

[Shri Era Anbarasu]

How can you expect Railways to pay to General Revenues on these assets?

I wish to point out that this additional revenue of Rs. 490 crores could be raised by the Railways if deterrent steps are taken by the Railways to stop recurring pilferage in railway property and in the goods being carried by the Railways. The amount of compensation claimed on the loss of goods in transit is quite substantial. The loss in ticketless travel is running into several crores of rupees.

In addition to the special powers for the police as well as RPF to deal with the menace of pilferage, ticketless travel etc., there should be a Magistrate posted at each junction/station, and the ticketless travellers and other offenders should be awarded punishment on the spot; otherwise the cases would linger on for a long time. Such a step would go a long way in curbing various offences, and the railways would also stand to benefit in terms of revenues.

Further, a second class passenger can carry at present 35 kgs. and a first class passenger can carry 50 kgs. of luggage with him. There should be a graded variation in this matter so that the long distance passengers are enabled to take some more luggage. Now, a passenger going from Delhi to Agra can carry 35 kgs. and a passenger from Delhi to Trivandrum can also carry 35 kgs. of luggage. The long distance passenger going from Delhi to Madras or Trivandrum should be given the facility of carrying more luggage with them.

I would also submit that the Railway Convention Committee should be converted into a Standing Committee for the Railways. That will ensure day to day appraisal and appreciation of the Railway finances.

The hon. Minister has said that the on-going projects would not be allowed to suffer for want of finances, and no new projects would be undertaken for want of funds. In this connection, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister to the case of Karur-Dindigul-Tuticorin-Tirunelveli broad gauge line with a capital outlay of Rs. 42.5 crores; but so far only Rs. 3 crores have been spent and this Budget provides a sum of Rs. 175 crores only. At this rate, this scheme may take four decades to get completed. I would, therefore, urge the Minister to provide more money for the speedy implementation of this project.

Here, I would also like to make one suggestion. When you take up a project, at least you should try to spend three-fourth of the amount in the first year or two. If you spread it over a number of years and allocate only a paltry sum, the project will always suffer.

MR DEPUTY-SPEAKER: And the cost will also go up, if it is delayed.

SHRI ERA ANBARASU: Sir, Tamil Nadu occupies the eighth place in the railway track map. The southern railway has always been treated in a step-motherly manner. But, now after the assumption of office the Minister of State for Railways is taking keen