

Kerala State has the highest unemployment of literate people. Being a small State the chances of procuring employment are dim. In the above circumstances educated persons are compelled to migrate to other places in India and abroad. There are lakhs of Keralites working abroad, especially in Gulf countries. Kerala has one international airport at Trivandrum and some international flights are operating from Calicut airport also. But the frequency of the international flights operating from these airports is very less.

Therefore, I request the Central Government to operate more flights from these airports to various countries. This will greatly benefit the people who are working abroad and also facilitate sending foreign currency to their country.

12.39 hrs.

**SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR
GRANT (RAILWAYS), 1994-95;**

AND

**DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS
(RAILWAYS), 1991-92**

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We will not take up Demand for Supplementary

Supplementary Demand for Grant (Railways), 1994-95 submitted to the Vote of Lok Sabha

Grant (Railways) and Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) — item numbers 11 and 12. Motions moved:

"That the Supplementary sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund to defray the charges that will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1995, in respect of the head of Demand entered in the second column thereof — Demand No. 16".

"That the respective excess sums not exceeding the amounts shown in the third column of the Order Paper be granted to the President of India out of the Consolidated Fund of India to make good the excess on the respective grants during the year ended on the 31st day of March, 1992, in respect of the following Demands entered in the second column thereof. Demands Nos. 6, 8, 13, 14, 15 and 16"

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand for Grant submitted to the Vote of the House
16.	Assets-Acquisition, Construction and Replacement <i>Other Expenditure</i> Railway Funds	12,000

Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) 1991-92 submitted to the Vote of Lok Sabha

No. of Demand	Name of Demand	Amount of Demand submitted to the Vote of the House
		Rs.
6.	Repairs and Maintenance of Carriages & Wagons	16,47,50,076
8.	Operating Expenses — Rolling Stock and Equipment	7,78,63,334
13.	Provident Fund, Pension and other Retirement Benefits	37,79,30,598
14.	Appropriation to Funds	87,36,39,308
15.	Dividend to General Revenues, Repayment of Loan taken from General Revenues and Amortization of Over-Capitalization	94,67,58,501
16.	Assets — Acquisition, Construction and Replacement	
	<i>Other Expenditure</i>	
	Capital	15,31,36,695
	Railway Funds	34,58,39,864

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Kottayam): Sir, where is the Railway Minister?

SHRI P.C. THOMAS (Muvattupuzha): Sir, without Railway Minister how can we take it up? Railway Minister, as well as the Opposition, are not there.

SHRI KODIKKUNIL SURESH (Adoor): Who is there on behalf of Government?

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA: Can we discuss them without the Railway Minister?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: How about doing with 'prospective' Railway Minister?

(Interruptions)

SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Since it is collective responsibility and since other Ministers are here, there should be no difficulty in starting the discussion.

[Translation]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV (Sahasra): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, how can the demands for grants of the ability of Railway can be discussed in the absence of the hon. Railway minister and the officers?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Other Ministers are present. They can note down the relevant and reasonable suggestions made by the hon. Minister and in the meanwhile the Railway Minister will come. We can start discussion.

[Translation]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV:
Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, these traditions
are not good.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The
Minister will come. He has already placed
the Demands. Now it is for discussions.
Of course, there are Ministers, who will
note down and bring to the notice of the
hon. Minister. I hope you all agree.

SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN
(Palghat): When the Railway Minister is
not here, when the Railway Board people
are not here, what is the use?

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA:
There are no officers even from the
Railway Board.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Today,
Shri Vijayaraghavan gets the first chance
in every subject. Therefore, why should
you deny him. Let him enjoy it.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI
(Deogarh): This is the outcome of Zero
Hour being completed earlier.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA:
Sir, there is no translation facility
available.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri
Vijayaraghavan, I would like to know
whether you have made arrangements for
the translation.

SHRI V.S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN: I
have already intimated.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: All right,
if translation arrangement is not made, we
shall call the next Member and you will
have the chance later.

Shri Ankushrao Raosaheb Tope —
Not present

Shri Sharad Dighe — Not present

Shri Sriballav Panigrahi.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: Mr.
Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I think like Railway
accident, my being called here as the first
speaker is quite accidental.

[Translation]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV: If
such conditions prevail, the accidents are
bound to take place. When the hon.
Minister is not present in the House, who
will listen us?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There
are three Ministers. They will note down.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR
SHASTRI (Saidpur): It is not the issue of
presence of three Ministers. We have an
hon. Railway Minister also in our country
and we are going to discuss railways. We
are neither going to hold discussion on
chemicals, nor on rural development nor
on mines, to which these hon. Ministers
are supported to reply... (Interruptions). My
suggestion is that the House should be
adjourned till lunch and it should be taken
up after lunch. In the meantime the hon.
Railway Minister should be informed. If he
is present here, it will be good.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The Minister will come within two or three minutes.

SHRI BUTA SINGH (Jalore): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, you cannot ignore the rules and conventions of this House. How can you discuss the Demands of the Ministry when there is no Minister and when there is nobody present from the staff also? Therefore, in all seriousness, kindly direct the Government to bring the Minister here so that the Members can discuss the Supplementary Demands.

How can a discussion be useful without the Minister being present here?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: What you say is perfectly correct.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, you should give the direction that the hon. Railway Minister should be present in the House..(Interruptions). If you agree to it, please adjourn the House till lunch.

[English]

SHRI BUTA SINGH: It is a regular business printed on the agenda, namely Supplementary Demand for Grants (Railways).

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: I agree with you.

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI RAM LAKHAN SINGH YADAV): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir,

in deference to the feelings of the hon./ Members, I would like to inform that the hon. Railway Minister has left for the House. My submission is that the debate should be taken up by then. We will note down till he reaches.

[English]

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity to participate in the discussion on Supplementary Demand for Grants (Railways) and the Demands for Excess Grants (Railways). Till the Railway Minister comes, I can speak on fertilizers and chemicals relating to Railways and I can also speak on Steel relating to Railways. Railway have gained a lot from the steel sector.

You know the importance of Railways in our system, in our country as such. Railway contributes immensely to the strengthening of national unity and solidarity in our country. Right now, further strengthening of national unity and solidarity is the need of the hour. India is a country of distances, right from Kashmir on the topmost northern corner up to Kanya Kumari in the South and from the East, Arunachal Pradesh and other Eastern States like Assam up to Bombay, Maharashtra on the West.

Earlier on so many occasions, I have stated that India is much more than a country. It is a mini world. It is a country of different religions, many languages and even different races. We have thus a very composite culture in our country. We have continental dimensions. In a country of this nature, a large number of people, in crores, do travel daily from one part to another and they use trains as a main medium in their journey. As you know, very few people can afford air journey in

[Shri Sriballav Panigrahi]

our country and to travel to distant places, it is not the road but rail services have to be resorted to and depended upon.

Around 11,000 to 12,000 trains operate daily in our country carrying more than one crore commuters. As you know, Sir, the Railway is more than a century old in this country. Before four or five years ago, we observed the centenary celebrations of the South Eastern Railway. We are concerned with the South Eastern Railway because our State comes under that.

Considering the importance of the railways, we have a separate Budget for it. There is no other Ministry and no other department which has this unique advantage or this distinction of having a separate Railway Budget. As you know, Sir, the General Budget is presented on the last day of February, every year, and three or four days before that, the Railway Budget is presented by the hon. Railway Minister in this House. This is not a post-Independence development process, but during the pre-Independence also, this has been the practice followed by the railways.

As you know, Sir, in other Ministries we have Secretaries and they have a bureaucratic system in their Ministries. As far as the Railways are concerned, there is a little bit of difference. Here in Railways, we have the Chairman of the Railway Board as the Head, who also happens to be the Secretary to the Railway Minister. They do have some sort of autonomy. Railways assume a great deal of importance, a great deal of significance in our administrative system... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI P. G. NARAYANAN
(Gobichettipalayam): Sir, the debate on

Supplementary Demands (Railways) is going on but the Railway Minister is not present in the House.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI:

That is why, Shri P.G. Narayanan, I am dwelling on the general points; I am not discussing the Supplementary Grants. Till the Railway Minister arrives, I will be speaking on the general points concerning the Railways. I am yet to deal with the Supplementary Grants.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS) AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK): I am present here on this behalf.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: I know that you are present. I do not have any objection, but it is they who raised the objection.

As you know, Sir, our Railway is the largest in the world now. Till some time ago, it was the second largest Railway in the world. But after the collapse of the former U.S.S.R., which was hitherto regarded as having the largest railway network in the world, it is now Hindustan, that is, India which has replaced the former U.S.S.R. and that distinction has come to India as having the largest and the biggest Railway in the world. It is also the biggest caterer in the world. That way, Railways have the largest catering arrangements in the world. They serve thousands and thousands of people. So, that way, Railway is the largest public sector undertaking in India, with 15 lakh to 17 lakh employees on its rolls. After Railway, the next largest undertakings, I think, are coal and steel. Thus, our Indian Railway is the biggest employer, the largest public sector undertaking and it is

also the biggest caterer. It has its own Budget and its own hierarchy etc.

It is expected to run very efficiently and on profit. It is not a philanthropic organisation. It is a commercial management. It has also to run officially to earn profit. No doubt, it is in arrears and it has its social obligations. But, at the same time, railways will have to meet the growing aspirations of the people. The anxiety of the hon. Members is where there is no railway, the areas which do not get the benefit of railway line really remain backward. They are backward. One of the reasons attributed to the backwardness of such areas is the lack of communication and railway line. We have our new industrial and economic policy in operation in our country and lot of restrictions are lifted. The entrepreneurs have now the liberty and freedom to go anywhere and set up their industries without much restriction on them with regard to licence, permits and letter of intent. But these entrepreneurs do not prefer to set up their plant in backward areas, in areas which are not served by railway line. Growth is our objective and together with growth, social justice and also combined with that, balanced development, not imbalanced development, of all the regions of all the States. That is our national objective. But if entrepreneurs do not move to backward areas and if they do not set up their industries there because the railway line is not there, then how can we achieve our objective of achieving the ends of social justice and fight out regional imbalance to achieve growth?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Hitherto Shri Sriballav Panigrahi is giving the background about railways. Now he will come straight to Demands for Excess Grants.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): I am very sorry. I was told that this Bill is coming in the afternoon. I was in another meeting.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: It is the outcome of pushing through other business like the Zero Hour.

I was in general giving the background of railways and the importance of railways in our system in our country. I will deal with the Demand side after lunch. For an organisation like railways, in a vast country like ours, it is quite natural for the Railways to come up before the House with Supplementary Demand for Grants etc. in one go.

13.00 hrs.

At one go, it is not possible to include everything in the Annual Budget, in the General Budget. In the Annual Budget, everything cannot be contained. In our system, a situation does arise necessitating Supplementary Demands etc. We have two things before us today. One is the Supplementary Demand for grant for the year 1994-95 and the other thing is the Excess Grants for 1991-92.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Sriballav Panigrahi, you can continue your speech after Lunch break.

Now, the House stands adjourned to meet at 2 p.m.

13.01 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned for Lunch till Fourteen of the Clock.

14:07 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled after Lunch at Seven minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

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

SUPPLEMENTARY DEMAND FOR
GRANT (RAILWAYS), 1994-95

AND

DEMANDS FOR EXCESS GRANTS
(RAILWAYS), 1991-92 — *(Contd.)*

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Sriballav Panigrahi.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI (Deogarh): I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1994-95 and also Demands for Excess Grants (Railways) for the year 1991-92. Earlier, in the three long sessions, I was speaking about the important role, the laudable role being played by the Railways in our country. The Railways is a vast organisation which has a network of about 42,000 kilometres and also about 18 lakh employees in its rolls. While referring to the Demands being raised, Members from different parts have expressed anxiety for extension of railway facilities and railway lines to their respective areas. We cannot think of progress and prosperity in these days without the existence, without the presence of railways in the area. The Railways is like an engine for the economic growth of the country.

About these Demands I have nothing more to say. For an organisation like the Railways with a budget of thousands of crores of rupees, we have

Supplementary Demands for only Rs. 12,000. It is very very insignificant. This is nothing; this is very usual. Then there are of course Demands for Excess Grants amounting to Rs. 293.99 crore, roughly Rs. 294 crore. These are expenditures incurred in the year 1991-92, that too some expenditures which were incurred on items which could be located afterwards. This is a usual feature and there is nothing unusual in this. Looking at the vastness of the organisation, this is nothing. I support this.

Taking this opportunity I would like to speak something about the functioning of the Railways. Railways is the lifeline of the country. The daily income of Railways from one source, that is freight, is Rs. 34.6 crore. We are proud of this Railways which is the largest in the world. The activities of this Railways have to be expanded. First of all, Railway lines need to be extended to different areas. They have great resource crunch and resource constraint. We appreciate that. About twenty years back, in 1974-75, Railways were having 75 per cent budgetary support. Do not know how much budgetary support they are getting now? It has been reduced to 14 per cent two decades. It has come down drastically from 75 per cent to 14 per cent. They are really in deep waters. They have to thus depend on, as in the case of other public sector undertakings, their own resources. They have also to streamline their functioning. They have to go for economy and internal savings. At the same time they have to go for public borrowings also and generate their own resources through savings, etc.

Generally in a country like ours, discontentment is growing over regional imbalance. As I said earlier in the pre-lunch session, national unity and integrity is the need of the hour. That also is

related to Railways. We can ill-afford the growth of this discontentment. Discontentment is on the rise on account of the Railways not being expanded to different areas.

If one thousand kilometres of railway track would be added every year, 30,000 jobs could be created.

The other problem with which we are confronted is massive unemployment. When we provide 30,000 jobs on the railway sector, as a consequence thereof, we can provide 7,50,000 more jobs indirectly. If we can expand annually one thousand kilometre additional route coverage, then directly 30,000 jobs and indirectly 7,50,000 jobs can be provided. But, wherefrom the financial support would come? As I understand, railways have been demanded Government loan at 7 per cent interest. Naturally, the argument is, with the dwindling budgetary support and greater reliance on internal resources, the railways should be given loans on some terms. It has not been agreed to by the Finance Ministry and railways are finding themselves in an odd situation.

Of course, Eurobond is another welcome feature. They have decided to go in for this sort of a bond and that is another welcome feature. The issue of Eurobonds by the railways is a welcome development as Government undertakings have to depend on either internal savings or borrowing from the market. We have to find out how much funds can be arranged so that expansion of railway system, railway line, etc. can be taken up in a big way.

I would come to the performance of the railways over the last six months this year. Over the last six months, it has been

spectacular. The growth is spectacular and I congratulate all those connected with the railways starting with the hon. Railway Minister. Under his guidance, the railways have performed well. Comparatively, over the corresponding period of last three years, this time, there is a growth of 3.49 per cent in respect of passenger traffic. For the corresponding period in 1993, the passenger traffic was 1,803 millions. It has been raised to 1866 million during this period this year, thus recording a growth of 3.49 per cent. Coming to freight traffic, the growth is 4.2 per cent. In 1993, it was 178.65 million tonnes in terms of tonnage and now it has been raised to 185.97 million tonnes. In terms of earnings from passenger traffic, there is a growth of 11.69 per cent.

Thus, in freight traffic as well as in passenger traffic, growth is very much there. Thirteen million commuters have used the railways to go from one place to another daily in our country.

We have a new Chairman, now in charge of the Railways. He has taken charge as the new incumbent recently. I was happy to come across a news item wherein he has stated that the present overall target for railways is two per cent improvement in the operating ratio. If this could be achieved, there would be a saving of Rs. 400 crore.

So, there will be three per cent improvement in the operating ratio; three to four per cent improvement in asset realisation of both mobile as well as fixed; and 20 per cent improvement in reliability of assets and elimination of collision. So, it is very good; and the target that they have fixed should be achieved. I wish them good luck in achieving the targets that the Railways have fixed.

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Secondly, computerisation is another very popular programme. There are many advantages associated with this programme. This is going on very speedily and rapidly in the Railway sector. In another two years' time, probably only 20 per cent of the entire booking section will be without computerisation.

Now, emphasis is laid on gauge conversion. In the Eighth Plan, gauge conversion is highlighted. In the Eighth Plan, so far as the Railways programme are concerned, more than construction of new lines, importance is given to the aspect of gauge conversion. In this project of unigauge, in the first two years, 3,000 kilometres of gauge conversion has been achieved. This year's target is around 1,400 kilometres.

The main task of the Railways is to provide a strong, dynamic and cost effective transport system in the country. I repeat, 'cost effective transport system'. They are trying their best to bring down the operational cost and also to raise the productivity of employees which means, to bring in further efficiency. This is a continuous and a challenging task. Railways are addressing themselves to the task of making it a more efficient system and also to make it more economical. This is all going on in Railways.

I would not like to take much time of the House. I am afraid, you have been staring at me now.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are watching, I hope, that my finger is on the bell.

SHRI SRIBALLAV PANIGRAHI: Then, I can continue for some time!

Over the last three years, with many limitations, Railways have been doing an excellent work under the guidance of our hon. Minister. Of course, overall guidance and inspiration is always there, of our hon. Prime Minister. Though constraint of finance is there, they should liberally make available funds to the Railways. In this background, the expansion of Railways is a must and they should get adequate funds.

Now, I will come to the objectives of Railways. The objectives are cleanliness, neatness, safety, security and punctuality. So far, I was all in praise of the Railways. But, in regard to this, I cannot equally do so; and they cannot expect us to praise their functioning from this point of view. About punctuality, if we see the national figures, it is very encouraging. But we are concerned with the trains that bring us from our place to Delhi. We have a train from my place, Sambalpur. It hardly reaches Nizamuddin in time. Two days before, it reached five hours late. It has become a common feature. Why is it happening so? Railways are monitoring some very important trains.

The officers feel proud about the punctuality of those trains. What about the other trains? We were assured that they would provide a pantry car in that train with effect from 1st July. But it has not yet been done even though a month has passed. They should try to honour the assurances given by them.

About passenger amenities, etc., in backward areas like Orissa — particularly in western Orissa — a lot can be said. We have our own agony. We have our own discontentment. We have raised these things time and again during our discussions with the Divisional Manager, the General Manager, at the Zonal

Headquarters and even in the presence of the Minister. But due attention is not being paid to these things.

Now, I will highlight very briefly some of the demands of my constituency. Then, I would conclude. Every time I am making this demand. The work on two new lines — Khurda to Bolangir and from Nalaroad to Junagarh — in Orissa was to commence. In this year's budget, funds have been provided. The work should start immediately. The hon. Minister of Railways and the hon. Prime Minister should go over there to lay the foundation-stone. A function presided over by our Railway Minister, Shri C.K. Jaffer Sharief, should be held there.

The gauge conversion of Naupada-Gunapur railway line should be undertaken. The construction of Sambalpur-Talcher railway line should be expedited. The work is going on at a snail's pace. Last time, I mentioned whether the completion of this line would be possible during the twentieth century or it would go on beyond that. Late lamented Rajiv Gandhi laid its foundation-stone in 1984. In that function, Shri Rajiv Gandhi had made an observation that this project would be completed within a five-year period. Ten years have already passed but one-third of the work has not yet been done. Why is it so? I would request the hon. Minister to pay personal attention to this project. It is much needed and a very important railway line from the point of view of the people of Orissa. It will reduce the distance from Puri to Bhubaneswar by about 200 kilometres.

There is an urgent need for a full-fledged division at Sambalpur with its jurisdiction spread over to Orissa portion of Bombay-Howrah railway line. Places like Jharsugoda, which is at a distance of only 50 kms, have been kept outside this

division. It comes under another division which is about 250 kms away from Jharsugoda. What is the logic behind it? We have a new division at Sambalpur. The area of erstwhile Sambalpur district have been kept outside.

The Chief Administrative Office now functioning at Bhubaneswar should be strengthened and streamlined. As I said, considering the importance and expansion programme, etc., of the Railways, some new zones should be created. Now it is time to think about reorganisation of the Railways into new zones and divisions, etc. One such new zone should comprise of entire Orissa, parts of Madhya Pradesh, parts of Andhra Pradesh and Bihar with its headquarters at Orissa. I do not like to speak more about it. There is heart-burning.

So, this is a very heart-burning situation that two zonal headquarters are being located in one place, one metro city. What is the logic of it? Is it because the people of some States are very simple, they are peace loving and they do not create problems? Why should they be neglected all the time? Things are changing now. We must be in a position to read the writings on the wall and take necessary action right now, to avoid the confusing situation in the days to come.

Now, I come to land losers. People are giving their land for the railway projects. So, land losers' case should be considered sympathetically and they may be provided with some jobs.

I also suggest for the extension of Cochin-Bilaspur Express train. A new train should be introduced for Bombay via Titagarh. This Sambalpur-Nizamuddin Express train is very long distant train, probably covering half of India, lengthwise

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by taking about three full days, and it passes through each zone. But, there is no pantry car available. I do not know why at the zonal levels also, they are not able to take the decision for the stoppages of some trains. Stoppage of Utkal or Link Express at Godpura and Batriah, also stoppage of Bokaro-Alleppy Express at Rangali may be considered. I got the reply from the hon. Minister. I say, "How do you come to the conclusion that there are not many passengers from this station?" I request you to provide us the stoppage at Rangali for this Bokaro-Alleppy Express.

I am reminded of one thing that passenger's time is very valuable. In many Express trains they are not given preference. Preference is being given to good trains. I can give proofs arithmatically, and with logic I can say, that if the control system works judiciously, applying its mind, punctuality of many trains would be ensured. They keep some trains just waiting and allowing some other trains. I request for the running of one EMU train between Sambalpur and Rourkela. A new station on the proposed line Sambalpur-Talcher lines may also be considered.

These are the demands we have repeatedly making. I would request the hon. Minister to see it personally. I do not understand we get the reply in negative and the stock reply is that it will not be possible; it is not feasible and all that. I want to know how does it become positive, when people resort to violence and agitation? Then that negative thing become positive. Let the officers be very reasonable.

The General Manager recommends the stoppages only after thoroughly

convicting himself of the necessity of such stopovers. But these wise people sitting in the Rail Bhawan turn them down without assigning any reason. The General Manager being a local man, knows the proud realities and knows the genuine demand for the stoppage. But half of the recommendations are turned down by the GM at the Zonal level. In the remaining half, more than 90 per cent are refused by the Railway Board here in Delhi. Without any offence, I would like to mention here that the hon. Railway Minister is like a post office. He simply writes to us saying that this is not feasible or that is not possible and so on. I know very well that he is very sympathetic to the genuine demands of the people. And he is working very hard. Therefore, I request him to consider our demand sympathetically. Orissa is a backward State, and our area in Orissa is further backward. He may kindly assure me that before I get an opportunity — I would consider it not an opportunity but my misfortune — to repeat these things, our demands, which are very genuine and simple, will be fulfilled.

With these words, I lend my wholehearted support to these Demands for Grants. At the same time, I would like to say again that it is time for all of us and for the Government too, that we recognise the importance of our Railway system and try to provide the necessary financial support to strengthen it.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: Shri Vijayaraghavan is the next speaker. But Shri Tope wants to participate in the debate before you as he is having some prior commitment and he has to leave early.

SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHEB TOPE (Jalna): Let him speak first, I will speak after him.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The time allotted is three hours out of which forty-five minutes are over. You may please try to be very brief.

[Translation]

SHRI HARCHAND SINGH (Ropar): We also wish to speak. If there is a shortage of time, then it should be extended because no hon. Member from the North India has spoken on it.

[Translation]

*SHRI V. S. VIJAYARAGHAVAN (Palghat): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways). There have been a lot of complaints from various corners that in Railway Budget allocation Kerala is not getting what is due to it. This grievance sounded from time to time by many is not without proper grounds. Because the allocation for the development of railways in Kerala in the Railway Budget for the year 1993-94 was a mere Rs. 10 crores whereas the total outlay was Rs. 6,500 crores. This makes the fact more conspicuous that gross injustice has been meted out to Kerala.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, many Railway development projects in Kerala are moving at a snail's pace. It seems that Railways Ministry is indifferent to the completion of these projects in a time bound programme. Therefore I request the hon. Minister of Railways, through you, Sir, to take active steps to complete the following projects on an urgent basis.

The first point I would like to bring to the attention of the hon. Minister is regarding the 'Rajdhani Express'. At the

outset let me congratulate the Hon. Minister for extending the Rajdhani Express to Thiruvananthapuram. The train had started running between Hazrat Nizamuddin and Thiruvananthapuram on 1.7.1994. But at present the train has only one stop in Kerala, that is Ernakulam. So the full utility of Rajdhani Express has not reached the people of Kerala as yet. The demand for a stop for the train at Palakkad has not been sanctioned. Even otherwise the train usually stops at Palakkad for signal change etc. If the train is to be run on the Alappuzha line, as proposed, it would save one hour of its running time. What I am trying to prove on the basis of these factors is that an official declaration of a stop for Rajdhani Express at Palakkad will not affect the actual running time of the train. This is the only way to make Rajdhani Express useful to the people of the northern districts of Kerala who constitute 40% of the total population of the State. A stop at Palakkad would be benefited to the people of Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu also. Moreover, Palakkad is a Railway Divisional Headquarter. It is a pretty old grievance that Malabar is neglected in all developmental activities. I along with my Hon. colleagues from Kerala have met the Hon. Minister of Railways on various occasions in this regard and submitted several representations of this effect. Let me reiterate the demand and once again request the Minister to sanction a stop for Rajdhani Express at Palakkad which would be a right step in the right direction to make the people of Malabar feel the existence of the celebrated train and which is a step hardly involving any restructuring of either schedule or running time.

My second point is regarding the doubling of Shornur-Mangalore line.

* Translation of the speech originally delivered in Malayalam.

[Shri V.S. Vijayaraghavan]

Assurances were given on more than one occasion that doubling of this line would be completed along with the completion of the Konkan Railway Project. In fact it was on the strength of those assurances that the State Government had decided to associate with the Konkan Railway Project. Konkan Railway is expected to be completed in March 1995. But so far, no discernible steps have been taken towards the doubling of Shornur-Mangalore line. The benefits of Konkan Railway would be at a distance for the people of Kerala without the Shornur-Mangalore line being doubled. Similarly, the doubling of Kollam Thiruvananthapuram line is progressing at a snail's pace. It seems that Railway department is indifferent towards the doubling of Shornur-Mangalore line in a time-bound programme. The fact that the Budget allocation for this project for the year 1993-94 was a mere Rs. 1000 is too telling a sign of Railways' interest or rather lack of interest in this project. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to kindly consider the doubling of Shornur-Mangalore line without which the glorious inauguration of Konkan Railway would not be an occasion of joy for the people of Kerala.

The Erode-Ernakulam Electrification project which has been sanctioned long back is also moving at an incredibly slow pace. The Hon. Minister's declaration that the electrification will be extended to Thiruvananthapuram is of course highly laudable. But it has not reached Palakkad as yet. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to do the needful to complete the electrification at least upto Ernakulam in the present financial year itself.

Another point I would like to make is regarding the ticket reservation system at

Palakkad Station. In spite of having the ticket reservation system been computerised, they do not issue return journey tickets at Palakkad Station. Passengers are forced to go to Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu for buying return tickets. Proper action has to be taken in order to spare the passengers of this unnecessary inconvenience.

Recent changes in the timings of certain trains operating between Palakkad and places under Madurai Division like Pollachi, Palani and Madurai are causing great inconvenience to the passengers. Due to the changed timings of Trains No. 761, 768 and 764, the daily collection has come down by one thousand rupees. I strongly suspect some malafide intentions behind this move. Because there has been a move to downgrade Puthunagaram Station as a 'Single Station'. However, this move was dropped by Railways on after-thought. Therefore, I suspect a conspiracy formed among the Railway Officers to make these trains unpopular among passengers by changing their timings and thereby cutting down the collection. I suspect some officers are set upon downgrading Puthunagaram Station under the pretext of low collection. So, I request the Hon. Minister to cancel the unnecessary changes in the timings of Trains Nos. 761, 768 and 764. I have received a lot of complaints and representations from passengers in this connection.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, another submission I wish to make through you, Sir, to the Hon. Minister of Railways is regarding the extension of Venad Express. This train starting from Thiruvananthapuram terminates at Shornur where it remains for almost two hours before the return trip. By using this time the train could be easily run upto Palakkad. This would be highly useful for

the passengers from Thiruvananthapuram who are travelling to Madras. If a link Express could be arranged for Kovai Express the net effect would be that of a Day-Express from Thiruvananthapuram to Madras. This would be a big achievement at hardly any extra cost or rescheduling of the running time. Therefore, I request the Hon. Minister to extend Venad Express to Palakkad.

Another matter that invites the serious attention of the Hon. Minister is the pathetic condition of various Railway Stations in Malabar. Many of the stations in Malabar lack sufficient facilities and basic amenities. Though the Hon. Minister has introduced a number of trains, Malabar has not received any of it. It is not a new grievance that Malabar has been neglected in all respects. I wish the Minister will do something to make the people of Malabar feel that they also form part of the State and the country.

Sir, another important point I would like to bring to the attention of the Hon. Minister is regarding the absence of an office of Railway Chief Engineer (Construction) in Kerala. One reason for the slackness in Railway development projects in Kerala is the fact that for every small and insignificant matter one has to travel to Madras where the Railway Chief Engineer's Office is situated. This is despite the fact that there are two major Railway Divisions, namely, Palakkad and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala. Some areas in Kerala belong to Madurai division in Tamil Nadu also. So, I request the Hon. Minister to set up a Railway Chief Engineer's Office at Palakkad.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, lastly I would like to draw the attention of the Hon. Minister to the plight of the non-functioning Railway Sleeper Factory at Palakkad. The factory was established

during the period of Late Rajivji when Shri Madhavarao Scindia was in charge of Railways. But now the factory is not functioning as the contract has not been renewed. This has caused loss of employment to a large number of young men in my Constituency. So I request the Hon. Minister to do the necessary for reopening the Factory.

I request the Hon. Minister not to think that I have only demands, grievances and words of criticism to sound. I may be falling in my duty if I do not say anything by way of congratulating him. He has given some new trains to Kerala, and sanctioned some important projects. It is not my intention to overlook what the Hon. Minister has done but I deem this august House the right platform to voice the needs and grievances of the people whom I represent.

Apart from all these I would like to reiterate what I have been raising in this august House on several occasions. That is the need to look into the pathetic condition of the Coaches running in Kerala. Despite the claims made by the authorities to the contrary, the Coaches remain uncommutable. I wish to invite the Hon. Minister to travel once in any of the trains running in Kerala and know the truth for himself. It is an incomparably horrible experience to travel in those Coaches in rainy season. One cannot close the shutter, one cannot lift a closed shutter and one is virtually drenched in rain water. Lavatories are in extremely bad condition. A regular traveller in those Coaches will definitely end up in a Hospital. I request the Hon. Minister to look into this matter seriously and provide good Coaches to Kerala, in which one can travel safely and in hygienic condition.

[Shri V.S. Vijayaraghavan]

Once again I request the Hon. Minister to consider favourably the few demands I have made. I have stood up in this House several times to raise these long pending demands. In fact, I made the same demands while participating in the previous year's Budgetary discussion. I may be excused for saying that I will continue to raise these demands alongwith my colleagues from Kerala, until they are fulfilled. So, I request the Hon. Minister once again to take active steps towards the completion of the pending projects in Kerala and consider favourably the few very urgent demands I have made. I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways). With these few words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI ANKUSHRAO RAOSAHEB TOPE (Jalna): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants (Railways) for 1994-95. Before I come to the Demands as such, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister, Shri Jaffer Sharief — as everybody might have read in the Papers — because the Supreme Court has upheld his elections.

Sir, I will restrict myself to my own area, that is Marathwada, which is a very backward area of Maharashtra. Because of the blessings of the present Government, our long standing demand has been fulfilled and the whole of the metre-gauge track Manmad-Aurangabad-Prabani-Purna has been converted into broad-gauge with the result we can go to both Bombay and Hyderabad in same broad-gauge line.

Devgiri Express which was started from our area has been extended upto

Secunderabad. Devgiri is an old fort of Marathwada. As the name suggests, it is not an Express train. It stops at each and every small station that comes in its way. My humble request to the Minister is that this Devgiri Express should not stop at each and every station and living up to its name it should go as an Express train. This train comes from Bombay and goes up to Secunderabad. All the VIPs from Marathwada travel in this train. Previously, only first-class bogie was there. Later on it was replaced by AC two-tier sleeper. Since it is a long distance train and it goes upto Secunderabad there has been a demand that one more AC two-tier or first-class bogie should be added to it.

Secondly, there is no superfast train from Marathwada to Bombay. There are trains running from Pune to Bombay or from Nasik to Bombay. Aurangabad is the Capital of Marathwada which is known for Ajanta and Ellora caves. People from all over the world come to Aurangabad to visit these caves. My humble request is that a train running from Nanded to Purna should be started.

Sir, my request is, if it is started from Purna to Bombay now, then the track conversion will be completed in March, it may run from Nanded to Bombay, a Marathwada train for Marathwada people. This demand of the people of Marathwada region for a superfast train is a very old one and I request the hon. Minister once again to please take note of this and have one more train, a superfast train, for Marathwada people, for Bombay itself.

Then, Sir, about Nanded and Amritsar — Some of my Sikh friends are sitting here who know that Nanded is a very important holy place — many

persons from Punjab visit Nanded. They come in trucks. Because of our Government, Sir, gauge conversion has been completed upto Purna, and upto Nanded it will be completed in March. My request is that if one superfast train is started from Nanded to Amritsar, these holy places will be connected by one train. If this demand is met, Sir, all the persons coming from Punjab or going to Punjab will definitely be facilitated and so this demand should be taken into consideration.

Jalna, which is my constituency, as you know Sir, is a commercial centre of the Marathwada. Almost all the freight goes from Jalna and almost 60 to 70 per cent of the budget comes from the freight and very less comes from the passengers. So, if facilities for godowns and other activities are given at the Jalna railway station, more freight can be transported more easily. So, all the necessary arrangements at the railway station, either of godowns or other things, should be completed at Jalna and other facilities also should also be given so that freight can be transported easily.

There is one track which is going from Beed to Jalna. Jalna city is at one side, Jalna is a new district, and the whole of administrative complex has been established in Survey No. 48. This local track lies in between the administrative complex where the hospital, Collectorate, Zila Parishad, S.P., Courts and everything is situated, and the city which is in the other part. So, a railway overbridge is a must for that area. I even met the Chief Minister. They have agreed to bear 50 per cent of the cost. My request to the hon. Minister is that a railway overbridge on Jalna-Beed road should be taken up so that the people going to the Administrative complex from the city can travel more smoothly.

Now, Sir, coming to the new lines, there is a very old demand from Jalna. As Jalna is the commercial centre of Marathwada, Khamgaon is the commercial centre of Vidarbha. If these two commercial centres are connected by the railway, both these backward regions will come together. A survey was done some 20 to 30 years ago and it was not considered feasible. Last time also I spoke of this point. Mr. Mukul Wasnik, who comes from Buldana and who represents Khamgaon, also spoke on this point. My request to the hon. Minister is that this Jalna-Khamgaon survey should be taken up again. I am sure the result will be positive if the survey is conducted as the whole infrastructure has changed now. In the long run laying of a railway line should also be taken up.

There is another very old demand, Sir, which my sister, Kaku Kshirsagar keeps making. She met the Minister also. We and the other Marathwada people also met the Minister. The whole demand is of Ahmednagar, Beed and Paradi. Beed is the only district in Marathwada which has not seen a railway track. Not a single railway track is going through Beed. So, this Ahmednagar-Beed-Paradi railway line should be taken up. The Minister has even committed to her and to us also. So, my request is that this new railway track also should be taken up for consideration.

One more line which had been taken up for conversion is the Latur-Miraj narrow-gauge railway-line. Pandarpur Vittal temple is a holy temple in Maharashtra. The people of not only Maharashtra but also from Karnataka visit that temple. So nearly half the population of India visit and have the *darshan* of Pandarpur Vittal temple. A narrow-gauge railway-line connects Pandarpur not only upto Latur and Miraj but also upto

[Shri Ankushrao Raosaheb Tope]

Kurudwadi. If you take up this line for conversion from narrow-gauge to broad-gauge as per the Uni-gauge Policy then definitely, the pilgrims who visit Pandarpur will be able to get all the benefits.

Lastly, I would like to mention about the assurance that has been given by the hon. Minister last time with regard to the reorganisation of Zones. Marathwada comes under South-Central Railway. Some part of Maharashtra also comes under South-Central Railway. The Headquarters of South-Central Railway is Hyderabad. We cannot go to Hyderabad every time. Even the people of Marathwada always go to Bombay and work. I would like to say that none of our people is employed in the South-Central Railway. So, taking all these factors into consideration, if you merge Marathwada Region and a part of Maharashtra Region or if you merge with the Central Railway, then everybody will be able to get the benefits.

With these few words, I again support the Supplementary Demands for Grants of Railways.

SHRI C. SREENIVAASAN (Dindigul): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, let me thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Supplementary Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Railways.

On behalf of All India Anna DMK and on behalf of the electorates of my constituency, Dindigul in Tamil Nadu, let me add certain points to this discussion. I hope the hon. Minister for Railways will consider and respond to these observations.

In line with the on-going liberalisation programme, the Railways

are contemplating various means to step up modernisation and to streamline its operational efficiency. So, various measures are being announced and some of them are sought to be implemented.

I would like to know from the Railway Minister whether this Supplementary Demands for Grants come as a routine or due to some other reason. I am afraid, this may be due to the pressing needs arising out of your calculated risk of providing meagre of 'token' allocation of funds to various projects envisaged in your three consecutive Railway Budgets.

Sir, an unenviable task is before our Railway Minister. It is also true that we just cannot wish away the financial crunch. The Railways in due course may be running trains on Uni-gauge, but at the same time I would like to mention that they are also walking on a tight rope. I wish to join with the Railway Minister in his efforts to obtain more of budgetary support from the Union's General Budget. The Railways are linked to the close knitting of our social fabric. The Railways cut across the geographical barriers and boundaries of various States and Union Territories. I would congratulate, for the role, the Railways play as an animator of the spirit of national integration. This needs to be infused off and on in a vast country like ours. There is no doubt that Railways stand for national integration. In its handling the passengers it is absolutely true. But I would like to know whether it could still be true in providing passenger amenities, in creating job opportunities or in enhancing the productivity of various units that come under Railways.

When we find that certain States are continuously neglected or meted out a

stepmotherly treatment we cannot but ask a question as to where goes your spirit of national integration.

15.00 hrs.

I have to point out that progress of the Mass Rapid Transport System goes on and on at snail's pace in Madras. But what has happened elsewhere? The moment the MRTS was suggested for Delhi Rs. 1 crore was allotted to proceed further. Just to prepare a feasibility report another 18 crore of rupees are to be released soon. It is projected that the Delhi Metro Project will cost a staggering sum of 8,000 crores of rupees. If even one-hundredth of it had been made available to the Madras MRTS project right at the beginning, we might have accomplished by now a viable project yielding rich dividends. Above all, it would have obviated that cost overrun.

I request the Railway Minister to look into this aspect and fix a time frame to avoid any further delay in completing the project in Madras. I need not mention that Madras is the capital of Tamil Nadu and the erstwhile capital of Madras province and now remain the only metropolis beyond Vindhyas.

We know that our Railway Minister is from Karnataka and we also know that he has been entrusted with the responsibility of administering the Indian Railways. We all know this. But the problem is our Railway Minister does not seem to know what we know. He must come clean of the criticism that he is yet to rise above Karnataka. There should not be any delay like the late running of trains. There should be an injunction of the conjecture that he is struck at his junction in Karnataka. Before he could get derailed, he must come on the right track.

This is the wish of the people of Tamil Nadu and, of course, the people of other States also.

I think the Railway Minister is yet to answer our question as to why the production capacity of Perambur Integral Coach Factory has been reduced. But at the same time the production capacity of Kapurthala Factory has been enhanced. I think, the Railway Minister owes a reply to railwaymen and the people of Tamil Nadu. The Perambur Integral Coach Factory has been asked to reduce its production capacity annually by 700 coaches. Why do you sideline this profit making and pioneering Coach Factory that was inaugurated by Jawaharlal Nehru? We still believe that there could be some other big railway scheme that might be implemented in Tamil Nadu. Even the allocation made for the nagging projects are negligible and quite insufficient. I request the Railway Minister to level this imbalance and I wish he offered a better deal to Tamil Nadu.

I must voice the aspiration of the people of my constituency, Dindigul. The recent broad-gauge conversion has given an impetus to our historical town. Dindigul is the headquarters of Anna District and commercially viable and industrially vibrant agricultural District.

Hence, I request the Railway Minister to give face-lift to Dindigul Railway Junction. Retiring rooms and rest rooms should be constructed and restaurant facility should be upgraded. The overbridge construction near Dindigul railway station is pending for a long time. I request the hon. Minister to sanction and allocate sufficient funds and ask your officers to complete this work at the earliest to avoid traffic congestion in this town that continues to grow by leaps and bounds.

[Shri C. Sreenivaasan]

A new Dindigul-Madras Express Train will help this town to achieve economic development at a fast pace. Dindigul is regaining its importance as a commercial and industrial centre which augurs well for our economy.

15.05 hrs.

[SHRIMATI SANTOSH CHOWDHARY *in the Chair*]

Under the laudable unigauge conversion scheme, the pet project of our Railway Minister, Madurai and Dindigul have secured a place in the Broadgauge Railway Line Map of India. So, I request the Minister for Railways to operate direct trains from Madurai to major cities like Delhi, Bombay and Calcutta, of course, all of them via Dindigul.

Before concluding my speech, I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister for providing insurance cover to all the railway passengers at no extra cost. But I must still insist on your continuing to uphold the social responsibility the Railways have in a vast developing country like ours.

Sustenance of many industrial units depend on railways. Under the technology upgradation programme, Railway should not opt out all of a sudden to anything and everything foreign. It is good you think big. At the same time try to think Indian whenever and wherever you can.

At a time when financial crunch is there you may think twice to incur heavy expenditure due to massive imports for Railways. It is said that Railways have plans to commercially exploit its prime land properties. I am only reminded of the

adage penny wise and pound not wise. Hence I would like to leave a word of caution to the Railway Minister. While decentralising and privatising different functional units of the Railways, why don't you think of involving States and their PSUs to try handling them. Let them have collaborators from elsewhere and join hands with Indian Railways.

Before winding up my speech, I would like to suggest to the Railway Minister to convene a Chief Ministers' Conference and evolve a long-term strategy and a perspective plan. I feel a balanced National Railway Policy is necessary at a time when our economy is being globalised. Liberalisation should not gobble up our gigantic railways. Indian Railways should always remain Indian and truly Indian.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central): Madam, Chairperson, I rise to support Supplementary Demands for Grants as well as Demands for Excess Grants which are submitted to this House for approval. In fact, these Supplementary Demands are for token amounts; they are only for Rs. 12000. But it is necessary to take approval of the House for new service, for new instrument of service, which was not included in the Budget. Therefore, these token grants will give power to the Railway Ministry to undertake these projects and later on supply further funds as required by these projects.

I find that the work which are mentioned in the Supplementary Demands are only 12 in numbers and the amount demanded is only Rs. 12,000, that is Rs. 1000 per item by way of token

demand. Now, out of these 12 Demands, one demand is with respect to additional rakes loading facilities and another demand is with respect to rakes for broad-gauge palace on wheels; whereas items 3 to 7 are all for track renewal at different places.

Item No. 8 is for sleeper renewal. Then the other two Demands bearing Item Nos. 9 to 11 are for 2nd distance signal on Rajdhani routes. The last Demand is for road over-bridge, which is to be undertaken in the near future.

Madam, it is gratifying to note that the Railway Ministry is undertaking more and more track renewal items as well as sleeper renewal items, as is seen from these Supplementary Demands. It is also gratifying to note that they are concentrating again on the rack loading facility to avoid detention as far as goods are concerned. The road bridge which is also given under these Demands will also give an indication that there is some coordination between the Ministry of Surface Transport and Ministry of Railways to relieve the congestion of traffic over the Railways. Therefore, there is no difficulty in supporting these Demands which are directed to a good cause as far as Railways are concerned.

As in my speeches on the last Budget as well as the Budget before that, I have pointed out that when the Railways were giving more emphasis on conversion of gauge, they should also turn to this track renewal and sleeper renewal because they are also important factors for running the Railways in a safe way for the safety of passenger and for the safety of the traffic. More concentration on track renewal and sleeper renewal as well as major signals, such as 2nd distance signals on the route, are also very important from the point of view of

avoiding accidents and for the safety of the Railway traffic.

Therefore, as I said, the Railways are now concentrating on important items and I hope that more and more concentration would be done for the items which give safety to the Railway traffic and appropriate measures would be taken to relieve traffic congestion.

From this point of view, I would have also wished that some items regarding Bombay Sub urban railways would have also been included in these Supplementary Demands. I am taking this opportunity of drawing the attention of the Railway Minister and also of this House to the sub urban railway traffic in Bombay which is on the verge of collapse. Day after day, not only the trains are getting crowded but there is neglect of the Bombay Sub urban traffic as far as Bombay is concerned.

Only recently, several incidents of frequent dislocation of traffic and frequent disorganisation of Bombay sub urban trains have taken place in the Bombay sub urban district.

This resulted into agitation by the commuters and also resulted into damage and destruction of railway properties by the enraged commuters, who were suddenly put to inconvenience and hardship due to disorganisation of the Bombay suburban railway traffic.

The recent incident took place on the 8th of August, only one day before yesterday, at Dombivili as a result of sudden derailment of goods train. Suddenly a goods train got derailed at the peak hours of the traffic when the people were anxious to reach their place of work

[Shri Sharad Dighe]

at the appointed time so that they may not be marked late or their casual leave may not be deducted. Such derailments take place when lakhs of people are anxious to reach their place of work at the peak hours in the morning, resulting into dislocation of suburban traffic for nearly five to six hours. There were no trains from Kalyan to Victoria Terminus as far as that particular stretch was concerned. This derailment took place between Diva and Dombivilli stations of the Central Railway. This resulted into not only dislocation but also stone throwing and destruction of railway properties by the enraged mob. I do not want to justify their behaviour. But we must also go to the root of the matter. When lakhs of people are anxious in the morning to reach their place of work, such sudden derailment of suburban railways, which carry packed passengers every day, poses not only hardship but also makes the mob angry and the mob psychology then results into destruction of railway property. We must take lessons from this and promptly attend to the Bombay suburban traffic problems so that no such dislocation takes place.

The earlier dislocation was on the 26th of July 1994. On the 26th of July 1994, one man was killed in firing at Ambarnath of the Central Railway and several others were injured in stone throwing and lathi charge on the Western Railway, Bombay. So, at Ambarnath also, sudden dislocation took place and the whole traffic was stopped. So also, on the Western Railway, on the very same day between 10 a.m. and 12 noon, services between Andheri and Borivilli stopped completely and by 1 p.m. the passengers stranded at Borivilli station began stone throwing and attacking indicators, signals, etc. The commuters also complained of

lack of information. So, on such occasions, not only no relief is given to the passengers but even there is neglect of giving information so that the people can disperse or take other transport system. This is the neglect of the railway authorities as far as Bombay suburban trains are concerned.

I would urge upon them to direct their attention to the Bombay Suburban System, so that such dislocations resulting into wrath of commuters and mob psychology for destruction of railways property may not arise henceforth. It is significant to note that there are the seven incidents of dislocation and disorganization of Bombay suburban trains at the peak hours during the month of July and the last few days of August.

First such incident took place on 2nd July, a collision of Shatabdi Express with the shunting locomotive in the Bombay Central Yard, resulting into dislocation and disorganization. Then again on 4th July, there was a derailment of a goods train at Nalasopara, that also resulted into dislocation of suburban railways. Then on 7th July, there was a derailment of a railway crane between Mira Road and Bhayandar.

These are all incidents, not out of mere accidents, but also because of negligence of the Railway Authorities as far as these services are concerned. Again on 13th July, the flooding of the tracks on the Western and Central Railway due to heavy rains. One more incident was in a goods train blocking three out of four tracks near Kalyan when its brake cylinder fell off. So the trains' brakes are not properly looked after. The tracks are not properly looked after. The sleepers are not properly looked after and

their time table is so organized and the traffic flows in such a manner that suddenly there is failure of the whole system; and when every minute is valuable in the morning, when people are rushing to their work, the trains are disorganized in the Bombay suburban resulting in a lot of agitation by the commuters. This results into hardship and inconvenience to the commuters of the Bombay suburban railway passengers.

Therefore, I take this opportunity to warn the Railway Authorities that before the situation takes a very serious turn in Bombay, the Bombay Suburban Railways should be improved, should be looked after and further facility should be provided. New projects such as the sixth corridor for the Bombay Suburban ought to be immediately undertaken by resorting to even Supplementary Demands, so that the congestion of the Bombay suburban would be relieved and at least there should be regular flow of traffic during the peak hours. Further, when people return from their offices to their homes, in these peak hours, at least, there should be punctual, regular Bombay suburban service with more and more facilities, giving more and more relief and decreasing the congestion.

With these words, Madam, I support the Supplementary Demands and urge upon the Railway Ministry to take care of the Bombay suburban traffic which is, as I said, on the verge of collapse.

I am sorry that during this period only, hon. Railway Minister had left, but I hope he would take advantage of the notes which would be given.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): Only yesterday, I called both the General Managers. We have taken up this matter.

[Translation]

SHRI RAJNATH SONKAR SHASTRI (Saidpur): Mr. Chairman, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to speak.

The supplementary Demand for Grant for the years 1994-95 and Demands for Excess Grants for the year 1991-92 of the Railways has been presented before us. We all support it. According to grant numbers 6, 8, 13, 15 and 16 there has been an excess expenditure of Rs. 293.99 crore during 1991-92 and it included the expenditure of Rupees 37,69,30,598 on provident fund, pension etc. Mr. Chairman, there is no doubt that railway is the biggest department in the country and all the industries are linked with it. Some of the members may have some resentment, but all of us know that our present Railway Minister, Shri Jaffar Sharief ji is an experienced, hard working and able administrator, and he will solve all the problems.

I would like to bring to your notice one or two problems. Our promotee officers have a problem. They constitute 70 per cent in the railway family. Their federation had given a memorandum to the hon. Railway Minister in 1991. The hon. Minister had a meeting with the office bearers of the federation on 30th July, 1992. He gave them a patient hearing. He gave an order to the board to sign an agreement with them to remove the differences between the board and the federation. When this agreement could not be reached, and the Railway Board did not take any action on it upto 9th September, 1993, the hon. Railway Minister passed another order to raise the quota of these promotee officer from 40 per cent to 50 per cent in Group-A promotions. One and half years have passed since then, but the railway

[Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastri]

department has not carried out the orders of the hon. Minister. We are proud of our hon. Railway Minister, but when such things take place, it pricks us to some extent. We must try to find out the persons who are in the habit of by-passing the orders of the hon. Minister. Now we have come to know that all these promotee officers will lead a march to the hon. Prime Minister's residence. What is the problem?

I was going through the supplementary demands for grants of 1994-95. A token amount of Rs. 12 thousand crore has been demanded. The new projects which have not been taken up till date will be taken up with the help of this amount. Definitely crores of rupees will be spent out of this token amount. My submission to the hon. Minister is that he should pay some attention towards it also.

I have carefully examined the list, there are 12 works in all out of which 10 constructive works are for the South-Eastern Railway, one each for the South-Central Railway and Southern Railway. But there is no mention of the North-Eastern Railway or Northern Railway. I was surprised to see the provision made for a selected few branches despite the fact that the Railways is a vast organisation with so many branches and zones under it. Why it is so? North-Eastern Railway has been totally ignored. I would like to urge the hon. Minister to pay his attention to North-Eastern Railway also.

I come from Varanasi. The Gauge conversion work is in progress in the North-Eastern Railway. The work is complete between Allahabad and Gorakhpur but it is yet to be taken up from Orihar to Chapra. The hon. Minister has

assured the House that this work will be started very soon. I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister of Railways to pay attention to it. The issue of linking up of Varanasi railway station either with the Northern Railway or with North-Eastern Railway is under consideration at present. At the Varanasi Cantt Station there was a platform for both the trains of North-Eastern Railways and Northern Railways. The trains of both the Railways halted there. Now, the conversion of narrow gauge into broad has caused a problem and this is to be decided as to which Railway, this platform should be given. The office of the Northern Railways at Lucknow is 3 kilometres away and the office of the North-Eastern Railway at Varanasi is one kilometre away therefrom. In view of ensuring good administration and keeping it under the control the DRM etc. it should be connected with the office at one kilometre. I would like to urge the hon. Minister of Railways to give a serious consideration to this suggestion.

Sir, there is Sheopur Station, where coal is being unloaded, there for the last one year. The issue was raised some day during the Zero Hour. The station is located in the heart of the city. The township starts just 20 steps from there. As a result of unloading of coal dust flies which is proving health hazard and people falling victim to the dangerous diseases like Tuberculosis etc. People are resorting to hunger-strike. The District Magistrate has paid a visit to the site and has written letters. The Commissioner had written to make some arrangements for unloading of coal at distance of about 2 to 4 kilometres away from the township at some another station. The Railway Consultative Committee also visited the site and they were of the view that the present arrangement was unjust they also assured to make recommendation to the Ministry of Railways. But despite their

recommendations nothing has been done so far. We have received a letter from the General Manager of the Northern Railways day before yesterday in which it has been stated that the coal being unloaded here is meant for industries situated in close vicinity to this station. Unloading of coal at this station has been started just a few months back. What was the old practice? Why the same is not being resorted to? I would, therefore, like to request the hon. Minister to pay attention to it. I have been told that the people of the area are going to file law suit against this practice. The Railway officials do not furnish correct information to the hon. Minister. He should look into it.

Sir, many a time we have raised the issue of catering system in the House. According to the figures supplied 122 contracts were awarded to various persons during last three years. We are depending on you and have high expectations of you. We understand that the hon. Minister of Railways Shri Jaffer Sharief is very much considerate to the under-privileged, minorities and the economically backward classes. But it hurts when I found that out of 122 contracts only 7 or 8 were awarded to the persons belonging to scheduled castes. The hon. Minister, therefore, should pay attention to it.

Madam Chairman, I appreciate the immediate action taken by the Government in the matter. But no result has come out so far of the action taken. At Moghalsarai railway station under Northern Railway about more than 40 educated unemployed youths are earning their livelihood through an organisation of unemployed persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes. Such a large number of persons would hardly be working in any factory. The Government awarded only one contract to the society of SC and ST

people in 1982-83 when he was the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways. This provided an employment opportunity to 30 persons whose families are grateful to him. But what is the position today? On platform No. 1 and 2 the contract has been awarded to the upper castes. The contract for the platform Nos. 3, 4, 5, and 6 has been awarded to this society. But the charges recovered from the society are 4-5 times more as compared to those recovered from the platform Nos. 1 and 2. We have sent all the records to the hon. Minister for verification. This issue was raised in the House also. The hon. Minister of Railways also has been intimated in this regard. But no action has been taken so far. Why such a disparity in the matter of charges to be recovered from the contract awarded to the persons belonging to the Scheduled Castes? We have made a request with the hon. Minister to award the contract as the newly constructed railway station at Varanasi to the SC and ST people. About 50-60 families may be benefited with this contract. He had assured us to grant this contract to SC/ST people. He had called necessary information in this regard but nothing concrete has come out so far. Perhaps it is our misfortune, it is the misfortune of the people belonging to the SC and ST and educated persons that the work has been kept in abeyance. He has again asked for comments in the matter and we hope that he will certainly take action favourable to us.

Madam, I would like to draw your attention to one or two minor issues. I will not take much time. It is a matter of pleasure that Shri Jaffer Sharief the Minister of Railways, visited Dullahpur, Jakhania and Sadat railway stations. He was warmly received by the people there who put forth their problems to him. A new train has been introduced just from

[Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastri]

one or two years from Gorakhpur to Bombay. This train halts at all the railway stations after a distance of 40 kms or so route. But it becomes so fast after the Mau railway station that it does not halt even at the stations of big mandis and big towns. People of the area have made a representation in this regard. This arrangement will facilitate development activities in the area... (*Interruptions*)

The Government has issued orders in this regard. My submission is that the train should halt at Dullahpur, Jakhnia and Sadat railway stations falling at a distance of about 30-32-40 kilometres. I have just now been informed that the train will halt at one of these railway stations. My submission is that the halts for this train should also be provided at the stations of big towns and big mandis.

There is a railway which was constructed 50 years ago during the British period. This line covers 12-13 stations Shahganj, Jaunpur, Ohirar etc. The condition of this line is very bad. Nobody knows where the train will stop. The passengers travelling in these trains are from rural areas. There is no water, no shed and no light on these stations. No employee wants to work there. If an employee is transferred there, he rushes to the Minister to get the transfer orders cancelled. If signal is out of order, it is not put in order for the whole week and trains keep on running there.

I have made requests time and again to provide proper facilities at Kirakat, Muftiganj, Orihar, Dhobi, Putrahi and Yadavendra Nagar railway stations. Old coaches attached to the trains should be replaced. DRM Shri Nanda was asked to go there and solve the problem. We asked him to accompany us to see the

site but he went there alone. Sitting benches are broken and there are no window-panes in the coaches. Toilets are dirty. The matter needs proper attention to be given by the authorities. The Government has provided halt Station and Sidhauna which continued for four years. It was very convenient for passengers. But since a college was set up there, the students started travelling without tickets. The officers reported the matter to the Ministry. Consequently the facility was withdrawn. We pointed out that we are being made to suffer for the guilt of the few students. We were told that station is running loss, therefore, it is not possible to continue the arrangement. There are lakhs of railway stations. Whether all of them are earning profits. We expect welfare measures from the Government and at they have to hear it. A Marauda Halt Station is proposed to be provided in my constituency. The officers asked to make arrangements for 3 acres of land for it. The villagers provided valuable land and 100 trucks of good earth for the said halt. Later on, the contract was withdrawn as a result of the report submitted by an officer to effect that the bus stop was just one kilometre away here and there was no need to provide halt at this place. The fact is that there is no bus stop upto the distance of 12 kilometres. If my statement is found wrong, I am prepared to resign as a member of the House. The person who submitted such a report should be asked to explain as to why did he submit such a misleading report to the Ministry.

There is a small bridge over Magai river. Every month at least 2-3 persons are killed there by the train. About 30 years ago a big accident of Gorakhpur Express took place there in which thousands of persons were killed but till now this bridge has not been widened. There has been a repeated demands for

the widening of bridges over Magai and Beso rivers. About 200 persons have been killed there in accidents after independence but the Railway Ministry do not pay any attention towards it. We go there to ask for vote for the Congress party. But who will vote for the Congress? The Railway Ministry can take the plea that other party's Governments were also there at the centre but the Congress party has been in power for quite a long time and it could not get this small work done. These are very sensitive issues. The Railway Ministry has done a very good work by setting up a cancer institute in Varanasi for Railway employees of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Assam by which more than 10 crores people of our country get benefited. The hon. Minister has great contribution in setting up this institute. Recently the hon. Minister had a programme to visit Varanasi but later on the programme was cancelled. We would like to show the condition of this institute to the hon. Minister. 12 posts of doctors are lying vacant there for the last six years. There is no Registrar there and many posts of MBBS doctors are lying vacant. The local people have been making continuously demanding for it and I have also raised this matter but no attention has been paid on it. There is no Director in this institute. Now the hon. Minister has appointed an eminent and senior doctor whose name is perhaps Dr. M.P. Sharma from Danapur as Director of this Institute. The day this news appeared in newspapers, local public congratulated you for appointing a good doctor as a Director. Now it is being heard that he is not being relieved. The hon. Minister should issue order that he should be relieved immediately. It is also being heard that some doctors are saying that they would become juniors if he joins here. This cancer institute is a prestigious institute of the railways. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister to get him relieved immediately to enable to join as

the Director of this institute. I have a copy of the orders issued by the hon. Minister. You have issued orders thrice. In the first order it was said that ad-hoc appointment of doctors should be made there. In reply to it the Railway has said that ad-hoc appointments cannot be made. The hon. Minister asked the CMO and D.G.R.H.S. to make appointments and such appointments shall remain effective till they are not confirmed by the UPSC. But all your orders have been violated. That is why doctors are not being appointed there. The hon. Minister should pay attention to it.

There is a Shramjivi Express train from Delhi to Patna via Varanasi. At least 30-35 M.Ps. have requested you that it is a good thing that this train has been introduced which starts at 1.20 p.m. from Delhi and just after 10 minutes there is another train named Kashi Express on the same line. On every Friday we have to catch train at 1.20 p.m. If there is an evening train, which starts at 7.00 p.m., we can attend the entire day's proceedings of the House and can catch train in the evening. There is no train in the evening for Varanasi.

Similarly we had been demanding an evening train from Varanasi to Delhi. You have introduced Delux train which runs thrice a week. It starts at 8.00 p.m. from Varanasi. Now we can catch this train in the evening and attend the House in the morning. During day time we can attend work relating to our constituency. This train oftenly runs late like Shramjivi Express. You can see the chart of last 100 days and you will find that about 90 days it was late by 7-8 hours. Instead of 1.20 p.m. it always starts at 7.00 p.m. Therefore, there will be no problem if its time is changed to 7.00 p.m. and similarly its departure time from Varanasi may also be changed from 3.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. Similarly, it will be better if the time of

[Shri Rajnath Sonkar Shastri]

Delux Express is also changed accordingly because this train generally do not get line-clear. The hon. Minister has to pay attention to it. One thing I would like to say about pantry service. On 3rd August I was travelling in a train. I was feeling hungry so I asked the waiter to bring non-vegetarian meal. He served the meal. At Tundla station I started taking my meal. Shortly after that I started vomiting. Similar was the condition of my shadow. I did not have any tablet so a tablet was taken from one of the passenger and message was sent to make a Medical Officer available at Allahabad. But I regret to say that neither MO nor any Food Inspector came there. When ASM Varanasi was contacted on telephone a M.O. and food inspector came there. A sample of food was taken. All passengers congratulated me and said that no complaint would have been attended had I not been there. Then an inquiry was started and it was found that the concerned waiter had not undergone any medical check-up since 1990-91. A sample of meat piece was taken and found that it was rotten and sub standard flour was used. Next day when I returned in the same train I found that the same waiter served good quality meal from the same pantry. The meal was so good that even the hon. Minister do not offer such meal to us. After making complaint, such a good meal was served. When I asked for this sudden change, the waiter requested that the said sample may please be withdrawn and this complaint should not reach the Minister and assured that now onward good quality food will be served. I told him that this complaint will definitely reach the Minister because I knew that Railway demands were to come up for discussion in the House. I was not worried about myself but what was the condition of hundreds of

passengers who were there at Varanasi Railway Station. They were saying that the train may get late by two hours but this incident must be brought to the notice of the Railway Minister. Therefore, I would like that the hon. Minister should pay attention towards these things also.

Madam Chairman, it has been generally noticed that good quality food is served in Southern trains whereas I do not understand why it is not good in Northern trains. We are ourselves responsible for this because there are frequent chain pullings in northern trains. It is not a question of north or south India but it is about railways as a whole with which every citizen of our country is connected, be it by travelling or goods transportation. Even the persons who travel by air only have also to travel by trains sometime. I hope the hon. Minister will try to solve these problems of the general public. I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

DR. KARTIKESWAR PATRA (Balasore): Madan Chairman, I am very much grateful to you for calling me and I support the Demand for Supplementary Grants for meeting the expenditure of the Central Government on the Railways which was laid on the Table of the House in pursuance of Clause 1(a) of Article 115 of the Constitution. I am supporting this Demand because our hon. Minister for Railways, during his three years tenure, has made historical achievements in the Railways.

Our hon. Railway Minister during his tenure of three years made historical achievements in Railways. That is why, I am supporting the Demands for Grants for Railways. I will cite four or five achievements.

The Project uni-gauge is a historical decision of the hon. Railway Minister. Against a target of 2,800 KM railway has completed 2,970 Km gauge conversion thereby exceeding the target. Against the target of 1,600 km conversion for the year, 1994-95, till today 438 km have been completed.

The Konkan Project is in progress and it is also a good achievement of the hon. Minister that Government has authorised Konkan Railway Project for giving free bonus to the tune of Rs. 450 crores.

During the three years period, 336 new trains have been introduced including the prestigious Rajdhani Express. It is, no doubt, a record.

Earlier, two Rajdhani Expresses were introduced.

During three years, even new Rajdhani trains have been introduced.

Eighteen pairs of Mail and Express trains have been introduced including Satabadi Express. Three Satabadi trains have been introduced.

Two Satabadi trains have been proposed to be introduced.

Twelve pairs of trains have been extended and the frequency of ten pairs has been increased during this year.

One hundred and fifty Mail and Express trains and 300 passenger trains have been speeded up by 40 to 45 minutes each from July, 1994. They have been carrying more freight over the last three consecutive years, lifting from 337.98 million tonnes, 350.05 million tonnes and 362.11 million tonnes of revenue earning freight respectively.

During 1994-95, the target is 380 million tonnes.

The Container Corporation of India has handled 2,37,000 containers in 1993-94 while in 1991-92 it was 1,08,300 containers.

The facility of computerised passenger reservation system has been extended to 46 cities during the last three years.

16.00 hrs.

Please hear me because I am quoting only what you have stated.

Madam, during his tenure, 60 to 80 per cent reservation is being computerised. As far as electrification of track is concerned, during the last three years it has increased from 1725 Kms. to 11,817 Kms. 91 Railway Stations were provided with electricity in 1993-94. The total number of electrified stations is 7112. 145 stations will be provided with electricity. It has been decided by the hon. Minister.

As far as modernisation of technology is concerned, it is a good achievement. Though we have purchased some railway engines, our modernised engines are now capable of completing with those of other modernised engines of other countries. The Railway Production Units continued to perform well in 1993-94. The Diesel Locomotive Workshop at Varanasi produced 152 engines against the target of 145 engines. The Chittaranjan Locomotive Works produced 150 engines against the target of 130 engines. The Integral Coach Factory, Madras, produced 1038 coaches against the target of 1000. The Kapurthala Factory also produced 1025

[Dr. Kartikeswar Patra]

coaches against the target of 1000. Though I am only attributing to the good achievements of our hon. Minister, yet I also want to submit before him my genuine grievances. One of my genuine grievances in this. I am repeatedly submitting before the hon. Minister to bifurcate the South-Eastern Zone into two. The headquarters of one Zone should be in Orissa. It is my humble submission because he knows better and the country knows better that one-third of the income is coming to the Indian Railways from the South-Eastern Zone. You will be astonished to know that the South-Eastern Railway has handled 19,532 wagons in 1992. In 1993-94, it has handled 7892.5 wagons. But I want to submit that according to its highest workload and the extensive area, this Zone should be bifurcated. Here also, with much regret I want to submit before the hon. Minister that the General Manager of the South-Eastern Railway is holding the dual charge now. He is in charge of the Central Zone as well as the South-Eastern Zone.

16.04 hrs.

[SHRI SHARAD DIGHE *in the Chair*]

I would like to submit here that in a reply the hon. Minister has stated how much money has been given to Orissa for a new line, for doubling the line. I want to submit one after the other. Koraput-Rayagada line is a new line. Its length is 164 Kms. Its project cost is Rs. 491.20 crores and the amount spent up to March, 1994 is to the tune of Rs. 387.94 crores.

This year, allotment made is only of Rs. 17 crores. It should be completed soon because it is a long-standing on-going project. Otherwise the estimate will

be doubled or trebled. It should be completed immediately and more allocation of funds should be given.

The length of the Talcher-Sambalpur line is 172 kilometres. The cost is Rs. 220 crores; amount spent so far is Rs. 99.66 crores; funds allotted in the current year is Rs. 35.11 crores.

The Length of the Lanjigarh Road-Junagarh line is 54 kilometres. The cost is Rs. 100 crores; amount spent is only Rs. 0.50 crores. This year, the Minister has been pleased to allot Rs. 2 crores only.

The length of the Daitari-Banaspani line is 147 kilometres. The cost is Rs. 242.55 crores; amount spent so far is Rs. 11.50 crores and the funds allocated this year is Rs. 23 crores.

The Khurda Road-Bolangir line has been completed. But still the Minister has been pleased to give Rs. 1 crore this year to give the final touches to it.

About doublings, the length of the Ambodala-Bissam Cuttack and Therubali-Gumada line is 100 kilometres. And the cost of it is Rs. 84.20 crores; amount spent has been Rs. 78.05 crores and the funds allocated this year is Rs. 4.17 crores.

The length of the Joranda Road-Hindol Road line is 28 kilometres and the cost of it is Rs. 25.09 crores; amount spent has been Rs. 22.46 crores and allotment made this year is Rs. 2.63 crores.

The length of the Talcher-Hindol Road line is 32 kilometres. The cost is Rs. 27.61 crores; amount spent so far has been Rs. 19.91 and the allotment made is Rs. 6.71 crores.

The length of the Rajatgarh-Nergundi line is 26 kilometres and the cost is Rs. 37.64 crores and the allotment made this year has been Rs. 2.00 crores.

Regarding electrification, I want to submit that though survey has been made from Kharagpur to Khurda Road and from Khurda Road to Vizag yet no fund has been provided so far. This is the major line. This should be taken up on a priority basis by the Railways. This is my demand and the hon. Minister should also acknowledge this. This is a fair and justified demand. More funds should be allocated immediately to these projects for electrification of lines.

Sir, you may remember very well that in this House, I had tried to create commotions to make the Minister realise my grievances and the Minister has realised it. And the Minister has assured me that conversion of Ropsa-Bengripasi conversion line from metre-gauge to broad-gauge will be taken up on a priority basis. So far he has made efforts to lay the foundation stone of it. This is a vital point. Your programme has been cancelled three times so far.

You have made your programme to lay the foundation stone. But, I would like to request you, if you are so pleased, please assure me in your reply that after this Session you will go there and lay the foundation stone. Otherwise, I will quit this House. If the hon. Minister has any compassion or sympathy in his heart he should assure this House that after this Session he will go there and lay the foundation stone of conversion of Rupsa-Banginpuri narrow-gauge to broad-gauge.

From Haridaspur to Bhubaneswar there is one line. While one train is moving another train cannot come. So, a bridge should be constructed on the Mahanadi river.

Then, regarding my appeal in this House, in the Consultative Committee in several forums that though Howrah is the biggest railway station where lakhs and lakhs of passengers come and go from Calcutta, the situation in Howrah station is beyond my description. The new complex in which the Railway is functioning belongs to Eastern Zone and for all purposes they could not function. The employees and passengers are put into very much trouble; even the employees are taking drinking water from latrines; no ceiling fans over their head; no security though they are dealing with Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 lakh a day, there is power-cut, they are kept in dark. So, this should be taken into consideration on a priority basis.

Then, I have an appeal before the hon. Minister for stoppage of Neelanchal Express in Soro station. It is a longstanding demand of the people of that Assembly segment. They are not allowing me to enter in that constituency because I could not fulfil this sort of a small demand for them. So, this should be considered sympathetically. The hon. Minister has also agreed to this in the Consultative Committee.

I appeal to the hon. Minister for one halt in between the Balasore and Nilgiri Road, that is Bangla passenger halt. It has been enquired into. No monetary involvement is there. There is also every facility. It should be declared immediately. By that, the Minister will allow me to go to my constituency.

Sir, sometimes we are bringing some grievances to the notice of the hon. Minister. I brought to the notice of the hon. Minister a matter regarding one Muslim lady. For more than one year I have been pursuing this matter. She appeared in an interview. Though she comes from a minority community, she

[Dr. Kartikeswar Patil] could not be recruited and those persons are not capable to go to court.

You have been pleased to give an assurance that it will be considered. The file is on your table; you should consider it.

The families which have given their land for railway tracks to be built, according to Railway Rules, will be given either compensation or some sort of employment. At least one person in each such family should get a railway job. But that is not properly adhered to. I would bring to the notice of the hon. Minister in writing all these cases and I hope he would consider them later on.

I feel that both the hon. Chairman and the hon. Minister have been sympathetic to me. I heartily thank both of them.

DR. VASANT NIWRUTTI PAWAR (Nasik): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to take part in the discussion on the Demands for Excess Grants for 1991-92 and Supplementary Demands for Grants for 1994-95. I am on my legs to support these Demands for Grants. At the same time I would like to bring some grievances of the Central Railway to your notice.

In the Central Railway my constituency has been a ghat region, particularly Igatpuri-Kasava region. Every train stops there for half an hour as a technical halt. I had urged so many times that this technical halt should be minimised. There is some problem of AD/DC current. But I hope that with the ABB locomotives which will be available we will be able to abolish that technical halt, so that the timing of the trains will be maintained properly.

As it has been stated, the Bombay suburban railways are being overloaded. We have to plan for more suburbs away from that area. Nasik is one of the suburbs of Bombay. From Nasik daily commuters are going to Bombay for their jobs. There is a need during the office hours for a special superfast chair-car train starting from Nasik, reaching Bombay before the office hours and after office hours from Bombay back to Nasik.

I thank the hon. Railway Minister for all the achievements that have been mentioned. One of the achievements in my constituency is that he has granted Tapovan Express from Bombay to Manmad and from Manmad to Bombay. I thank the Chairman of the Railway Board, Shri Bhatnagar, for his kind efforts in starting the train. But, after starting the train, immediately after one month, that train has been extended to Parbhani. So, now that train has been continuously running late. The train which was meant for the people of Nasik and the people of Manmad does not have space for those very people. No accommodation is available in the train. That train is running for eight hours from Parbhani to Bombay and from Bombay to Parbhani without any sleeper coach or even a pantry car. A pantry car is also not there in Tapovan Express. I request the hon. Minister to look into this and see that the Tapovan Express is provided with a pantry car. For the office goers a new train should be introduced between Nasik and Bombay. An excuse is given that Nasik is not a terminus. I would like to plead that Nasik is one of the biggest industrially and agriculturally growing cities. There is a traction motor workshop as well as there is an electric engineering institute.

Both these units of railways can be utilised for temporary maintenance of the trains at Nasik. If there is no space at

Nasik, the nearby railway station, ODHA should be given that facility and the train can be run. I think there is a provision or a precedent for such type of temporary terminus to the erected and the new trains to be started. About the Panchavati Express, there is a problem because of the AC/DC technical fault. The trains have been reaching Bombay late.

These is a new extra platform being built at VT Station. I think, they can accommodate in the early hours, before 10.00 or 10.30 a.m., a new train from Nasik to Bombay. This should be expedited so that the railway commuters from my area will be benefited.

In the Nasik railway station, we have demanded so many times that there should be a computerised reservation facility and I learn that it is in progress. But, it has not yet started. This should also be taken up and it should be started.

Now, it has been said that seven Rajdhani Express trains have been started and many more Shatabdi Express trains have been started. But, on the Central Railway, between Bhopal and Bombay, there is no Rajdhani Express or Shatabdi Express or any other train in which the commuters can go from Bombay to Bhopal *en route* to Delhi. I request the hon. Minister if he can extend the Shatabdi Express beyond Bhopal to Bombay on the Central Railway or start a new Shatabdi Express or a new Rajdhani Express which will run between Bombay and Delhi in the Central Railway so that it will be beneficial to all concerned.

A minor request for the stoppage at Nasik of Gitanjali Express, which starts from Bombay and directly halts at Bhusaval is long pending. It has to halt there because of technical reasons,

because no tickets are given at Igatpuri. So, I request the hon. Minister to kindly consider my request. It is about 500 kilometres or even more than that. If you have a halt at Igatpuri or Nasik, the people who are settled in Nasik from West Bengal will be benefited. The Igatpuri stoppage is a longstanding demand. I am pressing for this so that he may kindly look into it.

At the same time, the Pushpak Express, that is Bombay-Lucknow Express, is also not having a stop. A two-minute halt at Nasik Road Railway Station is also a very much longstanding demand of railway commuters and I request the hon. Minister to look into that. We had written letters several times and replies have always been negative. So, I will request that there has to be a will to do this. Otherwise, it will be just pending.

Sir, Nasik is the biggest vegetable growing areas for grapes, sugar-cane and vegetables which are supplied to Bombay. I have suggested that you can start a vegetable express from Nasik to Bombay, which will carry vegetables which is not possible by road because there are hundreds of trucks and the road facility is not good. If the roads are not good, the vegetables cannot reach Bombay in time. So, we can start a vegetable express from Nasik to Bombay and earn maximum revenue out of that also. I have suggested in the past that you can connect Maharashtra and Gujarat through Pune, Nasik and Surat, if a new railway line has been established. A survey should be made whether these three industrial cities. Pune, Nasik and surat, can be connected by rail. The tribal areas of Nasik and Gujarat will be connected with each other and the States of Maharashtra and Gujarat will also be connected with each other. so, I request the hon. Minister to

[Dr. Vasant Niwrucci Pawar]

look into this. The other survey of the railway line for which we had demanded is the Manmad-Malegaon-Nardana-Dhulia line. It has been promised in the past. But still the work has not been started. I will request the hon. Minister to start the survey of Manmad-Malegaon-Nardana-Dhulia railway track.

There are some problems in the nearby railway stations of ODHA, Kerwadi, Sukene, Nifad, Lalsalgaon. There is a demand to extent the length of their platforms as well as to raise the heights of their platforms. But, both the things are not being done; and the excuse which is given always is that the passenger traffic is less. I appeal that there is enough good traffic and the maximum number of vegetables, grapes, onion, sugarcane and sugar are all being loaded from Nifad, from Lalsalgaon and from Nasik. These railway stations are earning maximum profit, that is, not less than Rs. 2 crores each. So, I would say that if the passenger amenities are provided in these railway stations properly, the area which is developing will also be boosted and the commuters will also be happy.

In the past, I think, the hon. Minister has said that he will mobilise the resources in the railways. At every railway station, we can see so many materials lying idle — so many bogies, so many rakes, etc. If it is mobilised properly, they will be earning maximum revenue through this; and maximum bogies will also be available for the traffic in the Central Railway.

So far as the railway crossings are concerned, we had demanded an electronic gate at ODHA. I think, it has been provided. But, they are not there at

Kundewadi that is at Nifad and at Lalsalgaon which are across the State Highway where maximum traffic is there. If electronic gates are provided at those places, I will be very thankful to the hon. Minister. There are already manned gates, but still, they have to be converted as electronic gates. One more gate which I demanded in the past is in the Solapur division, that is at Kusmudi where there were three or four accidents near that village and three or four people have died while crossing the track. This needs an interaction between the State Government and the Railway Department. For doing this, the new formula is that the State Government have to give 50 per cent of the expenditure for putting up the crossing and make an alternative arrangement for the man who operates that gate. I think, there has to be an interaction between the Railway and the State Governments; then, such problem of railway crossings will be overcome.

There is a demand for railway overbridges at ODHA as well as at Lalsalgaon. At Nifad, a project for a railway overbridge has been sanctioned. But it is said that in the Plan of 1995-96, the provision will be made. There is still a problem of clearance by the State Government; and so, I think the interaction between the State Government and the Railway Department is necessary. I request the hon. Minister to look into this matter.

The last point which I would like to make is about one passenger train which is running between Bhusaval to Manmad. The passenger train from Bhusaval to Manmad should be extended to Igatpuri and if it is done, many more passengers will be benefited. That is a train for a common man and that can be done very easily which will not affect any one. I would request the hon. Minister to extend

this Bhusaval-Manmad passenger train to Igatpuri and make it Bhusaval-Igatpuri and Igatpuri-Bhusaval passenger train. If it is done, the passengers will be benefited.

At the end, I will just request him to look after the security of the passengers. There were three or four dacoity in my area, that is, between Nasik and Nifad. It has happened three or four times; and so, we have to provide some railway guards in the bogies.

Then and then alone, this can be controlled. That is the necessity of the time. So, I also request him to look after the security. The punctuality of the trains is definitely going to be more important necessity. With this, once again, I request the hon. Minister to give more attention to Bhusaval Division of the Central Railway so that the commuters of my constituency are benefited. The Railways can also earn maximum revenue if the Bhusaval Division is looked after properly.

SHRI M. KRISHNASWAMY

(Vandavasi): Mr. Chairman, Sir, thank you very much for giving me an opportunity to participate in this discussion. I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants relating to the Railways and the Demands for Excess Grants. My previous speakers expressed that the performance of the Railways is very good and effective. Particularly our Railway Minister is taking serious steps in improving our Railways. I need not go over it again.

Apart from that, I would like to mention about my constituency. There is a railway gate in my constituency, that is, in Tiruvannamalai town. It is a district headquarter. It is a temple city and a fast developing city Tiruvannamalai — in Tamil Nadu. There is an Asharam called

'Ramana Asharam' for which so many foreigners are coming every month and stay there. As a matter of fact, they have purchased some land and constructed houses and are staying there.

There is one more Asharam coming up. Swami Yogi Sarat Kumar came to that place from Uttar Pradesh and has settled in Tiruvannamalai town about 30-40 years back. Thousands of devotees are coming there to see him. It is an important city and has office of the Collector and that of the Superintendent of Police. All officers are there. In the town, there is a railway gate. The trains are going two or three times. At that time, the gate is closed. The people are not moving from one place to another at the time of emergency. It is a very important matter to be discussed. I would request the hon. Railway Minister just to see that a railway overbridge is constructed in the town. It is a very important town.

At the same time, one more railway over-bridge is required at Polur in Tiruvannamalai district. Both the railway gates are on the States Highways. The traffic congestion is there. The people are not able to move about. Every half-an-hour or 45 minutes, it is closed. I would request the hon. Minister to pay more attention to these two bridges — one at Tiruvannamalai and another Polur.

Further, there was a proposal for a new line from Madras to Salem via Chinglepet, Uthiramaru, Vandavasi and Tiruvannamalai. I was told that there was a survey in 1948 or 1952. Thereafter nothing has happened. The proposal is still pending. The Railway Minister can provide a token amount in the budget so that necessary survey can be undertaken and the project report could be prepared. Alternatively, I would suggest that there is a proposal now to have a new railway line

[Shri M. Krishnaswamy]

from Madras to Sriperumbudur. Our late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi's memorial is located in Sriperumbudur.

If there is a proposal to have a new railway line from Madras to Sriperambudhur, that line can be extended from Sriperambudhur to Kanchipuram. Kanchipuram is a big town and also an ancient town. Then comes Cheiyar, Thiruvannamalai. It is feasible. It is a very effective line; so, it can be considered. The Ministry of Railways can have a survey of these lines and bring more attention to it since the line is very productive. Kanchipuram is a very interior place connecting so many towns. I can say that even now, the people living there have not yet seen the railway line. So, I request the hon. Minister to kindly consider this and if possible, provide some funds for the line Sriperambudhur-Kanchipuram-Cheyyar-Thiruvannamalai-Salem line.

Of course, my friends are also telling about the jobs. In certain cases, I represented this matter for the provision of some jobs on compassionate grounds. The hon. Minister is readily accepting it and making an endorsement. He is ready to help on compassionate grounds for jobs. But, I am very sorry to say that when this goes to the Department, the officers raise some questions and all that, and then return the file. I do not know why it happens. If I represent to the Minister certain cases, he readily accepts and even writes on the margin of the representation 'May be appointed'; 'May be considered', because he knows the facts, he knows the feeling of the poor people. But somehow or the other, it has been denied by the bureaucrats and the other officials. This point may be considered.

I would, therefore, request the hon. Railway Minister to consider this proposal and issue necessary directions for the new lines Cheiyar, Sriperambudhur, Kanchipuram, Cheyyar, Chetpatu, Thiruvannamalai and the old proposal also namely, the line via Vandavasi Thiruvannamalai and other places. The necessary direction may be given to the concerned officials in the Southern Railway to make the feasibility report and to prepare the project report for these new lines.

With these words, I support the Demands for Grants relating to the Railways and also the Demands for Excess Grants.

[*Translation*]

DR. GIRIJA VYAS (Udaipur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I do not know whether I should give thanks to Hon'ble Minister or say some words in his praise or express my resentment on behalf of the people of my constituency. After so many years of independence nobody has remembered this district of Rajasthan, but for the Hon'ble Minister. You have not brought any major change in Rajasthan inspite of your three year tenure as Railway Minister. I do not know whether I should begin with thanks or by expressing my resentment. I have already given my thanks though, of course in few words, but I want to express my resentment in regard to Southern region of Rajasthan. The Hon'ble Minister has just gone out from the House which shows his indifferent attitude towards this area. He went out of the House while a lady Member was speaking. It shows his attitude towards we people. If we see the position of Rajasthan as a whole, we will find that you have not given any attention towards the Southern Rajasthan, whether

it is a matter of gauge conversion or whether a matter of laying Udaipur-Jaipur rail line or extending rail line from Mhowchittor to Udaipur and to further extend the Ahmedabad line from Udaipur to Nathdwar or whether it is a matter of conducting survey on Toda Raj line, not a single matter has been settled down in these three years.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is well known that Rajasthan attracts about 60 per cent tourist flow. Out of them 50 per cent visit Udaipur and it takes 20 hours to reach Udaipur from Delhi. You need not travel in ordinary compartments in Chetak Express, you can travel in saloon along with your chairman and you will come to know how I reach Parliament after travelling a distance of 700-750 kilometre in 20 hours and how the people of this area reach Supreme Court to the hearing of their cases. There are report on only two flights from Delhi to Udaipur. You can well understand how tourist must be reaching there.

It is a well known fact that this area abounds in minerals. There are numerable mines of Rock Rhosphet, zinc, Zipsens and marbles. The Ministry of Railways have not given it a thought as to how to transport this material. It has been our long standing demand that railway line between Udaipur and Chittorgarh be converted into broad gauge line. The Hon'ble Minister can state in his reply that when 20970 k.m. line in the whole country was converted into metre gauge, Rajasthan was also included in it. But this is the border area of Rajasthan. It is true because our soliders who serve our country are posted there. But the area which provides minerals to Rajasthan, to the country and even to the whole world, nobody has given it a thought that how minerals should be transported from there. There are a number of marble

mines but the Ministry of Railways has never considered the increasing demand of marble in Bombay, Delhi and other areas, how this marble should be transported there. We have no direct rail links with Delhi and Bombay because of only not converting 90 km line into broad gauge. At the same time we have no direct rail links with South India. I would request to the Hon'ble Minister that he should shed away this indifferent attitude. I would like to request to the Chairman of Railway Board to do away with this indifferent attitude and think rationally on this aspect and to develop this section.

There is no train from Udaipur to Jodhpur. It takes three days to reach Marwarh Junction and some coaches of Jodhpur train are also attached in this train. Earlier Meera Express was running on this route. It has been discontinued in the last few days. Most of the people of Udaipur are residing in Mhow and Indore but the Mhow Chittorgarh Express halts for a ten and a half hours at Chittorgarh. This train can be extended up to Udaipur. Most of the rail passengers of Ahemadabad goes upto Nathdwara, that train can also be extended upto Nathdwara because engines can also wait there for ten hours. Hon'ble Minister should give it a thought and after rational thinking on this aspect may do justice towards this Southern Zone.

There have also been demands about the retirement and other benefits, such as Provident funds and pension. I have also received some letters from the widows. In those letters they have mentioned that they are not receiving pension after the demise of their husbands. Arrears could be the reasons of this continuing demand. If this is the State of affairs I would request the Hon'ble Minister to give Justice to these widows.

[Dr. Girija Vyas]

As I said earlier there is tremendous scope for further promoting tourism in Rajasthan. Tourist come to see the tourist places of Rajasthan. Having this thing in mind the palace on wheels was introduced there and it was made fully air-conditioned, we should try to continue this train. Due to the dispute of Broad-gauge and metre gauge this train is not running. It is not certain that it will run or not in the future. There is one new route which goes through in some parts of Gujarat and Rajasthan, whether Ministry of Railway has given attention to this.

Foreign tourists come to see the palaces of Rajasthan and to gather knowledge of the deserts. They want to see the lakes of Rajasthan. I only want to say that by doing so we should not do injustice with the tourists. It should also be given a thought that where you are planning to convert the line into broad gauge line but there is some danger to the tourism, metre gauge should be continued there. Ministry should think about this.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, I want to give you thanks on two counts. First now the good quality of food is being served in the train than before and the second is for the good behaviour. I would request you that some sort of training on the behaviour should be given to the railway staff so that we can do something new in this regard.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, on the one hand I want to thank the Ministry of Railway whereas on the other the onus rests on me to express resentment of the people of this area. We have one old coach of second class A.C. in Chetak Express, I want that should be converted into first

class A.C. With these words and with the mix feeling I welcome the supplementary demands on grants of Ministry of Railways.

SHRI HARCHAND SINGH (Ropar):
Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to state that it is the only Department which shares its profit with the Government. This Department deserves full appreciation for its excellent performance because today, in Punjab, people prefer to travel by trains. So far as the hon. Railway Minister is concerned, he himself does not know whether hails from Sri Lanka or India? Punjab has the largest share in the income of Railways but it does not find sufficient place in the railway map of India. There are about 12,000 villages in Punjab but none of them is linked by train. Chandigarh is the capital of two States but it is not linked with any place in Punjab by rail. There, the people generally travel by buses. The Railway Department can at least think of linking the State capital with other parts of the State. I have written two letters to the hon. Railway Minister and his response is that Rajpura is being linked with Chandigarh by train. They are linking it with train although there is no need for it. I have not written the letters for this purpose. We show those letters to the people. At least something should be done in this regard. The Railways should take certain action to link Simla with Punjab by train. The people of Punjab have to go to High Court daily which is located in Chandigarh. Besides, the hon. Chief Minister and other Ministers also sit in Chandigarh. Therefore, Chandigarh should be linked by rail with rest of Punjab.

Whatever assurances you give should be fulfilled. Sharief Sahib expend the whole fund in South. There is on one from North in the Railways. The whole

Cabinet is represented by the Members hailing from South. They have completely ignored the North which will not be tolerated at any cost. I would request Shri Jaffer Sharief that Punjab should be linked with its capital.

SHRI CHANDULAL CHANDRAKAR (Durg): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the supplementary demands in the Central Railways Budget. There is no doubt that recently, Railways has made rapid progress. It has done commendable job in regard to conversion of narrow-gauge lines into broad gauge lines. However, very few new railway lines have been laid. The hon. Railway Minister should see that justice is done to Harijans and Adivasis. The Government, time and again, gives assurances in this regard but if they do not link those places by rail with other places, how would they progress?

Bastar is one of the largest district of India. In terms of area, it is larger than Kerala. The Members hailing from Kerala have put their view-point. There, at least, Rajdhani Express runs upto Trivandrum. However a demand has been made to halt it at Palghat. Even 48 years after attaining independence, Bastar has not been linked by railway line with other places. There, even salt costs more. The traders bring their goods by trucks and buses and sell them at higher rates. For example, in Delhi, honey is sold at Rs. 90 per kilogram while it is sold at Rs. 12 per kilogram at Bastar. One can even get salt in exchange of equal quantity of honey. So there is total exploitation in Bastar. I mean to say that such a large district should be linked with railway line. The Ministry of Steel has assured the Railways that it would provide sufficient fund for construction of railway line from Delhi-Rajhara to Balandila. An agreement was signed that the Government of Madhya Pradesh would allot land.

Thereafter, the Ministry of Railways and the Ministry of Steel will jointly construct the line because they have to bring iron ore from there. If Bhilai Steel Plant is not linked with Balandila for bringing iron ore, it may be closed down after four years. This plant has shown the best performance and is exporting iron to foreign countries in the largest quantity. Due to some unavoidable circumstances, the hon. Railway Minister is not present here. Gomangoji will brief him but he will not be able to tell him everything in detail because he does not have a tape recorder with him. This year, during the Question Hour, he had replied that a railway line would be constructed there but when Manakuram asked him particularly about Bastar, it was informed that such a proposal has not been approved by the Planning Commission. When, once he had agreed to do so, I do not know why did he keep it pending under some pretext later? I mean to say that the Government should immediately seek the approval of the Planning Commission and must include some token grant in this supplementary budget itself so that the Railway may be able to start some construction work then by October. Then only, I will get convinced that justice has been done to Adivasis and we will be in a position to speak before the people.

There is another district — Sarguja, which is an adivasi area. It is also not linked by any railway line. How many times do we have to request? We feel embarrassed while repeating it. Our requests are simply ignored. The Government must realise their plight. Ambikapur is the headquarter of district Sarguja. There is a place Vishrampur, which is only 30 kilometres away from Ambikapur. This stretch of land has not been connected with a railway line in spite of repeated demands. Nobody is ready to listen about this. The most important thing

[Shri Chandulal Chandrakar]

is that the coal worth about Rs. one crore is transported by 3-4 thousand trucks daily from there. The coal is required to be transported by road as that area is not linked by rail. As a result, the roads get damaged there. The demand for 30 kilometres railway line is being made for the last 50 years. Sir, through you, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to have sympathy for the Harijans and Adivasis and give approval for construction of this railway line and make necessary provision for the purpose in the supplementary demands. Only then, we will be convinced that he has sympathy for the Harijans and Adivasis.

Thirdly, in my area (*Interruptions*).. However, I comply with your viewpoint and leave the issue of Adivasis apart. The area between Gondiya and Jabalpur is scarcely inhabited by Adivasis. However, four districts of Madhya Pradesh adjoining to this area are considered Adivasis areas. In the past, promise have been made to convert the narrow gauge line of this area into broad gauge line but it has not been translated into action so far. It seems that Madhya Pradesh has not been given any place in the railway map of India. At present, no construction work is being undertaken there. Railway line has been laid upto 3 kilometres only I would request the hon. Railway Minister that the railway line between Gondiya and Jabalpur may be converted into broad gauge line.

One of the Divisional Office of South Eastern Railway is in Bilaspur. South Eastern Railway earns maximum profit for Indian Railways, yet it's headquarter is in Calcutta. Sir, through you, I would request the hon. Railway Minister to set up a zonal office in Madhya Pradesh because it is the largest State of

India. From the very beginning, recruitment for this zone is being made from Calcutta. As a result, the people of Madhya Pradesh are not benefited. The condition of Madhya Pradesh is the same as it used to be during British Raj because they are still known as 'cutter of wood and drawer of water". Through you, I would like to say that Indian Railways should contribute in the development of Madhya Pradesh by setting up a zonal office there. Railways have constructed a big marshalling yard at Gharoda village in Bhilai and thousands of acres of land has been acquired for this purpose. However, the children of those farmers whose land was acquired have not been offered any job in the Railways, though they were well educated and qualified. Through you, I would request the hon. Railway Minister that the children of these farmers should be provided jobs in the Railways. I don't say that unqualified children should also

be provided employment
17.00 hrs. because today they cannot even be absorbed on the posts of peon etc.

I request that those persons should be provided employment whose land has been acquired for this purpose.

My another submission is that South Eastern Railway is earning maximum profit for Indian Railways but its earning is diverted to some other zones. I would request that at least 50 per cent of this income should be spent for the development of Bilaspur and its adjoining areas. It would definitely help in the development of this area. Indian Railways instead divert this profit to compensate the loss in other zones and thus, no fund is spared for the development of this area. The Railways should at least allot some fund out of this income for the

development of Ambikapur and Jagdalpur. This whole profit is earned from Chhatisgarh region but it is not spent on the development of this region.

My next submission is regarding employment. The people of Madhya Pradesh do not get any employment in the Railways. Until the zonal office of Railways is set up in Bilaspur, the people would not be able to get any job.

My third submission is that Chhatisgarh Express runs from Raigarh to Nizamuddin and again from Nizamuddin to Amritsar. If you happen to travel by this train you will find that it is in a worst condition. The most of the doors and windows are damaged. Therefore entry or exit can not be checked. There is no security arrangement. Lavatories are also filthy. This train always runs late by 4-5 hours. At present, this train takes 26 hours to reach Nizamuddin. In such a situation, it would be better to convert it into a passenger train and increase its running time upto 35 hours as it is being stopped at any place so that other trains may pass. No attention is paid to it. If the train is run properly, it can travel the distance between Raigarh and Nizamuddin in 22 hours and a further distance upto Amritsar in three hours only.

I would request the hon. Railway Minister that he should once travel by this train and see the reality himself. No officer of the Railways is ready to travel by this train to know the problems being faced by the Public. However, the hon. Minister is a people's representative. He should think about them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, Railways has a great contribution in the development of the country. Today, we are required to go to Maharashtra via Jabalpur and Gondiya.

In Balaghat area, there are largest mines of good quality copper in the whole world but it has no railway link. I, therefore, suggest that a new railway line should be laid in this area connecting the places like Durg, Balaghat, Mandla and Jabalpur. It will prove to be an important railway line. If these places are linked by the railway line, the minerals can be taken outside the area and the Harijans and Adivasis living in this area can be benefited. Simultaneously, it would also prove profitable.

There is no development in Madhya Pradesh. Its main reason is that there are few railway lines in the State. I would suggest that a new railway line must be laid from Durg to Balaghat via Seoni and Mandla. I would submit that due attention should be paid to this request of mine. Otherwise, we will have to opt for another Railway Minister hailing from that area and except something from him, I have observed that when a Member becomes the Minister, he starts development work in his area and other areas are left out. Therefore, unless we have a Railway Minister from this region, we will be living in the dark. With these words, I conclude.

[English]

SHRI K. MURALEE DHARAN (Calicut): I rise to support the Demands for Grants of railways. Sir, I am supporting the point raised by my friend, Shri Vijaya Raghavan regarding the stoppage of Rajdhani Express at Palghat. It is beneficial not only for the six districts of northern part of Kerala but also to Trichur and Coimbatore districts. Because from Trichur to Cochin the minimum travelling time is two hours whereas the travelling time from Trichur to Palghat is only one hour. So, the travellers from Trichur by Rajdhani Express will be benefited if there is a stop at Palghat.

[Shri K. Muralee Dharan]

The next thing is that now there is a technical stop at Palghat because there is no automatic signal changing system. Due to this Rajdhani stops at Palghat for two minutes. So, my request to the Railway Minister is to consider the demands of the people of Kerala and I hope the Railway Minister will consider our demand.

Sir, ticket is not issued to Cochin for passengers travelling from Trivandrum to Cochin by Rajdhani Express. But they are issued tickets to Erode. So, the passenger is compelled to pay the fare upto Erode, even though a particular passenger has to go only upto Cochin. This is injustice done to passengers travelling from Trivandrum to Cochin.

Sir, there is a Mangla Express from Mangalore to Nizamuddin which was started in July, 1993. Now, the Kerala Express from Trivandrum to Delhi has 22 coaches with two diesel engines. But in Mangla Express, there are only ten coaches. It is very difficult for the people of North Kerala to travel from Mangalore to Nizamuddin. The reservation quota is only 30 per cent; the remaining 70 per cent is allotted for Tamil Nadu and Karnataka and our people in northern part of Kerala are getting only 30 per cent. So, my request is to increase the coaches from 10 to 27 as that of Kerala Express running from Trivandrum to Delhi

17.09 hrs.

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

Sir, it was mentioned that doubling of railways from Shoranur to Mangalore would be taken up. Now the Railway Ministry has sanctioned only Rs. 2 crores for doubling of railways from Kuttipuram

to Calicut. But the actual cost comes to Rs. 60 crores. This amount of Rs. 2 crores is insufficient to meet the demands. So, my request is that the Railway Minister should allot more funds for doubling of railways from Sharanur to Mangalore. Then only the people will be benefited by the completion of Konkan Railway in March, 1995.

Only then Kerala, especially the northern part of Kerala gets the benefit if the Mangalore-Shornoor railway line will be doubled as early as possible. I have heard from the Ministry that the Planning Commission approved the Kottipuram-Guruvayoor railway line. The Railways Minister should take personal interest in this railway line.

A weekly train has been introduced from First July from Trivandrum to Bombay, but there are no sleeper coaches allotted to the northern part of Kerala. At present, there is only one sleeper coach attached to Kanyakumari-Bombay Express exclusively for Shornoor-Mangalore. So, my request is that at least three coaches should be reserved for the northern part of Kerala; that is the most important thing.

The Railways Ministry has announced gauge conversion from metre-gauge to broad-gauge. They are giving more importance to gauge conversion, but the unfortunate thing is that the Railways Department did not give any money for gauge conversion from Kollam-Thenmala-Changhotta to Madras which is the metre-gauge line. My request is that the Government should allot fund for this sector.

My last point is regarding a railway line between Nangenchod to Vythiri. I raised this issue several times in this august House. Wynad is the most

backward and Adivasi district in the State of Kerala. If the Nagenchod Railway extends Vythiri, definitely Wynad will come on the map of railways.

The Karnataka Government, especially the Chief Minister of Karnataka extended all support for extending the railway line from Nangenchod to Vythiri.

These are the minimum demands and we hope that the Railways Minister will consider these demands of the people of Kerala.

Once again I am raising this issue of stopping the Rajdhani Express at Palghat. Again I am supporting the Supplementary Demands for Grants of the Railways Ministry.

[Translation]

SHRI SURYA NARAYAN YADAV (Saharasa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Railway Ministry is very important Ministry and I would like to speak on it. Therefore, I request for extending the time for one more hour.

[English]

AN HONOURABLE MEMBER: One hour has already been extended.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We have to stick to the relevant points. Let us stick to the timings so that all Members could be accommodated. Let each Member take only five or six minutes.

SHRI PALA K.M. MATHEW (Idulad): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, as suggested by you, I will confine myself to two or three points. At the outset, I would like to congratulate the Railway Minister

for having made certain improvements during the last three years.

They are all very welcome steps. Partial modernisation has already been done and one of the things which deserves comment is the energy conservation and computerisation. Some steps have been taken for upgradation of technology also and some improvement in passenger amenities have also been made. I welcome these steps and I congratulate the Minister for this. But at the same time I would like to say that the big hikes in the passenger fares as well as freights have caused untold miseries, especially, to the poor and down-trodden. As everybody knows, that creates a lot of chain reaction not only to the passengers but to the consumers in general.

Certain other problems also deserve very serious attention on the part of the hon. Minister. One thing is that it lacks in establishing priorities. They should give very serious thought to the question of establishing priorities in the allocation of scarce resources. The Minister and the Department always say that resources are scarce, that is true also but if proper priorities are established some of the problems can be solved.

It is a well known fact and I do not think that anybody would contest that even now there is very serious indifference in the basic needs of the passengers and there is pervasive neglect of elementary hygiene. This is something which has to be looked into very seriously.

I need not mention the other things because that have already been discussed here. But I would like to say that without raising fares and freights, resources can be mobilised by stepping

[Shri Pala K.M. Mathew]

up productivity, by improving operational efficiency and by cost control. These things should be considered very seriously and also applied very seriously.

I would like to repeat some of the things which have been mentioned by my colleagues from Kerala, but I will mention the points only. One is with regard to doubling of Shornur-Mangalore and Kollam-Trivandrum lines; electrification of Erode-Ernakulam line and extension of Trichur-Guruvayur line to Kuttipuram.

Second is replacement of old bogies and coaches. More coaches should be given for some of the Kerala trains.

I also endorse the views expressed by my colleagues from Kerala in regard to stoppage of Rajdhanī Express and other things.

My own constituency Idukki is one of the most backward districts in the State and that has been totally neglected by the Railways. No railway line is running through that district. So I would request that a railway line starting from Angamaly through the middle of Idukki district upto Madurai should also be considered seriously.

For the last three years, I have been repeatedly raising this demand in this House. I would once again request the hon. Minister and Indian Railways to consider this also seriously.

With these words, I support the demand and I thank you for the opportunity given to me to speak on this.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI (Robertsganj): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I thank you for allowing me to speak on Demands for Grants for Railways. Railway Budget is presented regularly in this House and I find that most of the Members of Parliament and higher officials demand for inclusion of A.C. First Class. But no one pays attention towards the 80 percent population living in villages, who have elected us. Not a single compartment of second class is added. More ordinary compartment should be added for the poor.

Sir, now I would like to say about my own constituency. I have written several letters to the hon. Minister and have told that mine is a backward area. Electricity, coal, Aluminium and Cement is produced in abundance in Sonbhadra district. Demand for introducing new trains for Shaktinagar and Renukoot, which are visited by large number of people from outside have been raised time and again. Several factories like NTPC, NCL, Birla and Kanodia Chemicals are situated here and people have to go to Varanasi and Allahabad. I am continuously demanding for introducing a train for Delhi. Earlier a deluxe train, Poorna Express was running via Mirzapur and had a stoppage there but now it does not stop there. The common man, therefore, faces great difficulties. I have written several letters to the hon. Minister but unfortunately, the officials have said that 22 pairs of trains are already running through this area. Though it is true but they do not stop there and people of Sonbhadra and Mirzapur are not benefited by it. I had written a letter requesting that reservation facility for Magadh Express should be made available from Mirzapur also but I was told that Magadh Express reaches

Mirzapur at 6 A.M. and therefore, there is no need for reservation from that place. I am very sorry to say that it is totally wrong. I have requested for making provision for reservation in every class from Mirzapur and Sonbhadra. Earlier the Deluxe train, whose name has now been changed to Poorva Express, used to stop here. Now its timings are good and it stops at Allahabad and Mughalsarai. If provision is made for stoppage of this train at Mirzapur or Chunar junction, it will benefit the people of Shaktinagar, Beejpur, Renukoot etc., which is an industrial area and provides electricity for electric trains. Quota should be fixed for people of Mirzapur in every class and a new train should be introduced from Shaktinagar or Renukoot.

Sir, I also demand for electrification from Shaktinagar, Renukoot or Chopan to Chunar. It will benefit the people of Mirzapur which is just 150 or 200 kilometre away. I would like to say that Mirzapur and Sonbhadra have everything like electricity, coal, iron etc. It has many cement factories. I have been demanding time and again to set up a sleeper factory in this area because it can be done at a lower cost in this area. But the sleeper factory has been opened in Allahabad though the raw material goes from Sonbhadra and Mirzapur. I have written several letters to officials and the hon. Minister and also raised question regarding 147 acre of land in Khata No. 3 of Jokahi village which has been occupied by Hindalco. This land has not been taken back because I feel that officials are corrupt and are themselves involved in it. They stay in their guest houses and as a result of this Railway could not get it back and other people are setting there. I would like to make my humble submission that small shops should be constructed on this land and should be allotted to tribal people. It will benefit railway also.

Another problem has also emerged there. Last year during rainy season, the dam on Rihand river breached and the train introduced by the hon. Minister for Varanasi and Gorakhpur has been cancelled. Five gates of Rihand have been opened and third pillar of chopan bridge has got damaged. It is a backward area in the industrial belt. This area is facing steep rise in the prices due to lack of transportation. Movement of trucks has stopped and at present goods can be transported through Bihar only. Keeping in view the problem of this area, I request the hon. Minister to introduce a new train for Gorakhpur, Shaktinagar and Renukoot as it was done during 1991.

I would like to make another demand which is related to Bombay. For going to Bombay from Mirzapur or Sonbhadra, people have to travel via Allahabad. I had demanded for introduction of a train for Bombay via Gorakhpur, Varanasi and Shaktinagar. It will reduce the distance by 200 kilometres which will serve the time and will also help in the development of the area. Therefore I request you to pay attention towards this demand.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, the demand for construction of a new railway line between Mirzapur and Jabalpur has been pending for a long time. Hon. Minister has told that an expenditure of Rs. 400 crore will be incurred on it. I would like to say that it is an important railway line and it will reduce the distance between Madhya Pradesh and Bihar. Singrauli which falls in this area is an industrial area. People from far away places have settled here. Similarly, there are big factories in Sonbhadra and Shaktinagar also. Therefore, I request for construction of this line.

[Shri Ram Nihor Rai]

I had also made another demand for construction of bridge for pedestrians at Chunar railway station. Construction of this bridge is necessary because people have to travel for 3 to 4 kilometres for reaching railway station from the bus stop. People also cross railway lines resulting in accidents. I request you to extend the Prayag Raj Express upto Varanasi. It should also be routed via new line, Allahabad, Madhosingh, Kachhva Road to Varanasi junction. Electrification work should also be taken up on this Railway line.

In the same way, people face great difficulties at the closure of railway crossing at Mirzapur. Therefore, I demand for immediate construction of an overbridge at Mirzapur.

I also demand for an inter-city train so that travelling to Varanasi and Shaktinagar via Chunar and Mirzapur becomes easier.

I would like to thank the hon. Minister for conversion of metre-gauge line into broad-gauge. Earlier, a train used to between Allahabad and Rambagh. On similar lines, after conversion of railway line one train should be introduced upto Gorakhpur so that people can travel upto Delhi via Kachhva Road, Madhosingh, Gopiganj and Allahabad. It will save two hours travelling time. I demand that Poorva Express which travels through Varanasi for three days and goes through a longer route should go via Kachhva Road, Madhosingh Gopiganj and Allahabad to Delhi. It will save one or two hours of the passengers. It should have a stoppage at Kachhva Road because

Bhadohi in Mirzapur has large scale carpet industry so that people can go easily to Delhi and Bombay. I would also like to say that damage occurred to Chopan bridge should be repaired immediately. One train should be introduced between Varanasi and Shaktinagar. With these words I support the Supplementary Demands for Grants.

[Translation]

*SHRI R. JEEVARATHINAM (Arakonam): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I extend my support to the Supplementary Demands for Grants pertaining to the Ministry of Railways tabled in this august House.

Arakkonam Railway Overbridge construction has now come to a standstill because of the financial allocation from the State Government, is yet to be released. I understand that the funds earmarked in the Railways' Budget has been released already. I request the Railway Minister to take up this matter with the Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu Dr. Selvi Jayalalitha. Kindly expedite the matter to realise the pending allocation from the State Government and see that this project is completed at the earliest.

At this juncture, I would like to impress upon you to modernise the Arakkonam Railway Engineering Workshop. Likewise I would like to bring to your notice the long felt need of my rural Constituency where there are numerous villages which have not seen Railways at all. If you could link Walaja with Tindivanam via Ranipet, Arcot, Kalapai, Cheyyar, Vandavasi this new Railway line can link several remote villages and bring them to the

mainstream. I want a survey be conducted to carry out this project. My constituency has a population of about 20 lakhs. There are 10 lakh electorates in my Constituency. Though it is a populated region we have no other Railway facilities other than the Madras-Bangalore and Madras-Kozhikode Railway line passing through our place. Nearby 50 years have elapsed ever since our country attained freedom, but still a long standing demand of our people has not yet been met. When Shri Madhavrao Scindia was our Railway Minister, he more or less conceded to our demand and completed the survey meant for laying this new line. It was then estimated that this would cost 100 crores of rupees. Even now, I have been reiterating this demand which I have been doing quite often even during my intervention during the discussion on the Railway Budget this year. If 100 crores of rupees is to be raised as a loan, I am prepared to raise the same for you from the people of my constituency. While giving this assurance to our Railway Minister, I would naturally expect him to give a consideration.

The day-express-train between Bangalore-Madras may kindly be halted a while when it passes through Anwartikhanpet. This is a demand from the people of that area for quite some time now. It is a historical town. When there was a war between the Britishers and Tipu Sultan, Anwartikhan was Tipu's Commander who fought bravely and died there. To commemorate his memory, the place has been named after him. More than 20,000 people live there and they have commercial contacts and business trips to be made almost everyday, away at Madras and Vellore. This stoppage would benefit them immensely, hence I request the Railways Minister to consider this plea favourably.

EMUs are being run between Madras and Arakkonam. You may kindly extend this upto Katpadi. This would cause traffic congestion in this sector. If habitations are on the increase in Madras, Arakkonam and their surroundings, it may add to the environment pollution. In order to ease out the population conglomeration and to encourage settlements spread all over, this request may kindly be conceded to. Apart from facilitating the people over there, this may also contribute to industrial activities over there. I bring this to the notice of the Railway Minister so that he may consider this also favourably.

Hon. Railway Minister has evinced keen interest in expanding and giving a face-list to the Kanchipuram Railway Station. In this connection, I would like to suggest that you may convert Arakkonam-Kanchipuram-Chenglepet Railway line from metre gauge to broad gauge. This would obviate the tedium of goods train service taking a round-about via Madras. I request the Hon. Railway Minister to consider this.

Conceding to the request from the Hon. Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, you are going ahead with the gauge conversion of the Katpadi-Tirupati via Bagala sector. I thank you on behalf of the devotees of Lord Venkateshwara. I also request you to expedite this project as early as you can.

We have been noticing the derailments and train accidents occurring frequently. I feel it is time to give priority to research and development activities in the Railways. You may explore the possibilities of inventing scientific gadgets to prevent accidents and give forewarnings to maintain safety.

Arakkonam Railway Engineering Workshop is one of the oldest of its kind

[Shri R. Jeevarathinam]

set up during the British regime. It needs to be modernised and expanded. I feel this is possible only during the tenure of this Railway Minister because our Hon. Railway Minister is closely connected with this area and he has several contacts over there. Hence, I request you to set up adequate funds to expand Arakkonam Railway Workshop.

Free Railway Passes given to the freedom fighters as a tributary gesture is in vogue. But, recently through Newspapers I came to know that this facility has been suspended for some time now and we all know the reasons too. Requests from the freedom fighters are forthcoming that this facility may be resumed very soon. I would like to impress upon the Railway Minister that their demand is justified, most of them are poor and hence it needs to be revived as early as you can.

Paying heed to the clarion call from Mahatma Gandhi and a galaxy of leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru, hundreds and thousands of men took part in the freedom struggle. I know that most of them were poor and they gave up their pursuits of education and other occupations to fight for the country. Since they did not have education and gave up bread-winning job opportunities, most of them were left poor and their families live in poverty conditions. Hence, you may consider providing priority or extending a token reservation to the extent of 5% in Railway job opportunities for the wards and the family Members of freedom fighters whether they are educated or skilled or unskilled labourers, they may be rehabilitated in the Railways. I humbly request the Railway Minister to consider this and pay a fitting tribute to the great

freedom fighters who have sacrificed a lot for this country.

Madras-Coimbatore-Cheran Express which has a stoppage at Katpadi only in the morning hours may be stopped in the evenings also on its way to Coimbatore from Madras. I stress this point because Vellore situated near Katpadi is an important medical centre and people from several parts of the country come to Vellore for medical treatment. People from West Bengal, Bihar, and other North-Eastern parts of the country are coming to Vellore via Madras. Hence it is imperative that you give instructions to authorities concerned to give a stoppage at Katpadi.

The biggest Naval Airbase in Asia has been set up in Arakkonam. Large number of defence personnel are stationed there. Whenever any exigency arise in the deep sea, Naval Planes rush from Arakkonam to salvage the problems faced by Ships stranded in the deep sea. Late Shri Rajiv Gandhi laid the foundation and commissioned this Airbase. In order to benefit so many people, it would be fitting and proper to give a stoppage to both Brindavan Express and Lal Bagh Express at Arakkonam. I would like to add here that these Superfast Trains were commenced at the instance of our Railway Minister.

Recently you have introduced Shatabdi Express to Mysore and I wish this prestigious Train too gets a stoppage at Katpadi. As I have pointed out earlier, the Vellore hospital is the biggest of its kind in Asia and people from several parts of Asia come to this hospital town. I hope Hon. Railway Minister will do the needful in this regard.

I welcome the insurance cover facility provided to all the Railway

passengers throughout the country round the year free of cost. I understand that this scheme to provide two lakhs of rupees in the event of any accident is a sort of pioneering one among the Railway systems in the World. I congratulate the Minister for this measure of social concern.

Catering services available both in Railway Stations and in long distance trains need your kind attention. You may kindly ensure that the quality is enhanced and the eatables are prepared in sanitary conditions.

I wish to go on record in congratulating the efficient handling of various projects by the Railway Minister, his officers and the Railway Department. Our Railway Minister attends to the needs of the Rail public wherever and whenever he can. Unfortunately, Arakkonam has escaped his attention. At least now on the Minister may kindly look into the long felt needs and demands of the people living in and around Arakkonam. Our demands are not mega in nature, hence we feel our Railway Minister can meet our demands positively.

Extending my support again to the Demands for Grants for Railways, I conclude my speech.

[English]

DR. VISWANATHAM KANITHI (Srikakulam): Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, for giving me this opportunity to speak on the Railway Budget. I rise to support the Railway Budget.

I thank the Minister of Railways and the Ministry of Railways for having taken up vigorously the work of making the

Indian Railways unigauge. Even though the work of unigauge line has been taken up in many parts of the country, I have in my constituency, a narrow gauge line which was laid somewhere in 1930 or so, but still this line has not been touched. With your kind interference, it was surveyed and the survey has been completed. That line starts from Naupada in Andhra Pradesh on S.E. Railway and goes up to Gunupur in Orissa, which is about ninety kilometres. This is a narrow gauge line. I request that this line should be extended from Gunupur to Singhpur Road on Vizianagaram-Raipur line 450 km. This will reduce the distance between Koraput and Bhubaneswar by more than 150 kilometres. One can imagine the enormous amount of gain in time and fuel. So, I request you to see that this line is taken up in this Eighth Plan and completed at an early date.

As you know, Sir, this line passes through four parliamentary constituencies and also four districts. It is advantageous for the hilly and backward areas of Orissa and North Andhra and is advantageous for three States — Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. So, I request you to consider this as a special case and convert it into a broad gauge line.

I have already given about 56 demands of my constituency which has 26 stations. I do not want to narrate all those demands now but I request the officials of the Railway Ministry to take care of those demands which relate right from reservation to Railway Over-bridges (ROBs).

I once again request the hon. Railway Minister and the Ministry to see that this Naupada-Gunupur line is converted into a broad gauge line and is extended up to Singhpur Road.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM SARAN YADAV (Khagaria): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on Supplementary Demands for Railway Ministry.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to submit two-four points before you very briefly. The rail is an useful means of transport for all the people of our country. Therefore, my first submission is that it is necessary to think about the poor people of our country with regard to railways. We generally see at Delhi Station that only one general bogie is there and people have to pay Rs. two to the Policeman to board the train. Therefore, I request the hon. Railway Minister to increase the number of general bogies for the poor people.

Bihari people come to Delhi, Punjab and Haryana in search of their livelihood. We have seen as to what difficulties do they face in the trains. The Railway Security guards extort money from them. Their tickets are taken by the guards first and then they are told that they are travelling without tickets. Then extra money is collected from them and then their tickets are returned. This type of treatment is being done to the poor people. The Railway Minister has to see as to how long these atrocities and indignant maltreatment will continue with these poor? Such things should be checked.

Now, Sir, through you, I would like to draw the attention of Raiway Minister towards my constituency. Khagaria is a place from where people of five districts—Samastipur, Khagaria, Gorakhpur, Saharasa and Supoh — catch trains for Delhi. Therefore, I demand that a two

minutes stoppage of Rajdhani Express should be provided at Khagaria which will benefit the transiting passengers of these five districts. Many trains are being run from Gorakhpur and Lucknow to Howrah via Barouni on this route. I demand from the Railway Minister to introduce at least one train from Khagaria to Siliguri via Katihar because people from Katihar and Siliguri catch train from Barouni. There is a Manasi station where the Booking office is situated at the platform itself. According to railway rules no one should enter the platform without ticket but the railway department itself is violating the law. Some times when people come to Booking office at the platform they are caught in Magistrate's checking and then punished and harassed. Therefore, this Booking office should be removed from the platform and opened outside the platform so that people get tickets easily. There is a pedestrain bridge at Manasi which is of no use I demand that instead of that bridge an overbridge on narrow and broad gauge lines should be provided so that people get some relief because every year some people die crossing the line there. There are 2-3 places where people have to cross double line, so far, this purpose if check land is made there that would provide safety to the people. A new train from Khagaria to Manasi via Kotihar has been introduced. That should atleast run between Barouni-Katihar so that people may reach Mukama from Barouni and from there they come to Patna and Delhi.

There are 1-2 important Railway Stations where not even a single train has any stoppage. For example Nainpur is a very important station from where people of three districts catch trains. Therefore, I demand that atleast a two minutes halt of Mahananda Express train should be provided there so that people of three districts could go comfortably to and fro Delhi.

I request that the Railway Minister should pay attention on these problems so that difficulties faced by the people of my constituency could be removed. As per my information the scheme for converting Manasi — Forbisganj line into broad gauge has been finalised. Therefore, I demand that the said scheme should be implemented at the earliest and Manasi-Forbisganj line be converted into double line immediately so that people get rail facility from there as well. With these words I support the Railways Supplementary Demands presented in the House.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: There are more than half-a-dozen Members to participate in this debate and I think tomorrow also we may have to take up this subject for discussion. Now, Mr. Ayub Khan's name is there in the list. But it seems that Mr. Dharmanna Sadul wants to speak as he is to go somewhere. If the House permits, he can speak now.

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes.

[Translation]

SHRI DHARMANNA MONDAYYA SADUL (Solapur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for allotting me time to speak. While supporting the Supplementary Demands for Grants presented by the hon. Railway Minister, I would like to raise some problems being faced by people of my constituency. I hail from Solapur. There is a proposal to connect Maharashtra's capital Bombay with the Karnataka capital-Bangalore, Kerala's capital-Trivendrum, Tamil Nadu's capital-Madras and Andhra's capital-Hyderabad enroute Solapur but at present it is only a single track line and that is why

it is a very busy one as a result of which almost all trains, running on this track are always running late. Because of the single track Doun-Gulbarga section remains very busy. I have personally drawn the attention of the hon. Railway Minister several times to the fact that this track should be doubled immediately and today again I request through you that a provision should immediately be made in the Railway Budget for double gauge conversion of this track.

Latur-Miraj railway line near Solapur is still a narrow gauge line and the hon. Minister has taken a decision for converting it into metre gauge line. It is the constituency of the hon. Speaker, Shri Shivraj Patil. 'Bhumi Pujan' has been performed there for the conversion work but the work is not being taken up with the required pace.

There is a Pandarpur Kurduwari area in my constituency where lakhs of devotees come to Pandarpur religious place but there is only narrow gauge line as a result of which devotees face a lot of difficulties. Therefore, I request the hon. Minister through you that a provision should immediately be made in this Budget itself for the conversion of Kurduwari section into metre gauge line so that devotees may not get any difficulty in reaching that religious place.

Moreover, the Solapur-Hubli line is metre-gauge line. The Ministry of Railways has undertaken the work of gauge conversion on this line. But this work is not being accomplished as fast as it should have been. Through you, I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister to expedite the work of gauge-conversion and complete it at the earliest.

[Shri Dharmanna Mondayya Sadul]

A large number of commuters commute daily from Solapur to Poona and for that it has become necessary to link both the places through a shuttle train. The hon. Minister of Railways is requested to initiate the work in this regard. A large number of Telugu people are living at Poona and Sholapur and they often have to go to Andhra Pradesh. But there is no convenient train service for them. Through you, I would like to request the hon. Minister of Railways to introduce a new train from Poona to Kajipet for the convenience of Telugu people.

Three more bogies can be attached to the Bombay bound Shidheshwar Express train starting from Sholapur. I request the hon. Minister of Railways to attach two three-Tier coaches and one first class coach to this train. Earlier this train had two first class coaches but now they have been replaced by AC coach. The AC coach does not suit to the health of many people and they feel problem in that.

I, therefore, request the Railway Board and the hon. Minister of Railways to attach first class coaches to this train alongwith the AC coach.

Further there are three or four hundred wireless operators who are working in the Railways who have not been promoted for the last 15 years. Though the railway is going to close this section, but so long they are working there and this section is not closed, I urge the Railway Board and the hon. Minister to promote them.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there is an Udyan Express train running between Bangalore and Bombay. There is Budhni

village at the Karnataka-Maharashtra border. There has been a long-standing demand of the local citizens to make halt of this train there. I had a discussion with the hon. Minister also in this regard. I again request the hon. Minister to take a decision to stop this train there. Similarly there is a Paschim Bagh settlement area in Sholapur city. The citizens of the people there are facing great difficulty to cross the gate because the gate remains closed almost all the time. I, therefore, demand to construct an overbridge there. Therefore, he is requested to approve the demand and release funds for that and start the work.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the residents of Solapur area are facing a lot of difficulties due to dacoities being committed on the Bijwan-Kudwadi line. I request the hon. Minister to take action for checking these dacoities and provide adequate security to the people living there.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to urge the Railway Minister that there is a big railway playground at Solapur city under the central zone. But since it is not in a good condition players cannot utilise it properly. I, therefore, demand to repair it properly so that players may be able to utilise it.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to request the hon. Minister that there is no reserved quota in the trains starting from or leaving for Solapur. Therefore, the quota should be raised in all such trains. In this regard I have written letters to the hon. Minister and the Railway Board also. I request him to consider those letters and make provision to raise the quota.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the outset my tongue slipped and I referred to the metre gauge by mistake. Construction of broad-gauge for the Pandharpur-Miraj and Lator has been approved. It is, therefore, requested to start this work immediately.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you again I would like to request the hon. Minister to implement my suggestions. I support the Demands for Grants and express my thanks and conclude.

[English]

SHRI SANT RAM SINGLA (Patiala): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I am grateful to you for having given me time to speak.

I rise to support the Supplementary Demands for Grants relating to Railways. Three years back, when this Government took over, the conditions of this country—socially, politically, economically and in foreign affairs—was at the lowest level. Socially caste ridden and suffering from communal divide, economically wreck and paralysed, politically unstable and in the international affairs, it had no prestige. But under the great leadership of our Prime Minister, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao and due to his political sagacity during these three years, there is no sphere where the prestige of this country has not been enhanced.

I congratulate the hon. Railway Minister because the Railways too during the last three years have made a considerable development. But I want to bring to his notice and focus this attention that, in India, we have certain new programmes before us. With the new economic policy of liberalisation and the new industrial policy there is a great

challenge before this country. We have entered into GATT and if we want to compete with the world, we will have to develop the services, whether these are transport services, telecommunication services, air services or rail services, to the world class standard. If we will not bring these services at par with the world standard, I am afraid that we will not be able to compete with the whole world. Therefore, I would request the Railway Minister to keep this fact in view. Whenever we write letters, he always says that there is a financial crunch or financial difficulty. Nobody would listen to these arguments. When the multinationals would come from outside to India to invest here, they would demand better services. If they do not find good air services or railway services, they will not like to invest here. Therefore, the finances will have to be made available, and arranged, no matter from whatever sources. We may even go for partial privatisation.

18.00 hrs.

But it must be made sure that the rail service is comparably better than the world class rail service.

Sir, you know that Punjab has been terrorist-affected State for the last ten years. In spite of that, Punjab has contributed a lot, whether it was towards food or defence and it did not lag behind in doing national service in any sphere. Today, when peace has come to Punjab, many non-resident Indians are coming to Punjab and a great development activity is going on there. Punjab is going towards industrialisation. Therefore, it is very necessary that Punjab, from the viewpoint of railways, should be given priority. But I am sorry to state that whatever little our railways are doing that is being done only

[Shri Sant Ram Singla]

in a cosmetic way. The interior Punjab is being neglected.

I want to bring to the notice of the Railway Minister that Malwa region, which is a very important region and which is an interior of Punjab, completely lacks any railway facilities.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: How much time do you need more?

SHRI SANT RAM SINGLA: Sir, need five or seven minutes.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: We shall extend the time of the House by another five minutes.

SHRI SANT RAM SINGLA: Secondly, Sir, Chandigarh is the capital of both Punjab and Haryana. It is also a Union Territory. But I am sorry to inform the House that it is not connected with Punjab by rail. Although for the last 30-40 years, all the State Governments had been writing to the Government of India that Chandigarh should be connected by rail with Punjab. I will demand from the Railway Minister that Chandigarh should be connected with Ludhiana so that people of Punjab should be able to go to their capital. Similarly, they have planned to connect Chandigarh with Rajpura. We have been asking for this and we have been told that the survey work is going on. But it appears to be only on papers and it is not visible and no substantial thing has been done. Therefore, I will request that Chandigarh-Rajpura and Chandigarh-Ludhiana should be connected by rail service. The new rail line should be laid here.

Similarly, there is a long demand for the last 50 years for a railway line from

Patiala to Jakhhal which is an interior of Punjab. A new rail line is required. This should be from Patiala to Jakhhal via Samana-Patran-Moonak. This is a very important rail link and if it is provided, it will open new vistas of economic activity in that area. This is an area which is backward and underdeveloped. There is great scope for industrialisation.

Sir, if there is any financial problem, I would suggest that the survey work on the Patiala-Jakhhal rail line may be taken up in parts. An overbridge is being constructed at Patiala and funds are required to be allocated for it. I request that more funds should be allocated so that the work can be speeded up and the construction of the allway bridge can be completed in time.

I am grateful to Shri Jaffer Sharief Saheb because he has accepted the demand for running a new Shatabdi Express from Amritsar to New Delhi. The Shatabdi will start functioning from tomorrow. We are all grateful to him. Now the stoppages have been provided at Jalandhar, Ludhiana and New Delhi. Shatabdi Express is for the people of Punjab and, therefore, I request that Rajpura which is a junction station serving as a terminal for the passengers on the one side and on the other direction for Ludhiana-Jalandhar-Amritsar, a stoppage at Rajpura is essential because it would serve the people of the three districts of Punjab, that is, Patiala-Sangrur-Fatehgarh Saheb. Thus, this train would serve the real purpose of catering to the needs of the people of Punjab.

Sir, Patiala is my Parliamentary constituency. Patiala also happens to be the second Capital of Punjab and many important offices of the Government of India and Punjab are located here. It has also been declared as a satellite town.

Northern Zonal Cultural Centre, DCW, National Institute of Sports, Punjab University are some of the important offices which are located in this area. But there is no adequate rail facility to this town. I would request that a new train New Delhi-Patiala intercity express should be introduced.

There is one Uchahar Express that runs between Ambala Cantt and Allahabad. It starts from Ambala Cantt at 5.25 p.m. which may be originated and terminated at Patiala.

Similarly, there is a Dadeer Express that runs through Patiala. This is a very slow train and I would request the Railway Minister that it should be speeded up because it takes double the time taken by Shatabdi Express.

There is a great need of construction of under-bridges and foot-bridges. There is need for providing sub-ways / under-bridges / foot-bridges at Sunam, Patiala, Rajpura and Lehragaga. There is a great rush of the traffic in these towns. These sub-ways are very necessary and need to be constructed immediately. I would suggest that funds should be allocated for the construction of these under-bridges, sub-ways and foot-bridges.

I had requested many a time that Ludhiana-New Delhi Express via Saharanpur and Shane-Punjab trains should be provided a stoppage at Rajpura both sides. Rajpura is an industrial city of Punjab and it is fast developing. It is proposed by the Government to set up a dry port at Rajpura. Many big industrial units like Sriram Group are also establishing their industrial estate here. Besides, it is a junction situation and it is serving as a terminal for the passengers going towards Patiala, Dhuri, Bamala,

Bhatinda, Malerkotla and in the directions of Sirhand, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Nangal dam etc. Since at present hardly any trains are available in the Rajpura Section, a large number of passengers have to come all the way from Nabha, Patiala, Dhuri, Bamala and Malarkotla to Ambala again for catching the trains going to Delhi and Amritsar because of the non-availability of stoppage of the above trains at Rajpura.

Apart from the aforesaid reasons for providing stoppages to these trains at Rajpura, Ludhiana-New Delhi Expresses via Saharanpur's stoppage is all the more essential because many industrial workers working at Rajpura belong to Saharanpur and Muzaffarnagar. A large number of traders of Rajpura who deal in trade of sugar etc. have to frequently visit these markets. Therefore, stoppage of this train at Rajpura would meet the longstanding demand of this area and help in catering to the needs of industrial workers and promotion of trade and commerce.

There is Bhatinda-New Delhi intercity Express. Your Department has changed the schedule of this above train and provided stoppages at many places in Haryana and as a result of the above change, the people of Malwa region belonging to Patiala-Bhatinda-Nabha-Dhuri have been experiencing great difficulty. Moreover, I may add that this is the only train allocated to Punjab by the Railway Department primarily to cater to the needs of Malwa region falling in Punjab State. Providing so many stoppages of this train in Haryana has caused great resentment amongst the people of Punjab. There are a large number of trains which pass through Ambala, Kurukshetra, Kamal, Panipat and Delhi at short intervals and are catering to the needs of the people of Haryana. It is

[Shri Sant Ram Singla]

requested that the stoppages provided to this train be dispensed with and old schedule should be adhered to.

I would also draw the attention of the Railway Minister to the frequent derailment of trains that is taking place. It is concerned with the safety of the passengers. There is a need for track renewal. Since it is concerned with the safety of the passengers, the whole matter should be examined as to what are the basic reasons of derailment of the trains. These days most of the people like to travel by train and they are very conscious about the time. I would request the Railway Minister that the trains should be speeded up so that they are able to provide efficient service to the people.

I would request the Railway Minister that priority should be given to Punjab in the Budget for the Railways because of

the contribution of Punjab towards national wealth, towards national defence and food production and financial stringency should not come in the way while providing railway facilities to Punjab.

I congratulate the Railway Minister that the Supreme Court has upheld his election and dismissed the petition against his election.

I support the Demands for Grants of Railways.

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER: The House stands adjourned to meet again tomorrow the 11th August, 1994 at 11.00 AM.

18.09 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Thursday, August 11, 1994/Sravana 20, 1916 (Saka)
