line with Howrah and Vijayawada main line. This is a very important proposal and matter should not be delayed any further. I request the Hon Minister to take the decision at least now to connect Kakinada with Howrah Vijayawada.

Sir, the Samarlakota station is in a very poor condition now. Though Samarlakota is a junction, the facilities available to the passengers are very poor. There is no waiting room there. The platforms are open and the passengers are exposed to the rain and sun shine. This station needs immediate improvement. Let me hope, the Hon. Minister would take steps for improving Samarlakota junction. Rajamundry is yet another important

station which needs immediate improvement. Similarly Tadepalli Gudem. This station also needs lot of improvement. The amenities available at these stations to the passengers are very poor. Steps should be taken immediately to improve the conditions in these stations. Tadepalligudem is an important station from where agriculture produce like rice and cash crops like coconut are sent out. But unfortunately sufficient number of wagons are not available at this Station. There is no storage facility either. Both agriculturists and traders are suffering a lot and fact incurring losses also due to non availability of wagons. Hence I appeal to the Hon. Minister to provide more wagons at Tadepalligudem and also at Rajamundry for helping the farmers and traders.

Sir, when I was a member of Estimates Committee, I had made several suggestions in providing more facilities to the travellers. At present the amenities available to the passengers are almost nil in the trains. The compartments are dim and dark as there are no lights in them. The toilets remain dirty. Most of the trains are too dark. More money should be allocated for providing amenities to the railway travellers. That should be our first task. More amenities can be provided only when more money is allocated.

The East Coast Express between Secunderabad and Howrah is a prestigious train. But even in this train, all bogies are old and dilapidated. This train runs through Andhra area during day time. It is too hot in this area and travel in such bogies throughout day is really tortuous. Not even a single A/C coach is attached to this train in spite of several requests. Once again I appeal to the Hon. Minister to provide II-tier A/C coaches to the East Coast Express and also Narsapur Express.

Sir, diesel engines were replaced by steam engines in certain important trains like Tirumala Express and Sarcar Express. The departure of Tirumala Express is being delayed at Kakinada on account of changing the engine. Hence this method of changing engines should not be resorted to. A/C coaches should be attached to

[Shri A.J. V.B. Maheswara Rao]

Tiruma'a Express for the benefit of the pilgrims who travel to Tirupathi.

The maintainance of stations throughout the country is not uniform. The stations in Andhra are being neglected while the stations in the north are being maintained properly. Every station in every part of the country should get equal attention. I hope, the government would take steps to maintain all the stations equally well in future.

Before I conclude, I once again draw the attention of the Ministry to improve the conditions in the trains and providing more amenities to the travellers especially those who travel by super fast trains.

I thank you very much for giving me the opportunity and conclude my speech.

[English]

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA (Balasore): I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants for Railways for 1988-89, and oppose all the Cut Motions.

There was a Press report published, based on a Press Release from the South Eastern Railway's head office, that some miscreants belonging to a political party are assaulting the Railway employees, viz. the Running Guards, Drivers etc. for no fault of the latter, so that they might go on an agitation, as a result of which the railway system might be paralyzed. I would urge upon the Minister to enquire into the matter immediately and take necessary action, so that necessary protection is given to these Railway employees who are constantly and habitually being assaulted with a deliberate intention.

I fully agree with Mr Basudob Acharia regarding the need for modernization of the Railway track as also electrification, and changing of rolling stock, coaches and wagons which are being used for movement of ore and coal and become unfit for use due to over age

But simultaneously I would request this august House to constitute a committee or a delegation of this entire House which should urge upon Planning Commission, so that they would allot more funds to Railways which is the nerve system of a developing country like ours. Because of constraints of resources the Railways are unable to go in for development which they would like to undertake. I request that the hon. Members in both the Opposition and the Treasury benches may kindly think about this seriously. Otherwise, we cannot develop our railway system and a developing country like ours cannot be developed, according, to our expectations.

Besides, the Rupsa-Bangriposibi narrow gauge railway line was constructed by the then Maharajah of Mayurbhanj about 90 years back. Now the Railway Reforms Committee after going through all the railway lines of the country have suggested that about 40 such railway lines which are found to be uneconomical should be withdrawn. But I would request the hon Minister that he may kindly rethink, or reconsider this issue because the Railway Reforms Committee would have, from the economy point of view would have given some suggestions. But the Railway is a big public undertaking and ours being a welfare oriented country, the Railways should grow. Being a public undertaking it should look not only for the income but also for the welfare of the railway users. That is why I request that the Rupsa-Bangriposibi line may be converted into a broad gauge railway line. The State Government has already agreed to give the land at a token price. Also the required infrastructure is there.

Mayurbhanj district is a tribal district and it has to be developed more and more. More railway lines should be provided in all such tribal and backward areas. We know that the electrification work from Howrah to Kharagpur and also from Madras to Waltair has been completed. But the middle portion from Kharagpur to Waltair has been left out. I request that the hon. Minister may kindly see

to it that the middle portion from Kharagpur to Waltair may be electrified in the the Eighth Plan with top priority.

Due to constraint of resources we are unable to convert the first class coaches into AC two-tier coaches or AC Chair cars, by which we could have earned more money and also we could accommodate more passengers. But this could not be done. On this issue, I request the hon. Minister to kindly see to it that the long distant trains like Train Nos. 915 and 916, 175 and 176 77 and 78, and 141 and 142 and also 45 and 46, may be provided with more AC 2-tier coaches and also AC Chair cars.

Similarly, I fully agree with my hon. friend, Shri Basudeb Acharia, who has already mentioned about train Nos. 397 and 398, the Puri-Asansol passengers

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : It is very dangerous to agree with him all the time.

SHRI CHINTAMANI JENA : I am with him one with him on question of revival of 397 and 398 Puri Asansol trains. One more point I want to mention. There are some old railway lines which have been there for a long time and the railway is incurring losses or which are uneconomical for commercial purposes. The hon. Minister may kindly look into them.

The Construction Sambhalpur division headquarters has not been provided adequate funds. This should be looked into as a matter of importance and priority. Also, the Jhonpur-Basuwari and Sambhalpur to Telchar lines should be completed in the seventh Plan period. With these words, I once again support the demands for Railways.

SHRI VIJAY N. PATEL (Erandol) : Sir, every time we talk about the railway budget, for the last few years, we are told that some super-fast trains is started on the one hand, and on the other hand the the speed of Rajdhani and other trains

has also been reduced. The time has now come when we have to think how many super-fast trains we are able to start at the cost of the goods traffic and what is the use of that. We cannot go on starting superfast trains only with the speed of 125 or 140 kilometres and we cannot dream of at least in the near future, about the trains which are superfast trains in countries like Japan, England and America which travel at a speed of 250 or 300 kilometres per hour. So, we have reached a saturation point. Now we have to think of raising more capacity and we have to think about the people who want to go in passenger trains for smaller towns to bigger cities. Now, we are reducing these passenger trains. I do not want to comment adversely. For example, Luskar Express between Gwalior and Bombay section has started recently. But our demand starting Bhuswal Manmad passenger trains is not forthcoming. Many college students and office going people are suffering on account of non-availability of accommodation in Maharashtra Express, Dadar Nagpur Express and other trains. Then, why are you feeling shy of raising Railway Bonds? The Railway Department helps to develop our economy and the traffic. If the people are ready in a particular area for raising the bonds only then on pretext that in future the passengers will have to pay more in that area, and they will be angry about that—this argument is not a good one. I urge upon the hon. Minister and the Government to rethink about this and wherever such proposal has come for converting narrow gauge into broadgauge or for starting a new railway line it should be considered. The Railway Bond may be issued so that early execution and completion of railway lines could take place.

Now we have to think about starting a third line between Bombay and Bhuswal. There is a lot of traffic between Howrah, Bombay and Delhi section. If we start now, I think we would be able to complete it after ten or fifteen years.

I would also like to suggest that one overbridge is required between Jalgaon and Bhuswal. It is an urgent necessity. The Maharashtra Chamber of Commerce

[Shri Vijay N. Patel]

proposed Kolan Railway and Khandesh Railway as early as in 1952. This is between Dhule and Amlanar, and the distance is just thirty KMs only.

We are glad that our Prime Minister has given green signal for new railway lines in the next Five Year plan. I would request the Minister to consider this small section so that we can reduce the burden on the Surat Bhuswal line and also the distance between Ahmedabad and Hyderabad and Trivandrum and Hyderabad would also be reduced by sixty kms.

I suggest that a survey may be conducted for starting a new railway line between Manmad Indore, Guna and Gwalior. If we construct section by section, it will take some years to complete it. But surely the distance between Delhi and Bombay would become shorter as compared to the Western Railway even.

My friends have mentioned that some State Capitals are still connected with metergauge only. Efforts should be made for converting it into broadgauge. Priority should be given in this regard. For example, if goods come from Calcutta to Jaipur, they have to be unloaded at Delhi and sent by trucks or re-loaded in the metergauge passenger trains. These are the priority lines.

I am confident that under the dynamic youth leaders, i.e. our Prime Minister Shri Rajiv Gandhi and the Railway Minister Shri Madhavrao Scindia, with the help of the team of railway board members, things will move speedily. We expect that people will get more facilities in the near future.

With these words, I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways).

[Translation]

SHRI C. JANGA REDDY (Hanamkonda) : I would like to congratulate the

hon. Minister because though the acknowledgement of the letters is received within one or two days, their reply is never received. My submission is that the reply should positively be given within 2 or 3 months and the problem should also be solved.

I would like to mention here the Allahabad railway land scandal about which I have been writing to the hon. Minister for the last two years. A third person is selling 500 acres of railway land and I have received an acknowledgement of my letter now. Our term will end in another one and a half years, and therefore, my submission is that the replies to the letters and action should be accelerated. Similarly, I have written many letters about the bungling of Rs. one crore in the electrification work between Vijaywada and Kargajnagar, but no action has been taken though two years have passed since then, nor have I received any reply. I think that even an investigation officer has not been appointed so far. Therefore attention should be paid in this direction. When an account was going to pass a bill,

[English]

she was transferred forcibly. I wrote all these things in that representation, but I have not received any reply so far from the Ministry except an acknowledgement.

[Translation]

I want to draw your attention to these things. Apart from this, there are a few more points to which I want to draw your attention. There is a railway line from Hyderabad to Adilabad, but no one knows about it because no train runs between Hyderabad and Adilabad. This place is near Nagpur. I have been a representative of that area for the last 20 years and even I came to know about this railway line quite late. The passengers have to travel by bus and it is a 14 hour journey. If an Express Train is started here the passengers of three districts, viz., Nizamabad, Karimnagar and Adilabad will be benefited. This point should certainly be considered.

Similarly, there is a train which runs

under the name of Minar Express in Bombay and becomes Konark Express on reaching Bhubaneswar. It becomes Minar Express in Secunderabad and on reaching back Bhubaneswar, it is again Konark Express. The train remains the same, only the name plate is changed. It will be convenient for the passengers if it has only one name. Similarly, only 17 bogies are attached to it, whereas there should be 22 bogies. Consequently, the passengers do not get tickets and they face a lot of problem. If there is no platform at Bombay, then 5 bogies should be to it attached in Pune, but the number of bogies should be increased.

Similarly in Kazipet, the waiting room for passengers of first class and A.C. two tier is on the second floor. In case there is a heart patient it becomes a very difficult situation. Therefore, this waiting room should be shifted down stairs. I support the demand of my colleague from Calcutta who has asked for electrification of railway line from Vijayawada to Calcutta. The Government is making attempts to get electrification done between Sanatnagar and Kazipet by 1992. It is my humble request that you should try to do this by 1990. The A.P. Express used to take 22 hours earlier but now it takes 25 hours, whereas the other trains take much lesser time now. The Tamilnadu and G.T. Expresses leave within one to two hours of each other. Tamilnadu is dominating the Railway Board and therefore, they chart out the railway time-table as per their convenience. Such a discrimination should not exist any more. The A.P. Express should run at 6 A.M. or at 7 P.M. instead of 2 O'clock in the afternoon. It reaches at 3 O'clock the next day. This spoils two working days and therefore, a change should certainly be made in the time table to this effect. Either the G.T. or the Tamilnadu Express, could be started in the morning and A.P. Express can be substituted in its place. The rate which is charged for carrying bananas in the goods train or passenger train, should be applicable for mangoes also. The freight charges of mangoes should be equivalent to that of bananas. I have already written to you in this regard. Mangoes are transported from Kazipet also but wagons are not available there. You should try to

provide wagons there. The small businessmen are facing a lot of problem due to only 20 to 30 bogies, that are made available there. Therefore, you should try to fulfil the earlier provision of attaching 2 to 3 wagons at Kazipet. The Godavari Express and the Gautami Express are super-fast trains and are meant for the people of Andhra Pradesh. These trains stop only at places with a population of 25 to 30 thousand people. I would request that these trains should stop at the district headquarters like Jangam, Mehboobabad and Mathira also.

After Vijayawada, the Gautami Express stops at the station of a place with a population of 10 thousand. I feel that if a stoppage is given to this train at Jangam, Mehboobabad and Mathira stations, it would be very beneficial to vegetable traders. Wagons should be made available on an immediate basis to transport vegetable consignments from Vijayawada to Hyderabad and Kazipet so that Vegetables do not rot. The Kazipet-Vijayawada Passenger train has been bifurcated—from Kazipet to Dornakal and from Vijayawada to Dornakal. This has created problems for passengers. Therefore, the Vijayawada-Hyderabad Passenger train and the Kazipet-Vijayawada Passenger train should be restored. I have written to the hon. Minister about the electrification of the Vijayawada-Kagaznagar railway line and the sale of railway land in Allahabad. Both these matters should be investigated and the results intimated to me within six months our term will expire after 1½ years and who knows who will be the victor in the next elections. So I request that these works be taken up speedily.

SHRI SHANKAR LAL (Patil) : Mr. Chairman Sir, I rise to support the Demands for Grants of the Railways. The railways should be developed according to the needs of the country. It is a matter of honour that hon. Shri Scindia has been given charge of the Railways. An important department like the Railways is usually put under the charge of a Cabinet Minister that the entire Railway Ministry has been entrusted to hon. Shri Scindia, who is a Minister of State, is ample proof of his capabilities.

[Shri C. Janga Reddy]

Mr. Chairman Sir, not much attention is being paid to railway development in the backward areas of our country. In this context, I shall cite the example of Rajasthan. In our country, on an average, there is 18.81 kilometres of railway line for every 1000 kilometres. However in Rajasthan for every 1000 kilometres there is only 16.41 kilometres of railway line. Rajasthan is much below the national average in this regard. So I request the hon. Minister to pay greater attention to Rajasthan. The Pali district of Rajasthan has been backward for quite a long time. I had written to the hon. Minister about the railway line from Bilara to Bar. In addition I had given a Short-Notice question and a Call-Attention. The reply was that the work was not being done due to paucity of funds. Surveys for this railway line have already been conducted. Survey has been conducted twice since the time I was a legislator in the Rajasthan Vidhan Sabha. Cost has escalated since then. If laying of a railway line is kept pending even after conducting a survey, the cost is bound to increase in that interim period. The hon. Minister has himself said in his reply that the cost has increased.

[English]

"For 1988-89, the Railways arrival Plan has been reduced by the Planning Commission by as much as Rs. 450 crores. The total allocation for new lines has been reduced by the Planning Commission to only Rs. 195 crores which is much less than the requirement to satisfactorily progress the approved new line projects."

[Translation]

I am saying this because the Government should sanction more funds for this purpose. Whenever we talk of development of backward areas, the Government gives lack of funds as the excuse. I cannot describe the injustice being meted out to these areas by the Government by doing so. During the famine in Rajasthan

and while earth-work was in progress, the Rajasthan Government offered funds for the railway line from Bilar to Bar as there was no other means of transport for villages in that area. Now the Government's claim of shortage of funds does not hold good. Pali is an important 'Nagar Parishad' area and has a population of over one lakh. Yet it does not have a direct rail link with Delhi. People wanting to come to Delhi have to entrain either at Marwar Junction or Jodhpur. Another urgent need is the conversion of the Delhi-Ahmedabad metre-gauge line into broad-gauge. But this scheme is also pending. What has the Government done? They have withdrawn the stoppage of Delhi-Ahmedabad Mail at Sendra station. This step had evoked loud protests from the people living in villages nearby. People from Sendra and its neighbourhood serve in the army, but the hon. Minister's reply says that very few passengers entrain from there. Passengers cannot even buy tickets from Sendra. Servicemen have to go upto Beawar to buy tickets. Sendra is an important station on the railway map of India. The Government should restore the stoppage of the Delhi-Ahmedabad Mail at Sendra. If additional facilities cannot be provided, at least the existing facilities should not be withdrawn.

Besides this, the conversion of the Jaipur-Sawai Madhopur and Suratgarh-Jaisalmer railway lines into broad gauge is also very important. The Indira Gandhi Canal project is important not only for Rajasthan but for the whole country. Lack of adequate means of transport affects the supply of cement and other goods in the command and desert areas. The Government must convert the Suratgarh-Jaisalmer railway line into broad gauge by treating it a matter of national policy.

The tribal area Plan from Ratlam to Banswara in Rajasthan is also lying in cold storage. I want to draw the hon. Minister's attention towards the backwardness of Rajasthan in terms of transport facilities.

There is no over-bridge is Pali. The people of Pali have to wait for hours to get the industrial area. The traffic on either side is held up. The situation is akin to the one in Rani Bazaar in Bikaner. There are no bridges over there.

Train services are satisfactory in Jodhpur but not in Marwar junction and other stations. As compared to the past, there is a deterioration in rail services. The hon. Minister may be working to the best of his ability but the reality of the situation is that railways are not being given due attention.

Mr. Chairman Sir, you have rung the bell twice, but when I get another opportunity to speak, I shall say something more on the railways as I have much to say on the subject.

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI (Mand-saur) : Mr. Chairman Sir, Shri Duga has spoken so much during this tenure of 7½ years that the representatives from Pali need not say anything for the next 21 years.

AN HON. MEMBER : That period will be cut from the time allotted to them.

SHRI SHANKAR LAL ; You are to do so but I have still got a lot more to say.

[English]

SHRI RADHAKANTA DIGAL (Phul-bani) : Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants in respect of Railways.

Sir, the scope of the discussion on the Supplementary Demands is very limited. Many hon. Members have spoken on the Supplementary Demands. So, I do not want to repeat those points again. I would only like to make some points with regard to Orissa, particularly my constituency Phulbani. Phulbani is geographically in the middle of Orissa. But unfortunately there is no railway line there. The population of

Phulbani mostly consists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. They have not seen the railway line or the railway till now. In this connection, I would like to say that we have already passed 41 years of Independence and I do not know why my district Phulbani has been neglected so far. There was a proposal to build a line Khurda Road to Bolangir via Phulbani. The then hon. Minister of Railways said in his Budget speech to take up the survey of that proposed line. Accordingly, survey of that line was taken up. But I am sorry to say that the need of the line was not properly highlighted by the survey team. They say, the construction of this line is not economically viable. In this connection, I would like to say that economic viability should not be the only criterion. The economical backwardness of the area should also be taken into consideration. There is a place called Tumdibundh in Phulbani district which is 200 kms. away from Phulbani and there lie graphite mines. That area is inhabited by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Gochha Poda and Katringia, both the places have full of coal mines. At a place called Dhalpur and by the side of river Mahanadi in Puwani district costly stones are available. Many business people from Bombay and Calcutta are frequently coming to Phulwani and are taking these precious stones and graphites and mines available in the district.

16.46 hrs.

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

In this connection, I would like to bring to your kind notice that you may advise the State Government also to make a geographical and mineral survey properly in Phulwani district. In 1984, before the brutal assassination of the late Prime Minister Shrimati Indira Gandhi, she visited Phulwani. When the people approached her and brought to her notice this proposed railway line, she assured the people that this Railway line was justified because it is geographically located in the middle of Orissa. There is a link to Gopalpur port and Sambalpur route also. So, I request the hon. Minister that construction of this line Khurda Road-Bolangir

[Shri Radhakanta Diga]

via Phulwani may be taken up expeditiously and steps may be taken to build up this line.

In Delhi-Puri Express and Neelanchal Express, catering system is not so satisfactory. Neelanchal Express is always running late to Delhi and so the people are suffering. You may kindly advise the Railway Board and the railway authorities for observing punctuality in running of this particular train.

Lastly, I would like to bring to your kind notice that don't concentrate all your efforts only in urban areas. Kindly make some efforts and give some time to think about rural areas like Phulwani district.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY (Midnapore): At the outset, I would demand that the Ministry of Finance and also the Planning Commission should see that the Railways do not starve of funds and more funds should be allotted so that the railway works can go on. This is my first point.

Second point is, I want to impress upon the Minister and the august House that the number of accidents have increased. He may disagree. But the people have died more in number. I do not know how the concoted figures or what figures he gets.

About the accident in Kerala which took place, the other day the Minister had made a statement that it was a mystery. We were amazed. I do not know in this fog end of the 20th century, whether the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry are dependent upon the *Tapas* and *havan*s so that railway trains can run properly. Out of my own experience, I can say that in Gorakhpur division, derailment has increased. It is being said that the derailments are taking place due to rains. Do you mean to say that India is a country where rains will not take place? Derailments leading to dislocation of railway traffic have increased to a great extent. As mentioned by Shri Chintamani Jena, railway staff have been assaulted at Khara-

gpur, Bauria, Ulberia and Bagnar etc. The assaults have been made because the derailment of railways has caused dislocation and delay. Hence the discontent has gone to that extent. When the railwaymen, the guards, the drivers or the TTs are assaulted, we do not find the railway officers ever going to that site. They should be given due protection and it should be seen that the railways run in time. In my opinion, one of the reasons why the derailments are taking place these days is because of the induction of casual contract system on the repair of railway lines, on the replacement of railway tracks, on re-railing, re-sleeper and deep screening etc. All these jobs so long were being done departmentally by appointing casual labour from time to time.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : Shri Narayan Choubey raised this point. Unfortunately he did not have patience of waiting to hear my reply. I have replied to this. I have made the matter very clear. He always brings this point. He never reads my reply. Every time an opportunity arises, he raises the same point. I know his speech. I know what he is going to say. I need not note the points. I request him to read my reply.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Even after reading his noted speech, which should be read and re-read, accidents are occurring and derailments are occurring. I do not know why. We are interested in reading his speech but we are more interested to stop derailments of trains and avoiding accidents. That thing is not coming up.

[Translation]

SHRI MOHD MAHFOOZ ALI KHAN : This is where nature's wrath runs. Accidents will keep occurring.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : If that is so, why does the hon. Member not go to temples and mosques instead of sitting here and participating in a discussion?

SHRI BALKAVI BAIKAGI : Shri Choubey is a man of his word. His

single-mindedness is evident from his speech.

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : And the hon. Minister too has a single reply every time.

[English]

The contract system should be done away with at least in the matter of renewal of tracks, re-railing and deep screening etc. These jobs should be done as were being done previously.

We are importing many new locos from Japan. We are importing coaches. Why cannot we produce our coaches and why cannot we produce our locos? Even if we require to import say, locos, Japanese locos are definitely much bigger locos than we produce but I am told that two Chittaranjan locos can work as good as one Japanese loco. But, Chittaranjan locos will cost less than half of one Japanese loco. I do not know why this should not be done. Suppose we require to import coaches. Why don't we import one or two or three prototype and then produce them in our own factory? Why are we importing 40 locos or 50 coaches? I do not know. This practice should be stopped and our RDS at Lucknow should be developed further.

We had been demanding for a third line between Kharagpur to Panskura and from Panskura to Santragarhi. Nothing

[Translation]

can be gained by flattering us.

Sir, I renew my demand again although he has told that it would be done after the survey is over. It request that it should be done.

Sir, there is acute shortage of spare parts in factories and depots. The spare parts which are supplied by the Stores Departments are not good spare parts. They are spurious spare parts. So, I would request the Minister to kindly look into this so that original spare parts will be supplied. I agree with Shri Janga

Reddy on some aspects. I don't agree with his philosophy. But I do agree with him on many other points. Regarding corruption cases, I would like to suggest that if they are brought to your notice, they should be looked into properly. I do not know why a case which has been given two years back, has not been inquired into and replied. I had given you some cases. You can have them inquired. In this connection, I want to point out one important thing. At present, the person who makes an allegation against somebody is not consulted by the investigating officers when they inquire into the matter. They consult the person against whom we had made allegations. They get a reply from the person against whom allegation has been made and the same reply is sent back to us. In future, we will be expecting from you that whenever you send some inquiring agency, the agency should contact such persons who have made the allegation. For example, I make an allegation against Shri Basudeb Acharia and your agency goes to Shri Acharia and takes his reply and you send the reply back to me saying everything is correct. (Interruptions) My suggestion is that the person who made the allegation should be contacted.

Regarding theft of materials, something has been done.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA) : Sir, Shri Choubey is a very dangerous man. He comes and sits near me here; tells me to give him some points to make a speech; takes the points from me and then fires them all against me. (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : You should be very careful. You are realising that only now.

(Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Kharagpur is a notorious place for all these things.

PROF. P.J. KURIEN (Idukki) : That is the place from where you come... (Interruptions)

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : Yes, that is the place from where I come. *(Interruptions)* I have even given the names of the criminals residing in the Railway quarters. I have given the numbers of the Railway quarters also. Even then, nothing has been done. I do not know what the RPF is doing? What for, are they there? At least let the Minister tell us whether this is true or not.

Regarding model stations, I am glad that you have declared Kharagpur to be a model station. *(Interruptions)*

MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER : He wants improvement. Afterwards, let it become model station.

(Interruptions)

SHRI HARISH RAWAT (Almora) : Sir, it is very unfair that the hon. Minister has given him so many things. Even the model station was given to him where there are thefts. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI RAM SINGH YADAV (Alwar) : Especially where criminals are residing in the Railway quarters. *(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI BALKAVI BAIRAGI (Mandsaur) : He will spoil the whole model. *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI NARAYAN CHOUBEY : I would like to suggest that as has been told by the officers of the Railway there, the entire building may remain intact. Let us agree that it should remain. But the other things need some changes. At least, while you want to make certain things in that area, let the MLAs, MPs, Commissioner, all these people be taken into confidence. I think that should be noted by the hon. Minister.

The last point I would like to make is about the Railway staff. I would request you to fill the vacancies. I am glad that you are increasing the railway traffic; you are increasing the number of

trains; number of platforms. But you are decreasing the number of railway employees. *(Interruptions)* He has not reduced the number of coaches. In the Indian Railways, the second-class coaches and even the first-class coaches are in a very bad shape. Therefore, I would first request him to fill up the vacancies. Do not create a situation unnecessarily. The Railways are the biggest employer in this country. The Railways are not only meant to carry the load, carry the passengers but the Railways must provide good employment. Knowingly or unknowingly, willingly or unwillingly, the Railways have been doing a social job. They are the biggest employer in this country. I think 17 lakh people have been working in this organisation. But now it has come down. I do not know the exact figure. Some say it is 14 lakhs; some say it is 18 lakhs. I do not know what the exact number is. But, definitely it has come down.

17.00 hrs.

The number of people are retiring. You are not giving them employment. You are saying that your productivity has increased. Please increase your productivity. At least keep a balance and see that vacancies are really filled up. With these words, I say that Railways must get more funds so that it should not starve of funds in serving the nation and it must prosper.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMEN-TARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P NAMGYAL) : I have a submission to make that after the Half an Hour Discussion is over, we will sit for some more time to conclude the discussion on Supplementary Demands (Railways) and the Hon. Minister will reply tomorrow.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I think, it has the consensus of the House. We will accept the suggestion that after the Half an Hour discussion is over we will continue the discussion on Railways once again and finish the discussion today itself. That is the proposal. And the reply, I

think, will be tomorrow. When do you want to give reply Mr. Minister?

(*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA): Let us have a discussion also tomorrow.

SHRI P. NAMGYAL: We will cover as much as possible because there are many Members who want to speak.

(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There are about 45 Members. You have to decide about this because I have to inform others. Otherwise, if we resume the discussion without informing, they may not like that.

SHRI P. NAMGYAL: If we can conclude the discussion today, reply can be given tomorrow. That would be better.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Today we will finish the discussion and tomorrow will be reply. Is it okay? I think this has the consensus of the House. I think all will accept that. Now we will continue. Shri Chiranji Lal to speak.

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA (Karnal): Mr Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the discussion on the Supplementary Demands (Railways) is going on. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA: If the discussion is going to take place, let me reply to it also.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let us see afterwards.

(*Interruptions*)

SHRI CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA: The double track between Delhi and Ambala on the Northern Railway is complete. It was formally inaugurated on the 7th of May this year. After doubling of the railway line, there has been no change in the timings. The same time is being consumed by the train that was being

consumed before the doubling of the track was complete. I would respectfully submit that double track should have some advantage. Some time should be fixed while preparing new time-table that is to commence from the First of October. It should be apparent to the eye that double track has a good effect on the running of the train.

Secondly, this Northern Railway from Delhi-Ambala onward is serving four or five States including a foreign country i.e. Pakistan-Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab and Pakistan. You will very well appreciate the importance that should be given to it. I would request the hon. Minister to include electrification of this line in the next financial year. It may be done in phases but let us start doing it. In the next financial year at least from Delhi to Panipat electrification should be completed.

Thirdly, I would like to invite the attention of the hon. Minister to the condition of platforms at Sonapat, Panipat, Karnal and Kurukshetra. During the recent rains I myself had bitter experience at Sonapat railway station. There are pits at the platform where water stagnates during rainy season. I would request that not only minor repairs at the platform be undertaken but also it may either be cemented or the existing structure replaced by Kota stone.

Fourthly, Kurukshetra is a place of historic importance on this line. There is going to be a solar eclipse on 11th September this Year. During the last one year there have been three solar eclipses and each time the gathering was to the tune of ten to twenty lakhs. There is no shed at Kurukshetra railway station worth the name. On 13th July I travelled from Sonapat to Kurukshetra. It was raining heavily. There is a small shed at Kurukshetra which is also leaking. Kurukshetra should be made a model station. At least a big shed should be provided on both the platforms there. It is not my constituency but it is a place which attracts people from every nook and corner of the country and if this

[Shri Chiranji Lal Sharma]

facility is provided people will very much appreciate.

Sir, at least sixty trains including goods trains run daily on this line between Delhi-Ambala-Amritsar. If we divide 24 hours by sixty then after every twenty-five minutes a train passes on this track and the railway-crossings at Sonpat, Panipat and Karnal remain practically closed thus paralysing the traffic. The railway authorities have taken a decision in principle to construct over-bridges both at Panipat and Sonpat but the difficulty is that the State Government is not providing funds or are not cooperating. I would request the Railway Minister to seek their cooperation. At Karnal on 15th September, 1985 the foundation-stone of an over-bridge was laid. On the same day at Kurukshetra the foundation stone was laid. Whereas Kurukshetra over-bridge was completed on 23rd September last year the Karnal over-bridge is lying incomplete. Three years have since elapsed. I would request the hon. Minister to look into this and have it expedited.

It was on 7th May that the Deputy Minister of Railways, Shri Mahabir Prasad visited Karnal for the formal inauguration of the double track. At that time also I had brought to his notice that there is a large pond adjoining the railway platform at Karnal. It is a very good mosquito breeding ground. It is stinking. The situation is terrible. On the other side, is the Model Town. Shri Mahabir Prasad, Deputy Minister, gave an assurance to the people in the function that was held on 7th May that this pond will be got filled up. I don't know if any progress has been made. I will request Shri Scindia to look into this matter. This is a genuine request.

I would again lay stress on the improvement of the platforms. I must congratulate Shri Madhavrao Scindia for the good example he has set by having tendered his resignation because of accident in the recent past. It was no mean sacrifice. It is good that the Prime Minister appreciated his work. He has set a good

example. The railways have no doubt made a tremendous progress all over the country during the last few years, But still there is plenty of scope for improvement. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI (Kaliabor) : Sir, after the Independence of our country, Assam has been neglected by the Ministry of Railways like anything. If you go there, you will find that there is no improvement. There is no maintenance of railway stations, railway lines and platforms. The stations are in a dilapidated condition.

SHRI MADHAVRAO SCINDIA : The hon. Member has mentioned after Independence'. Prof. Dandavate will share the blame with me. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI BHADRESWAR TANTI : The Railway Ministry is giving very old and rickety bogies, which have been rejected by other States, to the people of Assam. These are unfit for travel. There is neither light nor drinking water in the bogies. The speed of the trains is also very slow. No timings are observed. The distance from Guwahati to Badarpur is hardly 300 kilometres. But it takes more than 24 hours to reach from Guwahati to Badarpur or vice versa.

No doubt I will support the Supplementary Demands for Grants, but the Railway Minister should give some special attention towards Assam. Assam is also a part of this country. It should also be developed on an equal footing alongwith other States.

I requested for two railway crossings at Bilgaon and Chungajan in my constituency. I do not know how much money will be needed for such small things. But there should be no hesitation on the part of the railways to provide the railway crossings at these places.

The Government of India decided that they would create a new division at Rangia. The people have been demanding that. But it has not yet materialised. So, I request the hon. Minister to at least pay some attention regarding the Rangia

division which is the demand of the people. Luming-Badarpur line is a very dangerous line because it has to cross so many underground tunnels. It is a metre gauge line. One cannot travel by it because of its slow speed. People cannot reach on time. I am citing one example to show how slow the trains are running in Assam. A train was moving in such a slow speed that a man in the train asked a pedestrian to get into the train which he refused to do because he was in a hurry and he went on foot. This is the condition of trains in Assam.

Presently, New Jalpaiguri Division is not in Assam. It is in West Bengal. It controls the entire northern and some part of Southern Assam upto Guwahati. So, the people of Rangia have demanded Rangia Division to be set up at Rangia which has not been done yet. A survey was made in 1931 by the Britishers to take a railway line from Jakhlabandha to Jorhat and it was found feasible to take a line there. Till today that has not materialised and we have been demanding that all the towns in Assam should be touched by the Railways. The Kaziranga Express started from Guwahati via Furkating to Jorhat. But for the reasons best known to the Ministry, to the utter surprise of the people, it has been discontinued. Now, I request the Minister to look into the matter and pay some attention to continue the Kaziranga Express.

I would like to point out that huge areas of land have been occupied by unauthorised persons who are mostly foreigners. We have been demanding that these unauthorised occupants should be evicted. I do not know for what interest, may be for political interest, they are not taking any interest in the eviction of the occupants who are foreign nationals. There is only one superfast train going from New Delhi to Guwahati which is very slow. I request the hon. Minister to look into the matter of NE Express which he has assured during the last Budget. He has geared up the speed of all trains but not in the north-eastern sector. NE Express should be fast than what it is now. I

am from Golaghat district. There is only one station in the town. There is no room for the passengers and the entire building is old and rickety. Hence I request the Minister to immediately look into the matter and direct for improvement of the station.

Some employees of railways in Assam participated in the Assam movement for seven years and action has been taken against them. Their demands and cases have not been settled as yet; as per the Assam accord, their cases should have been settled immediately, but the Ministry of Railways is not paying any heed. Their cases should be settled immediately.

Then, the casual workers should be regularised. Those who had been dismissed from service for petty offences should also be reinstated.

Loco running staff were dismissed for participating in the railway strike in 1981. They should be reinstated as per the High Court and Administrative Tribunal's verdict.

In Assam there are a few railway facilities. If you go to a station to purchase a ticket and get it reserved, you cannot get it, but if you get into the train and pay some tips, you will get it. This practice should be stopped immediately. We do not know if there is any authority to look into that. If you are in the good books of someone, you will get the reservation, not otherwise.

Once I was humiliated by a railway employee, for no fault of mine. I brought it to the notice of the Railway Minister. He acknowledged my letter immediately, but I do not know what action has been taken. I request the hon. Minister to take appropriate action.

Lastly, I request him to pay special attention to the State of Assam. I request that railway level crossings should be established immediately at Bilgaon and Chongajan for the convenience of the people in the border area.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM BHAGAT PASWAN (Rosera): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Railway is the base of country's development. The policy of the Government is that the development works should be undertaken in backward areas. But it is unfortunate that Bihar has been totally ignored from the point of view of railway development. Mr. Scindia is a very active and energetic man. But he is not very active in respect of Bihar. The schemes of Northern Bihar have remained neglected for years. A survey of Sakri-Hasanpur Railway line covering a distance of 55 kilometre was conducted and its earth-work had also started in 1984. Provision for this item of work was made in the budget for 1986-87 but was dropped in the budget for the year 88-89. The scheme which had been provided for in the Budget for the last fifteen years, should be given first priority. Similarly the work of Darbhanga-Samastipur broad gauge line and Bagaha-Chhitoni railway bridge had started but was discontinued. I would urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways to arrange to start this work again under Rolling Stock Programme in view of the resentment among the people, the "Rail Roko" movement which has been launched there and the formation of a sangharsh samiti. Besides this, there are about 16-17 districts in Northern Bihar like the district of Patna, Darbhanga etc. which cover an area 250-300 kilometres and remain neglected as regards the provision of rail facilities in this region. There are about 10 more districts such as Jainagar, Patna and Darbhanga etc where 14 trains serving this area of about 200 kilometre have been cancelled. It is causing widespread resentment among the people. The private bus owners of this area are having their heyday as it is only who are providing transport facilities for to and fro journeys in this area. Railways are losing the revenue worth Rs. 40 lakhs per month. The Railway authorities of this region maintain that the bus service is more comfortable than train the train journey. Therefore people prefer buses. But it is not correct. The fact is that the passengers coming to Patna from Southern India, Bombay and Delhi do not easily get trains for Northern Bihar. They have

to wait for 8 to ten hours as the train is available only at 5 P.M. I request the Government to provide immediately a Mail or Express train on this section so that the passengers may reach their destination. There is already broadgauge line upto Samastipur but all the trains operating on this section have been cancelled. Even the express trains as they are called, actually run like passenger trains. They take a lot of time. Even the train operating between Samastipur and Jainagar has been cancelled. The people of those areas say that Railway officials such as Divisional Managers, Railway Managers etc. of this area have a collusion with the Private Bus owners and they compel the people to travel only by buses. The train from Samastipur has also been cancelled. So here there is no train from morning till evening. A train comes in the evening and then, there is no train upto 12 PM. Due to this wide gap of time the people have to face a lot of difficulty. The Government should bring to book those officials who want to put a blot on the capacity of the Railways. The Government should take care of the people of Bihar and provide rail facilities for the people of this state. Our hon. Minister is a very dynamic person. It is the bad luck of Northern Bihar that the development work and transportation facilities have come to a halt due to the cancellation of trains. Previously there was the provision of wooden chairs at Samastipur railway station but now these have been replaced by the plastic chairs which are not so comfortable.

Previously the entire furniture provided at the railway station used to be prepared by the Railway Department but now it is obtained through contractors. The people say that the seats which were provided earlier were durable than the present ones. Therefore I request you to stop this practice. In fact, these contractors are the men of the Divisional rail Manager. He had been transferred from Samastipur but he has got his transfer stayed. He is a local man and belongs to Begusarai. Thus a local man has been appointed as the Divisional Superintendent of Railways.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I think you for the reinstatement of Harijan scheduled Castes and scheduled Tribes under Crash Programme, Reservation quota has been implemented in it. But I request the Government to issue instructions for the recruitment of scheduled castes and scheduled tribes under Crash programme against their reserved quota on North-Eastern Railway.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I want to urge upon the hon. Minister to provide a stop for G. L. Guwabati express at Nayanagar in Samastipur division. A retiring room should also be got constructed at Rasera as there is no such room.

Sir, the food which is served is packed in tin-foils which is very unhygienic and its rates are also very high. Thus the quality of the food items being served is deteriorating and price of the tin-foil is also increasing. Even the contracts for packing the food in tin-foils have been given to the relatives of these officers which is making it worse and leading to more corruption. Therefore I request the hon. Minister to pay attention to all these things and streamline the entire system. With these words I conclude.

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17.13 hrs.

HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

[English]

Representation against import policy cash crops and spices.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We will now take up Half an hour discussion. We will resume the discussion on Railways' Grants after finishing the half an hour discussion.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS (Mavelikara) : What is this Sir ? We were not told about this late sitting.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : Well, we have discussed it in the House and the members have accepted to sit late. It was discussed at 5 o' clock.

SHRI THAMPAN THOMAS : Then we must be given dinner.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. R. DAS MUNSI) : It is good for people like Shri Thampan Thomas to fast once in a while.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : About dinner, you may ask Shri Namgyal.

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF SURFACE TRANSPORT AND DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI P. NAMGYAL) : I do not think that it will go that long. Moreover, many hon. members are attending the PM's dinner.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : We can decide about dinner later.

Yes. Mr. Kurup.

PROF. P. J. KURIEN (Idukki) : Sir, I have a submission. We all have given a notice for this motion. This subject is of great importance to Kerala. We request you to convert it into a discussion under Rule 193, so that we too can participate in it.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER : I will pass it on to the hon. Speaker. It can be decided in the Business Advisory Committee and the subject may be discussed once again under Rule 193. At this stage, I cannot do anything else.

SHRI SURESH KURUP (Kottayam) : You should allow them to put questions Sir.

The new Import-Export Policy was announced during the last Session. From that time onwards, members from Kerala