

[Shri Raghunatha Reddy]
representatives of the employers—the Indian and Eastern Newspaper Society and the Indian Languages Newspapers Association—on 27th February 1973. The representatives of the employers said that they would furnish their considered views on the subject by the end of March 1973. They are being reminded to do so as soon as possible.

I would like to assure the House that I will have the matter examined, to the extent it relates to my Ministry, as soon as the views of the representatives of the newspapers employers have been received.

17.06 hrs.

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS (RAILWAYS), 1973-74—contd.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS rose—

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am not allowing any question. The Railway Minister.

SHRI S. M. BANERJEE (Kanpur): Not a question, but a clarification.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, please when it starts, then everybody will demand. I am not willing to allow this. The Railway Minister, please.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I am indeed thankful to the hon. Members of this House who have participated in the debate and made a number of valuable points. My colleague, Shri Mohd. Shafi Qureshi, has intervened in the debate and tried to cover a number of points made by the hon. Members. At this stage, I will take up only two or three points before I sit down.

The first is the question, as was raised by Mr. Dinen Bhattacharyya who initiated the debate yesterday, about bonus. I will start with bonus, and Mr. Banerjee will perhaps be happy. On this question, as I have said earlier, our mind is open, and we have not come to any conclusion. Shri Dinen Bhattacharyya gave an argument yesterday that these depart-

mental workers should be treated as the other public sector workers. This is a self-defeating argument. I will advise Mr. Dinen Bhattacharyya not to advance this kind of argument, which might force them to lose their case. On this bonus, I will say again that there is nothing I can say at this stage, especially before we get the report of the Third Pay Commission. But I will again repeat that my mind on this issue is open.

Then, Shri Dinen Bhattacharyya also raised yesterday,— and Shri Birender Singh Rao today,—and used some harsh words about the Railway Board. It has been unfortunate that in every debate on the railway budget the Railway Board comes into the picture and it is discussed.

AN HON. MEMBER: And rightly so.

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: Might be, not according to me. I have explained at length the character and the composition of the Railway Board. Even today I held that this a body consisting of wise, experienced officers presided over by the Chairman, and there is nothing special about it. We have got Secretaries in the Ministry of Defence. There is a principal Secretary in the Ministry of Defence. So, these four Members are nothing but Secretaries and the Railway Board is presided over by the Chairman who is more or less a Principal Secretary. It will be very wrong to suggest that the Board dominates in the Ministry and the Minister is nobody in the Ministry. The Board has to carry out the decisions and directions given by the Minister. As I had said earlier, it will be really a bad day if the Ministers are flouted by any civil servant and I hold that view; and it has never been my experience that if I pass some orders any Secretary or any officer had dared to flout my order or instruction. I still held that the Railway Board will have to follow what I want as the executive agent of this Parliament. As I said earlier, also, I will say that

this Parliament is supreme and sovereign, and it represents the will of the people, and whatever this Parliament asks and whatever this Parliament decides has to be implemented; and myself, as an executive agent of Parliament, will try to do what Parliament wants me to do.

But I will say one thing. It is not fair to attack the senior officers who have come to this position after hard work and long service, and I will say that they are a band of dedicated workers.

The question was raised by Mr. Dinen Bhattacharyya, about the reopening of the Howrah-Amra railway—Martin's light railway. In my original speech I had stated about it. Today also I say this. We have taken a decision for taking over the Howrah—Amra railway and Shadhara railway of the Martin Light Railway. The question was about land we had long discussions with the Chief Minister of West Bengal Shri S. S. Ray. He agreed that it should be converted into broad-gauge. Earlier local people were not prepared to spare the land for the broad-gauge. Now that the local people have agreed. We shall go ahead with the project. In the other case there is no problem of land and so the same thing applies. 50 per cent of the cost has to be borne by the respective State Governments.

An hon. Member wanted priority should be given to the Defence. Of course, Defence will get priority. During the last two wars, in 1965 and 1971 the railways have done a good job and the defence people had good words to say about the railways. Some hon. members had also mentioned it.

Some hon. Member has said that not a single mile of railway line has been given to Andhra. In my budget speech I mentioned two proposals in Andhra. One is, Guntur-Macheria conversion to broad-gauge and the other is new broad-gauge line: Nadikudi-Bibinagar. Shri Darbara Singh suggested that some first class accommodation should be allotted to Hoshi-

arpur. I do not think it is a big problem. Apart from third class quota first class quota will be put in to meet the requirements of Hoshiarpur.

A line in Haryana was also suggested and the Chief Minister of Haryana Mr. Bansi Lal has been asking for a new line (Interruptions). You must accept that he is a very active Chief Minister. The matter is under examination.

Shri Ram Avtar Shastri wanted a claims office at Patna. I had accepted a suggestion at the Muzafarpur meeting. There will be a claims office at Patna. Shri K. C. Pande wanted a platform on the northern side of Khalilabad station. I had discussions with my officers and I hope there will be no difficulty. It will take some time and we shall try to provide a platform on the northern side of Khalilabad station.

Shri Piloo Mody raised the question of railway line in Sabarkantha. It was put before me earlier also by some social workers of the place and we are getting it examined, but it is difficult for me to commit anything at this stage.

SHRI PILOO MODY (Godhra): Please commit... (Interruptions)

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: About Coal, it a fact that till a few weeks back there was difficulty about the movement of coal, but now the position has considerably improved. Yesterday we had a meeting about the movement of coal. On the whole the performance of the railways is carrying coal this year has been better than the last year. We have set up a control room in the Rail Bhavan. There is a committee consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Irrigation and Power, Industrial Development, Heavy Engineering and the Railways and that Committee meets everyday to look into the problems of Coal supply to the power houses especially and also the supply of coal to the citizens.

As already mentioned earlier we had

[Shri Pillo Mody] a proposal to run commodity specials. This will come into being shortly. For the movement of coal we shall give special facilities, that is creation of coal dumps at the central places all over the country as was done for some time during the last war. We want to revive that system as it has helped us a lot in the movement of coal.

As regards new lines I do not want to go into details as the same has been dealt with by me at considerable length already. Shri Parashar has made a point with regard to the procedure for opening a new line. That is a fact. For opening a line in an area it should have the traffic of 3 million tons of goods. An underdeveloped area cannot be expected to have such a heavy traffic. It cannot afford to move 3 million tons of goods. As I said that was one of the concepts by which we go. Now we have to think in terms of backwardness of the areas. I am one of those who feel very strongly that power and transport create their own demand. Here the supply should precede the demand—not that the demand should precede the supply. This applies to cotton growing areas where there is need for opening a line for the movement of cotton. Same is the case with regard to Andhra, Bihar, Assam and Orissa. My intention is that upto 60 k.m. in backward areas railway-line development can be taken up. For purposes of economic development of the backward regions why we should not take up those areas for constructing railway-lines?

With this approach in view I want to tackle this problem. Of course we have very limited resources. So far as new lines are concerned, several hon. Members have spoken about the needs of their respective areas. Several hon. Members have expressed concern in regard to the need to provide adequate number of wagons for the transportation of coal, foodgrains, salt and other essential commodities. I want to remove the wrong impression created in the minds of the hon. Members that cement was in short supply

because of non-availability of wagons. (Interruptions).

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please do not disturb him. He is not yielding.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE (Rajapur): As far as new railway lines are concerned, I want to make one submission. Regarding the West Coast Railways the statements made in the Maharashtra Assembly and here are completely contradictory. And, therefore, the hon. Minister here should clarify the position before he completes his speech.

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: I have already made a detailed statement. There is no complaint from the people of Maharashtra State. They are fully satisfied and there is no contradiction in the statements made in the Maharashtra Assembly and here. If he wants to make any further points, he can come and discuss with me. To my mind there appears to be no contradictions at all. Sanction has of course to be given. You know everything.

There has been an upsurge of demand for railway wagons. In some sectors, the supply of wagons is short of demand. I am seized of the problem. I may repeat what I have said earlier, that to some extent certain circumstances inhibit optimum utilisation of our rolling stock, such as, slow release of rolling-stock by inefficient industrial units or by uncooperative traders. Availability of wagons would certainly improve if the immobilised wagons are all put back into the stream of traffic.

I have already taken steps to augment our fleet of wagons and our holdings in locomotives. We have recently ordered 15,000 additional wagons over and above the 26,000 already on order. Wagon manufacture in the railway workshops at Amritsar, Golden Rock and Samastipur is also being stepped up to 4,000 wagons per annum. The production target at Chittaranjan Locomotive Works which is expected to reach 109 electric locomotives and diesel shunters will be stepped up to 128 numbers during

1973-74. Likewise, the manufacture of diesel/electric locomotives at Varanasi is expected to go up to 140 in the next year.

I am paying particular attention to the expeditious movement of essential commodities like coal foodgrains, salt, sugar etc. The movement of coal traffic is accorded a high priority by the railways. They fully realise the importance of supplying adequate wagons for coal movement to various consumers like steel plants, power houses, railways themselves and other important industrial units. The daily average loading of coal during 1971-72 was 7,830 wagons including 5,647 wagons from Bengal-Bihar fields. Till about the end of February 1973 in the current year, coal loading achieved was 8,021 wagons per day including 5,682 wagons from Bengal-Bihar fields. The position would have been still better but for immobilisation of a large number of wagons on account of various agitations, bundhs and strikes in different parts of the country. The agitation in Andhra Pradesh has seriously affected railway operations from the end of October 1972 onwards and has caused immobilisation of a large number of wagons for days together. Railway operations in Northern India were also seriously upset in January 1973 on account of the strike of the engineers of the UP State Electricity Board. Despite these adverse factors, utmost efforts are being made by the Railways to increase wagon supplies for coal loading.

The three important commodities for human consumption are foodgrains, sugar and salt.

In the context of the failure of monsoon and drought conditions in several parts of the country, Railways were called upon to carry heavy foodgrains traffic from the State of Punjab and Haryana to different States in western and southern India. This task was performed very ably by the Railways. 6.23 million tonnes of foodgrains were moved from Haryana and Punjab till the end of February 1973 this year as compared to 4.25

million tonnes during the same period last year. The overall loading of foodgrains traffic during the period April 1971 to January 1972 was 12.94 million tonnes which has already surpassed this year with the lifting of 13.36 million tonnes of foodgrains up to the end of January 1973.

Considering the importance of salt for the community, its movement has also been accorded a high priority. During the period April 1972 to January 1973, 61,207 wagons were loaded with salt for human consumption as compared to 50,976 wagons loaded in the corresponding period of 1971-72.

During the period April 1972 to January 1973, 47,755 wagons were loaded with sugar, both on the broad and metre gauge systems, as compared to 59,420 wagons during the corresponding period of 1971-72. The drop in loading is mainly due to the less offering of sugar traffic during the current year. The demands for wagons have generally been met in full.

Lastly, I would say a word about the bookstalls. Some hon. Members raised this question of Wheeler and Company and other bookstalls. I have been considering this question and I might give one assurance to the hon. Members. This question of educated unemployment is before us and I am seriously thinking of the problem whether it would not be possible to allot these bookstalls to co-operatives of three, four or five educated unemployed youngmen. I want this monopoly to go. If the youngmen form co-operatives at different stations, they will be allotted these bookstalls. I hope they will be able to take advantage of that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will now put all the cut motions to the vote of the House.

All the cut motions were put and negatived.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That the respective sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the

[Shri L. N. Mishra]

third column of the order paper be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of the following demands entered in the second column thereof—

Demands Nos. 1 to 11, 11A, 12 to 20."

The motion was adopted.

[The motions for Demands for Grants, which were adopted by the Lok Sabha, are reproduced below:—Ed.]

DEMAND NO. 1.—RAILWAY BOARD.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 1,75,16,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Railway Board'."

DEMAND NO. 2.—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENDITURE.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 7,98 92,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Miscellaneous Expenditure'."

DEMAND NO. 3.—PAYMENTS TO WORKED LINES AND OTHERS.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 13,45,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Payments to Worked Lines and Others'."

DEMAND NO. 4.—WORKING EXPENSES—ADMINISTRATION.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 98,77,04,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Administration'."

DEMAND NO. 5.—WORKING EXPENSES—REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 363,59,77,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Repairs and Maintenance'."

DEMAND NO. 6.—WORKING EXPENSES—OPERATING STAFF.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 209,55,49,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operating Staff'."

DEMAND NO. 7.—WORKING EXPENSES—OPERATION (FUEL).

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 185,54,39,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation (Fuel)'."

DEMAND NO. 8.—WORKING EXPENSES—OPERATION OTHER THAN STAFF AND FUEL.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 57,24,00,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Operation other than Staff and Fuel'."

DEMAND NO. 9.—WORKING EXPENSES—MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 42,06,30,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Miscellaneous Expenses'."

DEMAND NO. 10.—WORKING EXPENSES—STAFF WELFARE.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 32,18,78,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Staff Welfare'."

DEMAND No. 11.—WORKING EXPENSES—APPROPRIATION TO DEPRECIATION RESERVE FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 115,00,00,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Appropriation to Depreciation Reserve Fund'."

DEMAND No. 11A.—WORKING EXPENSES—APPROPRIATION PENSION FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 16,00,00,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Working Expenses—Appropriation Pension Fund'."

DEMAND No. 12.—DIVIDEND TO GENERAL REVENUES.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 172,61,46,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Dividend to General Revenue'."

DEMAND No. 13.—OPEN LINE WORKS (REVENUE).

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,00,38,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Open Line Works (Revenue)'."

DEMAND No. 14.—CONSTRUCTION OF NEW LINES—CAPITAL AND DEPRECIATION RESERVE FUND

"That a sum not exceeding

Rs. 36,76,55,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Construction of New Lines—Capital and Depreciation Reserve Fund'."

DEMAND No. 15.—OPEN LINE WORKS—CAPITAL, DEPRECIATION RESERVE FUND AND DEVELOPMENT FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 741,60,12,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Open Line Works—Capital, Depreciation Reserve Fund and Development Fund'."

DEMAND No. 16.—PENSIONARY CHARGES PENSIONS FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 12,57,34,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Pensionary Charges—Pension Fund'."

DEMAND No. 17.—REPAYMENT OF LOANS FROM GENERAL REVENUES AND INTEREST THEREON—DEVELOPMENT FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 5,22,73,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Repayment of loans from General Revenues and Interest thereon—Development Fund'."

DEMAND No. 18.—APPROPRIATION TO DEVELOPMENT FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 16,46,59,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Appropriation to Development Fund'."

DEMAND No. 19.—APPROPRIATION TO REVENUE RESERVE FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs. 8,53,99,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Appropriation to Revenue Reserve Fund'."

DEMAND No. 20.—PAYMENTS TOWARDS AMORTISATION OF OVER CAPITALISATION, REPAYMENTS OF LOANS FROM GENERAL REVENUES AND INTEREST THEREON—REVENUE RESERVE FUND.

"That a sum not exceeding Rs 8,76,22,000 be granted to the President to defray the charges which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1974, in respect of 'Payments towards Amortisation of over capitalisation, Repayments of Loans from General Revenues and interest thereon—Revenue Reserve Fund'."

17.27 hrs.

**APPROPRIATION (RAILWAYS)
No. 2 Bill*, 1973**

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI L. N. MISHRA): I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1973-74 for the purposes of Railways.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of

the financial year 1973-1974 for the purposes of Railways.

The motion was adopted

SHRI L. N. MISHRA: I introduce** the Bill.

I beg to move†

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1973-74 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

MR. CHAIRMAN: Motion moved:

"That the Bill to authorise payment and appropriation of certain sums from and out of the Consolidated Fund of India for the services of the financial year 1973-74 for the purposes of Railways, be taken into consideration."

Shri Jyotirmoy Bosu has given notice to speak on this. He may take one minute or so.

SHRI JYOTIRMOY BOSU (Diamond Harbour): Sir, I want to draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister to the report that has been submitted by the Eastern Railway Committee on the running of the Martin Light Railways to Howrah. After a thorough scrutiny and examination, they have found that the light railways should be made to run the way they are at the moment.

Neither the Railway Minister nor the Railway Board understands capitalisation. That is why the whole Indian Railways is going into dolldrums today. The Martin Light Railways runs with zero capital but it yields a dividend of carrying 40,000 passengers a day who go to their place of employment to earn their livelihood and to struggle for survival.

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**Introduced with the recommendation of the President.

†Moved with the recommendation of the President.