

[Shri Sachindra Chaudhri]

crores which is Rs. 15.8 crores more than the Revised Estimate for the current year. The increase is mainly due to full year's provision being made for the payment of revised rates of allowances, the general revision of scales of pay proposed to be given effect to from 1st January, 1966, increased debt charges and the 'committed' expenditure arising out of completed Third Plan schemes. In the net, the Revenue account would show a surplus of Rs. 3.8 crores next year as against a deficit of Rs. 1.1 crores in the current year.

Capital outlay next year is estimated at Rs. 11.0 crores as against Rs. 16.8 crores in the current year, the fall being mainly accounted for by the recovery shown in the budget estimates for adjusting the value of the assets of the former Transport Department transferred to the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation which came into being from the beginning of the current year. The net disbursement of loans and advances by the State Government next year is placed at Rs. 20.0 crores as against Rs. 18.6 crores in the current year. The increase is due to the provision made in the estimates for 1966-67 for adjusting the value of the assets of the Transport Department as loan to the newly formed Corporation.

Next year's estimates provide for a sum of Rs. 41.8 crores for outlay on the State Plan. This includes Rs. 1 crore towards outlay on road transport schemes to be financed by the Kerala State Road Transport Corporation out of its own resources. Central assistance for the Plan would be Rs. 28.30 crores and the balance would be met from the State's own resources. The Plan places particular emphasis on the agricultural sector, including Fisheries and also the acceleration of the projects on hand in other sectors. The outlay on the agricultural sector, including medium irrigation, Co-operation and community development, would be Rs. 14.7 crores and that on Power Rs. 15.0

crores. All the other sectors together would have an outlay of Rs. 12.1 crores. Next year's estimates also include a provision of Rs. 9.23 crores for outlay on Centrally sponsored schemes for which the central assistance would be Rs. 9.03 crores. The details are given in the publication on the Plan programme.

The budgetary position for next year may now be summarised. The Revenue budget shows a surplus of Rs. 3.8 crores at the existing level of taxation. The capital outlay is placed at Rs. 11.0 crores and loans and advances at Rs. 20.0 crores. The debt repayment next year is placed at Rs. 10.9 crores. The net disbursement of Rs. 41.9 crores, will be met, apart from the Revenue surplus of Rs. 3.8 crores, by loans from the Centre of Rs. 29.6 crores, by market borrowing of Rs. 4 crores, by the State's share of Small Savings collections of Rs. 2 crores and by receipts under miscellaneous debt and deposit heads of Rs. 1.8 crores leaving an overall deficit of Rs. 94 lakhs.

The deficit would be partly covered by the withdrawal of the deduction allowed by the Sales Tax Rules for excise duty paid on goods, in the calculation of turn over of goods. The necessary amendment to the Rules has already been notified on the basis of a decision mutually agreed upon by all the Southern States. Proposals for the rationalisation of sales tax rates and revision of stamp duties and court fees on a few items, are also under consideration.

12.25 hrs.

RAILWAY BUDGET—GENERAL DISCUSSION—Contd.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Mr. A. T. Sarma may continue his speech.

Shri A. T. Sarma (Chatrapur): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, I have already said that there are no proper railway lines in my State. Our grievances are

manifold. First of all we want that certain lines should be laid in my State. I shall give you the reasons for that.

Due to the daring and adventurous efforts of my beloved leader, ex-Chief Minister, Biju Babu, we are fortunate enough to have a port at Paradeep. It is a port that could be constructed within the stipulated time without any help from the Centre. Now it is under the direct control of the Centre, but it is not linked with any railway line. If we want the port to prosper, then we must get the port linked with railway lines; there should be one line from Cuttack to Paradeep; another from Jharsguda to Paradeep; and others connecting the port with the mining centres from where the iron and manganese ores are exported. I would like to draw the special attention of the hon. Minister to this point.

There is another point. Out of the population of 17 million, about one-fourth consists of adivasis; they are scattered here and there in the hilly areas. These hilly areas are not accessible to the public. Even in this 20th Century—I am ashamed to announce it here—there are certain adivasis who live naked and travel naked on public roads. To get them civilised, the railway link must be established and lines should be opened to these hilly areas as early as possible.

In this connection I want to mention that there was a proposal to construct a line from Gopalpur, a third class seaport, to Bastar—about 150 miles in the heart of the hilly centres. Surveys were conducted and people were given the understanding that the line would be established, but till now, no action has been taken; the proposal lies unattended.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath (Hoshangabad): It is coming in the Fourth Five-Year Plan.

Shri A. T. Sarma: God knows. But now I am hopeful because we have

our own Government. I request the hon. Minister to look into this matter.

This is a State where we have to do many things. If the minerals of my State are worked, if the various projects are properly utilised, then my State will turn to be the richest in India within a short period. I am proud of saying this. But what is the use? We have no communications; we have no industrial factories and other amenities. That is why we are lagging behind even in this 20th Century. I want to draw the special attention of the hon. Minister to this. This is one side.

Another side is this. I shall tell you how the people of my State are inconvenienced by the existing arrangement of the Railways. First of all, the trains run with a limit of 20 miles per hour. The distance from Howrah to Burdwan is the same as that between Howrah and Kargapur. Whereas the trains cover the distance between Howrah and Burdwan in 1½ hours, the up and down trains between Howrah and Kargapur take three hours. I do not know what is the cause. A diesel engine is being attached to the Mail at Kargapur and I do not understand why it is not attached at Howrah. Unnecessarily our people are put to trouble by having to spend a longer time. Even to go from Howrah to Cuttack, it takes nine hours at an average speed of 22 to 25 miles.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: So that you get your money's worth.

Shri A. T. Sarma: The hon. member is kind enough; I thank him.

If it is properly administered, it can be done. There will be no difficulty on the side of the Government; no extra expenses are involved; only some understanding, some arrangement, is required.

Besides, all the up and down trains pass through my State in the dead of

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night. Madras Mail, Janata Express and Puri Express are the main trains and they pass, from Howrah to Berhampur, in the dead of night. The passengers are not allowed to see the faces of the people of my State. Our administration is kind enough to do such things. Even the Down trains that pass through Orissa pass through that State at dead of night. Even the Asansol and Hyderabad Passengers pass through that State at dead of night.

There is another difficulty also that we are experiencing. The passengers arriving at Howrah by the trains from the Bombay side or the Nadia or even the Delhi side or the Gaya side arrive there at about 11 A.M., but they have to wait for eight hours before they could catch the next available train for Orissa, because those trains start at 7 P.M., 8 P.M. and 10 P.M. So, the passengers who come from the Bombay side or the Nadia side or the Delhi side have to wait for eight hours to catch the next available train. I do not know why proper arrangements are not being made. A mail train was scheduled to start at Howrah at 1.30 P.M., but recently when we suggested that some stop-gap arrangement should be made, the timing was changed to 7 P.M. I would request that at least the timings of these trains should be changed to suit the passengers. I do not know why the passengers should be put to inconvenience by being made to wait from 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. After all, there is no extra expenditure necessary to remove this inconvenience. I am drawing the attention of the hon. Minister to this point so that he may save the passengers from this kind of inconvenience.

Another thing that I would like to submit is that we are losing even the trains that we have. There was a shuttle train from Waltair to Cuttack which was abolished. There was also another train from Waltair to Khargapur Road which was also abolished. During this year itself there was a local train which was introduced from Cuttack to Bhubaneswar and back,

and that train was running with very heavy rush, but that also was abolished during this year. There was local booking office at Cuttack, which was also abolished.

There was a dining car attached to 3 UP and 4 Down trains, but that has also been removed now. I do not know what the fate of the passengers in Orissa is going to be under these conditions. In this connection, I want to mention my bitter experience. Whenever I travel from Howrah by 3 UP train, I place an order for my meals to be served at Kargapur, but I never get it. It is a known fact, and all the passengers passing through that route suffer from this. The conductor comes and takes the order and says that he would wire and we shall be served with meals. But when we reach the place, the manager of the catering establishment comes and tells us that no meals would be available because it is already 10 P.M.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Did my hon. friend write to the hon. Minister about it?

Shri A. T. Sarma: But the dining car is attached at Waltair to the same train. I do not know why the people of Orissa should be deprived of the facilities of a dining car. There seems to be some organisation which is working against the interests of Orissa, I am afraid, in the railway administration. These are the actual facts, and I am not exaggerating anything at all.

I would also like to mention that very recently, the first class waiting room at Berhampur which is my native place has been abolished, without any reasons being assigned therefor. When I enquired about it, the station master told me that it was meant for the residence of the inspecting officers. The interests of the inspecting officers appear to be more valuable than those of the passengers.

My grievances are thus manifold, and I would draw the attention of the hon. Minister to these things. Re-

cently, when I was travelling by the Doon Express on the 12th of last month, I placed an order for meals to be served at Patna; the attendant came and took the order, and he sent the wire, but at Patna no meal was served to me at all.

An hon. Member: Probably, it was a Monday evening.

Shri A. T. Sarma: Probably they did not serve meals thinking that upavasa was more beneficial for a human being.

Shri Ravindra Varma (Thiruvella): Perhaps it was Monday evening.

Shri A. T. Sarma: No, it was Saturday I was travelling by that train to Delhi to attend the session of Parliament on the 14th February, 1966.

Now, I would like to state another bitter experience of mine before you. In the waiting room at Howrah station, many thefts take place. I arrived there at 11 A.M., took my bath, went at about 12 noon to take my meals and returned back at 12.25 P.M., but by that time, my handbag which I had kept inside my hold-all had been stolen away. I had reported the matter to the police but no action was taken.

An hon. Member: The police have conducted the thefts?

Shri A. T. Sarma: Probably they also get some part of the stolen property. There is no doubt about it; the bearers and the servants mix together and they share in it evidently. Very recently, these thefts have been on the increase and they have been occurring very frequently. Even in the matter of reservation also, there is plenty of difficulty . . .

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There is something wrong.

Shri A. T. Sarma: I would draw the kind attention of the hon. Minister to these things so that he may take the necessary action for rectifying the things.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Now, Dr. Ram Subhag Singh.

Shri Muthyal Rao (Mahbubnagar): Before the hon. Minister starts his speech, may I make one submission? There is no Member of the Opposition present opposite? Only Shri Kamath and one other hon. Member is there. Most of the senior Members of the Opposition are not here. May I request that one of the Opposition leaders at least should be seated there?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: There is no obligation on their part . . .

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Under what rule does he raise this point?

Shri Muthyal Rao: Otherwise, why should they go on raising the objection that a Cabinet Minister is not there or a Minister of State is not there on the Treasury Benches? At the moment, the hon. Minister in charge, the Minister of State and the Deputy Minister are all here, but the Opposition leaders are not here.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Under what rule, or under what article of the Constitution have they to be here?

The Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways (Dr. Ram Subhag Singh): We are very sorry that the hon. Member who preceded me had to experience so many difficulties while travelling on the railways. We shall try to attend to most of the points that he had raised.

But regarding one point, I might point out to him that it is not in our mind to neglect the State of Orissa, which he has said, is going to be one of the most developed States after a few years. He also said that some

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of the trains had been withdrawn. But I might be permitted to point out that we are going to introduce three pairs of trains which would be passing through Orissa or terminate there from 1st April, 1966, and those trains would be as follows:—One pair of express/fast passenger trains from Madras to Howrah, one pair of bi-weekly express trains from Tatanagar to Waltair, which would be passing through Titlagarh and through the heart of the tribal areas of Bihar, Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, and one pair of parcel-cum-passenger trains, which will be going from Kharagpur to Khurda Road. Therefore, I think that the passengers, who may be interested in seeing the face of Orissa, will naturally be seeing the development that has recently been effected there.

Though, of course, I would very much like to be guided by hon. Members, I would say that it is not a fact that Orissa has been neglected. Compared to the expenditure on the railways in the other zones, the expenditure incurred on improving the tracks etc. on the South-Eastern Railway is, if not higher, quite comparable, and that Railway caters to the requirements of Orissa. I think anybody who would be visiting the area of Western Orissa or Northern Orissa and wants to see its face after a period of ten years would be surprised to see the vast improvement that has been effected on the railways.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Contiguous to Bihar.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Bihar also, because Shri Kamath was imprisoned in Bihar.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: I was jailed in Bihar in 1942.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: He was in my constituency.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: That is right.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: In Bihar State also, particularly the tribal areas. You can see that all the steel plants are more or less located in the same belt. Bengal-Bihar-Orissa-Madhya Pradesh, and all those areas have a first class developed system of railways. Those developments were effected only recently.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Not first class, but second class.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I stand corrected, because Shri Kamath is more conversant with this language.

The waiting room facility to which Shri Sarma referred, will be attended to. Berhampore is one of the district headquarters. So it can never be ignored.

As the House knows, we are not a losing concern. To be modest, I should say that the railways have made a net earning which has virtually doubled during the past five years. It was only Rs. 88 crores in 1960-61 and during the coming year 1966-67, it will reach the figure of Rs. 156 crores. It will be paying to the general revenues more than double of what it paid in 1960-61. At that time, it paid about Rs. 56 crores, but during the coming year it will be paying Rs. 134 crores.

Along with earning revenue, it has improved its capacity. When I speak of improvement of capacity, it means better utilisation of rolling stock etc. It was due to this fact and this fact alone that the railways were able to face the Emergency so effectively that it brought laurels to them from all corners, even from the critics.

Shri Shiv Charan Mathur asked yesterday what has been paid to the railway workers who played such an important role at that time—and the Parliament paid open tribute to them not only during this debate but also earlier. Apart from the quick payment, settlement of dues and family pensions due to the family members

of the employees—20 of them were killed—the family of each person, who lost his life while on duty with the railways, was paid Rs. 500 as *ex-gratia* payment and Rs. 1,000 as assistance, from the Railway Minister's Welfare and Relief Fund/Staff Benefit Fund. This is in addition to the payment of the full normal compensation ranging from Rs. 3600 to Rs. 7,000. We have also provided that the widows and dependents will be absorbed in suitable jobs on the railways and that their minor children will be given educational benefits upto the higher secondary standard.

When I speak about improvement in the performance of the railways, I am not unaware about their shortcomings. Other Members have pointed out their difficulties while travelling on the railway, as Shri A. T. Sarma did. But it is also a fact that the number of persons travelling has doubled now compared to ten years ago, because from 1284 million passengers then, the number has risen to about 2100 million per annum. The freight traffic has been more than double of what it was previously; it used to be only 92 or 93 million; now it is 200 million. So there is bound to be some difficulty somewhere when you handle such a big traffic, both passenger and freight.

During this time the number of trains has also gone up. Last year about 304 trains were introduced; during 1965-66, we introduced 175 trains. The run of the trains has also been extended. Shri A. T. Sarma and other Members also spoke about the railways taking much time in various parts. With a view to obviate that problem, we are improving the speed of our trains. The Howrah-Madras Mail, the Kalka-Howrah Mail and so many other trains have been speeded up, because now they are being hauled by diesel engines. The Sealdah-Pathankot Express between Sealdah to Moghalsarai is being hauled by electric engines. Due to this as well as alertness, there is a

reduction in terms of hours; the total running time of many trains is being reduced and a larger number of trains are going to reach their destination earlier than they used to.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: But not punctual.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Punctuality also, because Shri Kamath may be interested in the punctuality figures.

Shri C. K. Bhattacharyya (Rai-ganj): Except in the Lok Sabha.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: May be that he is very punctual here. I must here pay a tribute to Shri Kamath and Dr. Aney for being very particular in attending the House and always being here.

Shri S. M. Banerjee (Kanpur): What about me?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Shri Banerjee also.

Punctuality, which was 85.26 per cent in 1962-63, has now reached in 1964-65—today's figure is not available—87.61 per cent.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath. Who compiles these figures?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Naturally both of us get them from the same source.

The accidents figure also has very much gone down. The capacity to haul traffic, passenger and goods, has also gone up. I was referring to accident figures. In 1960-61, it was 2121; now it has come down in 1964-65 to 1349.

Shri Maurya (Aligarh): What about failure of permanent way, what about failure of rolling stock, what about other failures?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I accept what Shri Maurya is saying, that

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there has been failure. I never claimed that there has been 100 per cent success.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Slow but steady improvement.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Even if I say 96 per cent, there is a failure of 4 per cent, and that is our objective that we must, as a nation, attain . . .

Shri Maurya: I do not say that. I say the number of accidents in these cases is increasing.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: That is true, but when you come to the total figure, it has come down. The number of deaths has gone down, the number of derailments, major accidents, all these things are virtually going down daily. You might also be interested in knowing that recently we handled one of the biggest Kumbh fairs, and there was no trouble. Just like meeting a war challenge, we met the Kumbh challenge.

On the Assam side also, everybody was afraid how our foodgrains, our war equipment, our soldiers, would reach the northeastern corners, but due to the alertness of the railwaymen of the N.F. Railway, most of whom are class three and class four employees, as also the big and middle officers, there was no difficulty. Despite the fact that Pakistan not only prevented us from carrying our cargoes but also confiscated them, and did not allow the riverine route to be operated, the railways played their role and increased the total haulage capacity by at least 31 per cent, and there was no difficulty in Manipur, Nagaland or NEFA getting their supplies in time. I pay my tribute to the railwaymen of that area also.

But, at the same time, I would seek the co-operation of the House, because the railways are functioning within limited resources, to discharge their duties effectively towards the nation in maintaining the freedom of the country. It is also our duty to con-

sider how we can better expand the railways, because all our weak areas are generally on our borders, and more particularly on our borders on the northwest and the northeast, and also on the western border from Kutch to Gilgit. There is no net work of the railway system anywhere in the borders—there lies the crux of our planning—and because of this the Mizo situation has arisen, or the Manipur or Nagaland situation. There must be a meticulous study of our problem to find out where railways are needed.

Dr. Singhvi was pointing out about the net earnings. He said we were spending more than 10 per cent of our earnings in maintaining our staff or a big paraphernalia. He asked why we are not making 12 per cent profit according to our own assertion. It is because the freedom of the country is bigger than any amount of profit that you might earn from any undertaking like the railways which is the biggest national undertaking. In ancient and medieval times forts were constructed with a view to provide security to a particular area, but with the invention of the steam engine, atomic engine and so on, those fortresses have become outmoded.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: Did he say, atomic engine?"

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Yes, atomic energy you can say.

Shri Hari Vishnu Kamath: For railways?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am pointing out that wherever the railway is in a position to operate, there is a better amount of security, and therefore this must be viewed from that angle, and Parliament should see that that is done.

Shrimati Jyotsna Chanda and Shri Laskar pointed out about linking Manipur and Silchar. It will cost about Rs. 3 crores; and from Silchar to Jiribum another Rs. 25 crores, and

from Jiribum to Chudachandpur and to Aijal it will be another Rs. 25 crores. So, are we prepared to be guided by economic thinking alone or also by security thinking? I would prefer security to economic earning.

Shri Mengi said something about Jammu. It is true this railway has gone to Kathua. He wants to have a waiting room there. That will be provided. He also wanted other facilities there. If in Jammu we want to have satisfaction, it is necessary that Jammu must be provided with a rail link; it will have to be provided and it will be provided. It can also be extended beyond Jammu.

Shrimati Jyotsna Chanda (Cachar): On a point of information, may I know what measures you are taking to secure the line which runs from Lumding to Mariani? I have been pressing this point for the last few years that the jungles on either side of the track should be cleared and we should rehabilitate people there.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: It is good that Mrs. Chanda has pointed out this fact. This is a point which must be vigorously and effectively tackled. From the country's security point of view it is necessary that the population which is there should not be afraid of any eventuality, but till we develop the capacity to meet the menace in the jungle. It is necessary to clear the jungle, because if anybody sees our security forces going, he can shoot them from the jungle. So, it is good that we clear, but simultaneously we must improve our military effectiveness. By military I mean railway police and everything, our capacity to guard the particular alignment more effectively, and we will do it because the entire area is under the operational command of the military. Also, the area is, as she knows herself better than myself, under the police control of the State Government of Assam. The railways, the police, the military, we are all acting as one, and trying to increase the strength.

As for the Pokaran—Jaisalmer line, Shri Mathur might be interested in knowing that this rail construction programme is going to be undertaken very soon.

Shri Hanumanthaiya spoke about other areas. He said there should be conversion of lower gauges into broad gauge. That problem was studied previously in 1957.

Shri Sham Lal Saraf (Jammu and Kashmir): What about his suggestion for a railway from Cape Comorin to Kashmir?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am coming to everything, you need not worry.

That study in 1957 indicated that it would cost Rs. 1,000 crores, and that estimate might have gone up three times now. I was pointing out that the Jiribum line would cost Rs. 3 crores, that may also similarly cost more. So, there will have to be some kind of priority, and conversion of any particular branch or section is always considered on its merits, having regard to the transportation requirements and the specific advantages of such conversion. The Hassan-Mangalore line, about which Mr. Basappa pointed out, is having all the alignments etc. for broad gauge.

This Jaipur thing is a good suggestion, and it will have to be gone into carefully.

Then about goods haulage and track utilisation, there has been a good deal of improvement.

14 hrs.

Dr. Ranen Sen pointed out about the difficulties of the workers, as also Shri Banerjee. They felt that they were going to be affected due to dieselisation and electrification. We are now going to leave those people in the lurch because we are trying to train them. All the steam-loco staff who are going to be affected by electrification of dieselisation are being trained under this programme and they will be absorbed. Even the

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people who are working in the project—we are going to be as sympathetic as possible towards them also and we do our best to absorb them also. So far only 14 persons had been affected, they are casual people but we are not going to leave them in the street because they are also our countrymen and their problems will also be attended to. The automation programmes are the need of the country; the need of the country is not to move backward but to go forward; we must move in every direction to go ahead because that is the surest sign of the advancement of the nation. At the same time the benefits that grow out of that automation programme must be equally shared with our countrymen. So, I would request him to give up his apprehension that any type of automation programme is going to adversely affect the workers who were there prior to the introduction of that device. There is bound to be some difficulty but we will do our best to overcome these difficulties.

Siddhantiji pointed out about the inscription on railway coaches. The railways have given instructions that the railway initials appearing on new locomotives, coaches and wagons should be displayed in Hindi on one side and in English on the other side of the locomotives, coach or wagon. It has now been decided that the class of the coach should also be indicated in Hindi.

The question of the restoration of the Darwah-Pusad narrow-gauge line, about 44 miles, was considered—Dr. Aney told me about this yesterday—in the recent past in 1957-58. The proposal was dropped as it was not found financially justified at that time. The disposal of assets pertaining to the abandoned Darwah-Pusad line is receiving the attention of the Central Railway. The request has also been received from the State Government for the transfer of a portion of this line for laying a new road along the abandoned track. The transfer is being agreed to subject to

the condition that the state Government agree to pay the market value of the line as assessed by the revenue authorities and also pay a reasonable compensation towards the formations, bridge structures, etc.

Shri Azad pointed out the need for doubling of the Howrah-Kiul line of 524 kms by Sainthia and Sahibganj. A double line already exists between Howrah and Khana, a distance of 120 kms. To create the requisite capacity for the anticipated increase in the traffic by the beginning of the Fourth Plan, the doubling of the new line between Sainthia and Barharwa, 106 kms, has been undertaken and the work is expected to be completed by June 1966. The work on the Khana-Sainthia section and other minor line capacity works and provision of additional loops, and crossing stations where required would be effected between Barharwa and Kiul.

Some Members pointed out about the minimum wage. Mr. Priya Gupta particularly said about my earlier announcement in reply to a question. I might assure him that no casual labourer on the railway will get less than Rs. 1.50. It is not a fact that anywhere, the railway casual worker gets less than that.

Shri Maurya: Is it sufficient?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I do not say so. He said that it was not up to that mark even and therefore I say that it is not correct. The old rule of the Minimum Wages Act of the Government of India, which was perhaps formulated in 1951-52, that laid down a lesser wage, is not followed; it is being determined on market rate and wherever the rate is higher, we are paying higher.

Shri Maurya: What is the highest?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: Perhaps Rs. 3 per day plus medical and other facilities also because we have to often do something for their food requirements, etc.

Shri Maurya: In no corner of the country a casual unskilled labourer gets Rs. 3 per day.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I said perhaps Rs. 3.

Shri Maurya: It is wrong. You give me one area where it is like that.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am going by facts and I will give you facts tomorrow if it is a matter of controversy; I will give you detailed figures tomorrow.

Shri Priya Gupta also pointed out about the medical facilities on the railways. He said that they were far inadequate, particularly in regard to the number of doctors. In this regard I might be permitted to say that the railways have 87 hospitals with 7892 beds besides 1061 beds reserved by railways in various sanatoria for treatment of their T.B. cases. All inclusive the bed ratio is over six beds for every 1000 railway employees as against 0.58 per thousand for the rest of the country. There are 2121 doctors on the Indian railways, each doctor being responsible on an average for not more than 619 railwaymen and their families, who in the normal course fall ill only now and then. The medical facilities provided to the staff of the Indian railways are, I need hardly mention, of a higher level than those offered to the other people in our country. Recently there was criticism regarding non-gazetted medical personnel because there were about 900 on the railways and it was only on the eve of the 24th December that all of them were given gazetted ranks and they have now become assistant medical officers and their salary as well as their practising allowances have appreciated . . . (Interruptions).

Shri A. P. Sharma (Buxar): About 200 of them have been left.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: They are licentiates. No M.B.B.S. had been

left out; therefore Mr. Sharma should correct himself . . . (Interruptions.)

Shri A. P. Sharma: The Minister has said very rightly that no M.B.B.S. has been left out; they are licentiates. But then new service conditions have been imposed on these people who are already in service . . . (Interruptions.)

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am not prepared to accept what has been said by Mr. Sharma. Because the licentiates are not 200 in number. Their number is less. But I do concede that they have not been given that benefit, and it has not been done due to so many other factors, because, there are medical graduates, regular medical graduates, whereas . . . (Interruption).

Shri Priya Gupta (Katihar): You promised to consider it. Kindly do not close the chapter.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: If he argues, we will meet his argument. If he remains silent, I will clarify the whole thing.

Shri Priya Gupta: We represented, and you promised.

Shri A. P. Sharma: The benefit should be given to them also. There is no question of argument.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I think that Shri Sharma is trying to make out a case for them, and we are already sympathetic. You go and find out the position elsewhere also. What has been done is this: nowhere has it been done by one stroke of the pen, because, what has been done is, 900 non-gazetted people were made gazetted people, and the salary went up by about 50 per cent and their non-practising allowance also went up from 20 per cent or so to 33 per cent.

Shri Priya Gupta: Why not extend this benefit to the poor fellows who

[Shri Priya Gupta]

have been left out on the same plea? I mean the licentiatees.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: About amenities to the staff and other people, this matter was raised this morning also. We explained the conditions which obtain today on the railways.

Then reference was made to the permanent negotiating machinery. Some hon. Members said that perhaps the railways are not prepared to refer disputes to adjudication. But they have already got the Sankar Saran Award. Therefore, it should not be said totally that there is nothing. The PNM is there, and there, we can discuss all the problems and arrive at satisfactory solutions.

Shri Priya Gupta: After that, not a single arbitration was held, it is a violation of the agreement between the Ministry and The All India Railwaymen's Federation. (Interruption).

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: About quarters and other things, Shri A. P. Sharma pointed out that the railways should purchase lands and give them to the railway workers for constructing houses. Demands have been made for the provision of spare railway land for the construction of houses for the railwaymen for their own accommodation on liberalised terms as recommended by the Jaganatha Das Pay Commission. Actually, what the Pay Commission recommended was that the employees should be assisted in acquiring developed sites in the neighbourhood of their habitat, workshops, etc., provided some co-operative type of organisation is floated by the railwaymen. We would very much like to help that type of housing co-operatives, if they come forward.

Shri A. P. Sharma: That was not my proposal; my proposal was different.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: But the proposal is not acceptable.

Then, reference was made to night duty allowances. Successive Commissions have gone into this matter. The railways were not allowing weightage for night duty shifts and this practice was upheld by Justice Rajadhyaksha on the ground that night work was inherent in the railway operation. The Jaganatha Das Pay Commission were, however, of the view that it would not be fair to deny weightage for night duty for railwaymen and have recommended that if night duty is such as would require continuous application, it should be allowed weightage at the rate of 10 minutes per every hour of work. This recommendation was accepted by the Government subject to the condition that weightage for night duty should be given only to such categories of staff whose duty involves continuous application to work during the whole of the night shift and not night shifts in general. This is the practice, and we think that it should satisfy hon. Members. (Interruption).

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: That is what we have decided and what we have implemented.

Shri Priya Gupta: No discrimination should be made in this respect. Working at night is the main point. The fundamental question is this. The Railway Board has issued circulars depriving many people from getting night duty allowance.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: When I say continuous application of night duty, it means there are certain types of work which do not require continuous application or attention.

Shri Priya Gupta: Will you allow them to sleep in the night, when as you say they have no continuous work?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am not yielding.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order.

Shri Priya Gupta: If anyone sleeps, then he will be found out and charge-sheeted. He cannot sleep.

Shri A. P. Sharma: What is that type of work which does not require continuous attention?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: That depends upon the nature of the work. Then, a case was made about periodical transfer. A recommendation was made by the Railway Corruption Enquiry Committee in its report submitted in 1956, and since then, according to that recommendation, the staff coming into contact, direct contact, with railway workers are not retained at the station for more than five years. It was pointed out that officers are not transferred and only the staff is transferred. But whatever is the existing system, that will be clearly adhered to according to the recommendations. But we shall see that there is no hardship caused in effecting any transfer, etc.

Then reference was made by Shri Banerjee to the mass transfer of the accounts service people and to the duty hours of work in Garden Reach, etc. All these things will be gone into.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: What about the revival of shuttle trains?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: These are matters which will have to be gone into by the local railway authorities. Shri Dinen Bhattacharaya referred to the nationalisation of light railways. Again, it is a question of economy. Many reports say that they are not economic.

Dr. Ranen Sen (Calcutta East): You are paying Rs. 17 lakhs every year.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: I am supporting your point. Why are you agitated? Many reports say that they are not economic. Most of the light railways are serving areas which are really remarkable areas, because they are so densely populated and are,

agriculturally and in other ways, productive areas, and so, I do not know what type of report is prepared. I am going to study the thing more carefully.

Shri A. P. Sharma: Including Arrah-Sasaram Light Railway.

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: There also, the report is not correct.

श्री प्रिय गुप्त : असम में नार्थ ईस्ट फंटीयर रेलवे पर एक छोटा सा हिस्सा है जो कि चापरमुख जंक्शन के बीच में पड़ता है। वह माटिन कंपनी के पास है। उसको नेशनलाइज न करने की वजह से बड़ी टैकनिकल दिक्कत है।

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: There was a demand by Shri Bibhuti Mishra and Shri A. P. Sharma and others regarding employment opportunities to people who inhabit the densely inhabited areas of our country, particularly the eastern area, and they also pointed out that it is very difficult to stay in bigger cities for persons of ordinary means. This is a hard thing. The difficulty is quite understandable. They suggested the creation of a separate Railway Public Service Commission at a suitable site. But that is a matter on which a positive decision will have to be taken, as to how best to serve their interests, because, a mere creation of something is not going to solve all the problems—

Shri A. P. Sharma: Shri Patil has assured on the floor of this House that there will be a Service Commission located somewhere in Bihar. If Dr. Ram Subhag Singh is hesitant, Shri S. K. Patil should make it clear, and implement that assurance. (*Interruption*).

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: A positive decision will be taken on a suitable occasion as to how best to protect their interests.

Shri S. M. Banerjee: What about Chittaranjan?

Dr. Ram Subhag Singh: About Chittaranjan and other production units, Mr. Banerjee pointed out that the unions there should be accorded recognition. The policy so far has been and is, that in production units we must not have unions. But we have not barred our people from taking their counsel, because there are staff councils which are functioning very satisfactorily in Chittaranjan.

Mr. Ravindra Varma referred to our diesel locomotive factory. In the Integral Coach Factory at Perambur we are producing about 7000 coaches per annum, which is double its capacity because there are two shifts. It is functioning very satisfactorily. Similarly, Chittaranjan has produced quite a good number of both DC and AC electric locomotives. By the end of the Fourth plan, it is going to produce annually about 150 electric locomotives over and above the steam locomotives. The diesel locomotive factory at Varanasi will also produce 150 diesel locomotives by 1970-71. So, our production units are going to make our railways very much self-sufficient. Some hon. member said, we are self-sufficient only in name. It is true that at present all the 18 diesel locomotives we have were assembled from imported components. But by 1970, 90 per cent of the components will be manufactured indigenously. In Chittaranjan as well as in the Integral Coach Factory at Perambur, we were importing only 1 per cent of the components. Out of Rs. 320 crores, we imported only about Rs. 18 crores or Rs. 20 crores worth of goods at the most. We are proud of our production units as well as about the performance of our railwaymen in facing the emergency and other problems of the country. We hope with the cooperation of the House, the railways will be placed on a better footing to serve the nation.

Shri Priya Gupta: The hon. minister said that the minimum amount

paid to casual labour is Rs. 1.50. But he stated earlier that it is not less than Rs. 2. Which is correct?

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: Order, order. The hon. Railway Minister will be replying to the other points.

Shri Rajaram (Krishnagiri): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity just after the good speech of Dr. Ram Subhag Singh. The railway budget for 1966-67 is before us for discussion. This time there is no increase in passenger fares. But if the railway policy is reviewed for the third plan period as a whole, there is hardly a year in which an increase in passenger fares or goods rates has not been effected. In the last year of the second plan, i.e. 1960-61, there was a supplementary charge of 5 paise per rupee on freight of goods and coal traffic. This was followed by what was called marginal adjustments in freight rates in the budget of 1961-62. Again in 1961-62, the basic rate chargeable for goods traffic was increased by 50 paise per ton of traffic including coal carried upto 40 KM and Re. 1/- per ton of traffic carried beyond 80 KM, thus reversing the principle of telescopic rates. The passenger fares were also enhanced by 10 to 15 per cent. In 1963-64 a surcharge at the rate of 10 paise per rupee in regard to parcel traffic with some exceptions was levied and then the surcharge on goods freight rates was also increased by 5 per cent. In 1964-65, the budget again increased the surcharge by 2 per cent on goods freight rates. In 1965-66, the budget increased passenger fares as well as freight rates for 25 items like iron, steel, cement, limestone, etc.

The latest proposal of an increase of 3 per cent in freight rates has to be assessed against this background. This surcharge will increase the cost of production. Because of this surcharge, the south is going to suffer. Coal is coming to Madras from the northern parts of the country like Bengal, Bihar, etc. Now we are giving more price for steel, because there is no steel industry in the south. Coal has been used for manufacturing bricks at

Madras. Already the prices of house construction materials are going up. If this surcharge is imposed on coal movement, I am afraid the price of bricks may go up in Madras.

As regards salt, we till now thought that it is a symbol of freedom. But through the Railway Minister we have come to understand that salt is not the symbol of freedom, but it is the symbol of tax. I request the minister to drop this surcharge.

Regarding passenger amenities, last year, the Railway Board came forward allotting Rs. 4 crores. When I participated in the last year's discussion on the railway budget on behalf of my party, I asked for a small public convenience to be constructed on the platform for the convenience of Salem third class passengers. For that, the Railway Board has given a note saying:

"There is, however, no latrine in the third class waiting hall. The feasibility of providing one will be looked into."

I can understand, while the Salem people are asking for a steel plant there, the Central Government coming forward with a note of looking into the feasibility of establishing a steel plant there. But here the Railway Board has come forward with a note saying that to construct a small latrine, they are looking into the feasibility of that. I am very sorry at this state of affairs in the Railway Ministry.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: He can continue on the next day.

14.29½ hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PRIVATE
MEMBERS' BILLS AND
RESOLUTIONS

SEVENTY-NINTH REPORT

Shri M. L. Dwivedi (Hamirpur): I beg to move:

"That this House agrees with the Seventy-ninth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 2nd March, 1966".

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That this agrees with the Seventy-ninth Report of the Committee on Private Members' Bills and Resolutions presented to the House on the 2nd March, 1966".

The Motion was adopted

14.30 hrs.

PROHIBITION OF MANUFACTURE
AND IMPORT OF HYDROGE-
NATED VEGETABLE OILS
BILL*

श्री यशपाल सिंह (कराना): प्रोहिबिशन
आफ मैनुफैक्चर एंड इम्पोर्ट ऑफ हाइड्रोजेनेटेड
वेजिटेबल आयल्स बिल को प्रस्तुत करने की
अनुमति दी जाय।

Mr. Deputy-Speaker: The question is:

"That leave be granted to introduce a Bill to provide for prohibition of manufacture and import

*Published in Gazette of India Extraordinary Part II, Section 2, dated 4th March, 1966.