

15.37 hrs .

RAILWAY BUDGET 1994-95—
General Discussion
DEMANDS FOR GRANTS ON
ACCOUNT (RAILWAYS), 1994-95;
AND
SUPPLEMENTARY DEMANDS FOR
GRANTS (RAILWAYS) 1993-94—

Contd.

[English]

MR. CHAIRMAN: We now take up the discussion on the Railway Budget. Shri Sharad Dighe to continue.

The time allotted is 15 hours. We have already consumed 48 minutes. Now we have 14 hours and 12 minutes.

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): He can speak for two hours.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It depends upon him and his party.

SHRI SHARAD DIGHE (Bombay North Central): The debate was initiated by a Member of the Opposition who took at least 40 minutes.

I rise to support the Railway Budget which is placed before this House.
(Interruptions)

I had taken the first opportunity to express my unhappiness regarding the deal given to the Bombay commuters in this Railway budget. But as far as this Budget is concerned, I agree with the Railway Minister that really the Indian

Railways have to perform a very unique function. They have not only to provide the basic infrastructure to the nation, but have also to deal with several social objectives which are before the country and also to run them as a business organisation.

It is now clear that the budgetary support to the Railways has been dwindling particularly from 1986 onward; from 51 percent it has come down to only 18 percent. Therefore, the Railways have basically to rely upon market borrowings and their internal resources and the management economy which they can do as far as the Railways are concerned. Now it is clear that market borrowing also in the present days has become an expensive thing. Therefore, the only resources which the Railways have to rely upon are self-reliant efforts to step up the internal resource generation through increased efficiency, productivity, etc.

Now, the Railway Minister has to mobilise in this Budget sum of Rs.997 crore, which was the gap left out by this Budget.

When we go through the performance of the Railways, unfortunately the traffic performance is not picking up for the last two years. In 1992-93, the target of revenue earning freight traffic was scaled down at the revised estimate stage to 334 million tonnes from 350 million tonnes. Similarly, passenger traffic was also marginally less than that of 199-92. When we go further to 1993-94 estimates also, the target of revenue earning freight traffic was fixed at 370 million tonnes and in the revised estimate it had to be scaled down to 362 million tonnes. And on that background, the present Budget expects

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the Railways to carry 380 million tonnes revenue earning freight traffic, that is only 18 million tonnes more than the estimated figures of last year.

Then, as far as the passenger traffic is concerned, the anticipated growth is only 2 percent in this Budget.

Now, considering the industrial scenario, I do not know whether we shall be able to reach this new target. Of course, there is optimism shown in the President's Address given to this House and also in the reply of our Prime Minister to the debate on the Motion of Thanks on the President's Address only some time back. If that picks up, there is no difficulty as far as Railways is concerned and it can have resources which are expected by the Railway Minister in the Budget. Now, therefore, the performance which has been shown in this Budget is also not unsatisfactory. The Railways have introduced nearly 13 pairs of express services. New trains which are proposed to be introduced are about 12 trains. And the run of 10 trains is proposed to be extended.

Sometimes, there is a criticism that the new trains like Rajdhani which are introduced are only for higher class people and for ordinary passengers, no further trains have been introduced. That was the criticism made by the hon. Member, Shri Ram Naik also in his speech the other day. When we consider carefully the trains which are proposed to be extended or the new trains which have been introduced, we will find that out of 12 trains which are introduced, only three trains are for rich class people and the other trains are for the common people. And, therefore, it is not correct to say that the introduction of new trains or extension of

these trains is not for the common people. The common people will also be benefited by the introduction of these trains.

As far as several other points of progress are concerned, I may point out that gauge conversion has been very speedily done. As far as the present budgetary year is concerned, the target for gauge conversion fixed for this year is 1600 kilo metres. Though it is not very high, it is in consonance with the past experience which has been gained in this field.

But, as far as doubling electrification and track renewal is concerned, the targets are practically static. The target of 250 kms. for doubling has been fixed for the current year and a similar target has been fixed. As far as track renewal is concerned, 2420 kms will be completed in the current year and the next year's target is only 2004 kms. So, in these three fields we are not taking a big jump but we are continuing the same progress which has been made during the last three years. As far as track renewal is concerned, my submission is that further funds will have to be allotted for this because track renewal will show the health of the trains. Many accidents are perhaps due to the bad tracks and in future further problems may arise as far as safety is concerned. Therefore, more attention may be given for the track renewal in future as the arrears are still or next year and we have to complete 3640 kms by the next year. As far as track renewals are concerned, considering all these figures, more attention will have to be paid.

Now, there are two more suggestions which are made in the Budget. First is regarding the new regions which the

Railway Minister proposes to introduce in view of the Konkan Railway as also the gauge conversion effects. The Railway Minister says in his speech that new zones and divisions will have to be carved out. It is a good suggestion and may be very useful. But, I would submit that in view of the crunch of funds, these new zones and divisions may be taken up at a later stage because it will involve large establishment charges, establishing new offices, constructing buildings and having more staff as far as the new zones are concerned. Therefore, the Minister of Railways may consider well before taking up this subject of carving out new zones at this stage.

I would like to congratulate the Railways for having brought Jammu and Kashmir, particularly Kashmir, on the map of Indian Railways and the provision of about Rs. 50 crores has been made for extending from Jammu to Udhampur and thereafter a survey has to be made as far as extending the railway to Kashmir is concerned. That will be a very good thing. I must congratulate the Minister of Railways for having taken up this attitude as far as Kashmir is concerned.

Now, as far as the new suggestion regarding Palace on Wheels which is meant for new class of railway enthusiasts and high spending category of foreign tourists is concerned, I do not know what further burden will be there on this account as far as the Railway Ministry is concerned. I was told that mostly it will be managed by private sector through the tourist agents and there may not be any burden as far as the Railway Ministry is concerned. If that, is so, that may be in-

troduced as early as possible so that tourists traffic, particularly the foreign tourist traffic, will be attracted and this can be done immediately.

Now, we must concentrate more on passenger and freight traffic because that is also very important from the point of view of our Transport Policy.

The railway traffic, as it is said, is less energy consuming and also from the environmental point of view, it is environment-friendly. Therefore, from this point of view, the traffic which is getting diverted towards the road transport should be recaptured by the Railways. This will not only add to the resources of the Railways, but it will also save the nation from the environmental problem and the problem of energy. Now, the experience shows that the more you increase the fares and freight charges, the less traffic you get and with the result the revenue also declines. The Railway Ministry has taken care at least in this respect by resorting to only marginal increases. This policy should continue or if possible, further steps should be taken and the transport should be managed in such a manner that the traffic which is getting diverted now-a-days towards road transport comes back to the Railways. In this way, the Railways should try to introduce more and more schemes and reduce the cost more and more so that the traffic can be recaptured by the Railways.

Sir, I would also urge upon the Planning Commission and the Finance Minister to give more and more budgetary support to the railways and the policy of giving less and less budgetary support to the railways would not be good for the railways in the ultimate analysis. In many

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of the developing countries and the developed countries, the railways are highly subsidised and in our country we are thinking of keeping the railways only on the internal resources as the market borrowings have also become expensive. Therefore, the Planning Commission and the Finance Minister should also think of revising their approach as far as the railways are concerned and more and more budgetary support may have to be given to the railways for its development.

Sir, coming back to the Bombay problems, I would again say that the Bombay commuters, particularly the suburban railway commuters are not getting the deal which they deserve from the point of view of the resources which they supply to the railways and also from the point of view of the commercial importance of this city on the map of India. The total number of passengers daily travelling by the railways is nearly one crore. Out of this, Bombay alone carries about 47.73 lakh commuters daily both by the Western Railways and the Central Railways. Then, from the point of view of resources also, if we see Bombay, Calcutta and Madras, the Western Railways Suburban Services have earned a profit of Rs. 24.91 crores in 1991-92 and Rs. 68.24 crores in 1992-93. So, the Western Suburban Railway in Bombay earns profit to this extent. Therefore, the statement of the Railway Minister that the suburban railway is highly subsidised does not appear to be correct when we see the figure of the Bombay suburban railway sector.

Whereas during the same period, Calcutta Suburban Services have incurred a loss of Rs. 182.87 crores and Rs. 211.23 crores respectively. Similarly, losses for Madras Suburban Services

were Rs. 46.92 crores during 1991-92 and Rs. 50.47 crores during 1992-93. I do not want to suggest that you do not give it to Madras or Calcutta. But looking at these figures, it shows clearly that heavy losses are there as far as Madras and Calcutta Services are concerned. Very very high profits are given by the Railway Suburban service in Bombay. Even then, I should say, step-motherly treatment is being meted out to the Bombay Suburban in the matter of allocations, as the figure shows. The allocations in 1993-94 for Bombay, Calcutta and Madras were Rs. 36 crores, Rs. 125 crores and Rs. 19 crores respectively. Bombay has got only Rs. 36 crores even though the profit as I read out, is very high. Calcutta gets Rs. 125 crores, even though it incurred a loss of Rs. 182 crores and Rs. 211 crores in the years 1991-92 and 1992-93. Madras has got Rs. 19 crores, whereas in that year, they had a loss of Rs. 46 crores in 1991-92 and Rs. 50 crores in 1992-93.

Considering all these things, Bombay Suburban commuters which require not only special attention but special deal, as far as this is concerned, have been given less. Therefore, the Bombay Urban Transport Project No. II was submitted, which, with the help of the World Bank was to cost Rs. 22,248.88 crores, out of which, the Suburban Railway Transport ingredient was only Rs. 1304.86. But the Railways have taken a stand that they will not spend a single pie as far as this suburban section of the Bombay Urban Metropolitan Project is concerned. The Ministry of Urban Development has been made a nodal Ministry and therefore perhaps the Railway Ministry is now taking a stand which is very much against the suburban railway and particularly against the Bombay commuters, that it will not

spend a single pie. Then, the funds have to be agreed to the distributed 50 : 50. The Maharashtra Government has agreed to allocate 50 percent of the cost of this suburban railway project and 50 percent by the central Government. But that is again to be reimbursed by way of levying the passenger cess on the Bombay commuters themselves. The whole burden will have to be taken by the Bombay commuters and the Railway Ministry is not going to spend anything as far as the Suburban railway project is concerned.

I find, in this Budget speech also, a very weak statement regarding allocation has been made. In the Explanatory Memorandum for the Railway Budget 1994-95, at page 7, for the extension of Railway line from Mankhurd to Belapur with a bridge across Thane creek (18 kms), residual works are in progress. This line including Thane bridge and other major, minor projects have since been completed. Residual works are in progress.

As far as the additional pair of lines between Bandra and Andheri with a flyover at Ravli junction and ancillary facilities on the Harbour branch line (7.2kms.) is concerned, each work, bridges and traction substations at Andheri have been completed. Laying of track, construction of platform, remaining station buildings, OHE and S & T works are now in progress. Additional fair tracks between Bandra and Andheri are expected to be completed by the end of 1994. The Minister adds, it is subject to availability of funds.

16.00 hrs.

It is not certain that even that will be completed by the end of 1994-95.

I would urge upon the Railway Minister to give a specific assurance that in 1994-95 this work will be completed. As this work has not yet been completed, there is overcrowding in the trains. A 9-car EmU rake carries about 3,500 to 4,000 persons during peak hours against its dense crash capacity of 2,000 persons, according to officials estimates and the other estimates are still awaited.

Railway Ministry must come forward to solve this problem. I regret to say that there is no mention in the Railway Minister's speech regarding the hardships of the railway commuters in Bombay and nothing is mentioned about Secod Bombay Urban Transport Project. No provision is indicated at all and the hardships are not taken note by the Railway Ministry. If the policy of not spending a single pie as far as Bombay suburban is continued and if it is left only to Urban Development Minister, I think the agitation will grow in Bombay and the transport system, particularly of the suburban railway, will one day collapse because it needs more trains, it needs more lines and it needs also the level-crossing. If that is not provided at all and even this project is also not accepted, then I do not think you will be doing justice to the Bombay city.

I may point out that at least four MPs are elected on the Congress ticket by the Bombay people and you should take note that the ruling party is being supported by the Bombay citizens. On that basis at least, we must give full justice as far as Bombay commuters are concerned.

With these words, I once again support the Railway Budget which is before the House.

[*Transiation*]

DR. S. P. YADAV (Sambhal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the hon'ble Minister of Railways has presented the Railway Budget for the year 1994-95. I have to oppose it.

The Hon. Member, Shri Dighe who spoke before we, was also opposing it in a way, but later on he completed the formality by saying that he support it. Actually, it seems as if this budget has been prepared for a few particular areas only whereas this budget should have been for the whole country and it should not have been unbalanced. The hon'ble Minister of Railways should keep it in mind. His Railway Budget is an unbalanced one.

The Hon. Minister of Railways had presented this budget on the 24th and in view of the discrimination made against Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Orissa and Eastern States and the inadequate provisions made for these states. Janata Dal and other associate parties were aggrieved and had staged a walk-out from this house. He should realise that so many members, elected from various states for this House have been hurt. Since he have not made any provision in the budget, I consider this budget is completely unbalanced one that would lead to price-hike and is totally insipid and lack-lustre. It seems this budget only increases the rail fare. This hike in rail-fare is going to be catastrophic and the increase in freight charges would lead to inflation. I would like to say that the hike in seasonal tickets on which daily passengers travel to various departments where they are working, would make the burden unbearable for them.

Sir, I would like to say that you have not considered price hike and you have not mentioned about the corruption prevalent in railways and the insecure life of people in trains. You have said no such thing about such insecurity or made any provision or arrangement in this regard. I would like to say that our hon'ble member of Parliament who was elected from Moradabad on Janata Dal ticket but has, now, been brought over to the ruling side, has been totally ignored so far as provision for his constituency in the Railway Budget is concerned. Moradabad is the headquarters of Northern Railways. The biggest zonal training college of Northern Railways is situated in Chandausi where all the employees are imparted training. But the Moradabad Division has been completely overlooked in this Budget.

He talks of the railway deficit. But I would like to know as to how many political workers or other people have been issued free passes by the Minister of Railways and the Minister of State in the Ministry of Railways for first class, second class and first class A.C. categories. I believe that around seven hundred railway passes have been issued. Can this practice of issuing free passes not be stopped? I would like to know the criteria being adopted for issuing such passes. How many people have been issued passes and on what basis? Sambhal is the oldest, most important and historical city under Moradabad division. I have been elected from that place and it has been completely neglected. There is only one branch line for Sambhal. I urge upon you to link Sambhal with Gajraula. Then, there will be a straight railway line for Lucknow from Gajraula to Hassanpur, Hassanpur

to Sambhal, Sambhal to Billari, Billari to Chandausi, Chandausi to Aonla and Aonla to Chanaiti and this railway line, parallel to the railway line from Moradabad to Rampur, Rampur to Bareilly, will prove to be very beneficial.

Sir, I would like to make one more submission that the Moradabad Division is still to be electrified. An amount of only Rs. 5 crores has been earmarked in this budget to undertake electrification in Moradabad division whereas amounts to the tune of Rs. 25 crores, Rs. 40 crores, Rs. 50 crores and even upto Rs. 53 crores have been earmarked for several other areas. The amount provided for Moradabad Division is very meagre as compared to other areas. The railway section from Ambala to Moradabad, Moradabad to Lucknow, is an important one. I urge you to make more provisions for the electrification of this section. There is a railway line which is very important for this area. This line is between Bareilly and Aligarh. The area between these two stations has totally been industrialised. There is a very big fertilizers factory of IIFCO and Aonla. The Government has set up Beenus sugar Mill a little further from Aonla on Bahjoi Road with an investment of Rs. 28 crores and a little further from Bahjoi there is a TATA fertilizers factory situated on Babarala road. Naraura Atomic Power Station on Rajghat is in working order. Harduaganj Power Station is also in working order. There is a very big Milk factory situated in Manjoorghati. The Bareilly- Aligarh branch line has been totally industrialised. So, this line also needs to be electrified.

16.10 hrs.

(MR. TARA SINGH *in the Chair*)

My submission is that the

Government should act in such a way that the people may feel that they are getting justice. There is no train from Chandausi Junction to Lucknow either during the day or at night whereas Railway's Training College is situated at Chandausi. All the Lucknow-bound trains from Delhi, Punjab and Dehradun go via Moradabad and Rampur. I urge that one train, our of Shramjivi Express or Kashi Express, and one train out of Doon Express or Janata Express, may be diverted to go via Chandausi from Moradabad. This will greatly benefit the people of that area. The third train, Nauchandi Express which goes from Meerut to Allahabad can also be run via Chandausi. I request that at least one must be diverted to go via Chandausi because your officials and employees have to come for training of the Railways Training College situated in the area and it is frequented by public also. So, it would be justified to provide a train for the people of this area. I would like to congratulate the Railway minister for providing Sadbhavna Express. I have even written a letter requesting for a train via Chandausi. My submission is that several trains pass through Rampur and it won't create any disturbances, if one of them is diverted to go via Chandausi otherwise, we are beginning to feel as if the rich are becoming richer and the poor are becoming poorer. In other words, more trains are being provided to those areas which already have a sufficient number of trains and the areas which do not even have a single train are being overlooked. Therefore, keeping in view the social justice a train should be provided to Chandausi so that the people of that area may also feel that justice is being done to them.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, First Class Coach and Three-Tier Sleepers both have

[Shri S.P. Yadav]

been detached from the 375/Three C.M. and 376/Four C.M. trains w.e.f. March 22, 1992. This train runs from Chandausi to Delhi at night and without these coaches the people and the representatives of people there are facing a lot of inconveniences. I, therefore, request that these bogies should be re-attached to it.

I had made one more request to the Hon. Minister through a letter. The Link Express running between Dheradun and Lucknow is a very important train. It has one and a half First Class bogies, but not daily. My submission is that a Second Class A.C. Sleeper should be attached to this train for the convenience of passengers.

The Government had replied that there is a shortage of bogies. We are demanding an A.C. Bogy only and it must be made available. The Department of Railways has sought huge loans from the countries e.g. England, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Germany etc. and the World Bank agencies like the A.D.B., I.D.A., I.B.R.D. etc. during 1949 to 1984. But the Department could not utilise those loan and it has been paying commitment charges every year on these loans; While replying in the House the Government should give the information as to how much amount of commitment charges is being paid every year by the Department not withstanding that it is not being utilised by the Railways. On the one hand the Government is asking for loans while on the other hand, no facility is being provided to the passengers. It is a great irony. Today, Shri Ram Naik has raised the issue of train accidents. I also would like to submit that a watchman was posted at Darauli railway crossing near Chandausi.

Now this man has been removed from there and the railway crossing is unmanned. During elections in Uttar Pradesh, on November 9, 1993 at 7 O' Clock in the morning a jeep collided with a train in which Shri Mukul Singh, Om Prakash and driver Sagan Lala were killed and Mahipal Singh, Gulab Singh and Chander Sain sustained injuries. The public gheraoed the D.R.M. and the doctor in charge. Had I not reached the spot, the rural people would gone to any extent in their misbehaviour. After my persuasion they did not misbehave. But the Doctor in-charge of Railway Hospital misbehaved with them. Therefore, action should be taken against the doctor. The three injured persons were admitted in Railway Hospital at Moradabad. But the doctors did not take care of them. The D.R.M. of Moradabad had assured me that the doctors would take care of them, but they did not. When the plaster of their leg was removed, it was found that the bones of their legs were not properly fixed. They were operated again in a Private Hospital and had to spent large amount of money, but they were subjected to inhuman behaviour. Accidents are occurring and compensation is not being paid to the next of the kins of the deceased. Even the employment on compensatory grounds is also not being given in a large number of cases. The doctors of the Railways Hospital Moradabad and the D.R.M., Moradabad should also be interrogated in this connection. Efforts should be made to prevent the recurrence of accidents. The Government had assured to appoint watchmen in 500 railway-crossings. I, therefore, would like to submit that at Darauli railway crossing near Chandausi a watchman should be posted. Because it is an accident prone crossing, the services of the watchman should be there

round the clock. I wish to submit that at least two persons should be posted there so that a watchman could be posted there round the clock. I would like to suggest that the loss incurred by the Railways cannot be made good truly by increasing the fare and freight. But if the theft and irregularity in railways is checked the loss can be made up. I had raised a question as to how many incidents of theft had occurred at Moradabad. The Department of Railways had accepted that the incidences of theft had occurred and had also supplied the figures of these incidents; I would like to know whether any action was taken against the thieves or not? Unless the Government takes stern action against them the incidents of theft cannot be stopped. Some recruitments were made in Moradabad. But the persons who had experience or who had worked for 90 days or 120 days were not recruited but those who produced forged experience certificates were given employment. It was also being probed. I would like to know as to who are those persons who have got employment by producing forged certificates.

I would like to know from the Government one thing more. The Government has made up its mind for the privatisation of the Railways. From newspapers I came to know that the Government is going for the privatisation of Delhi, Patna, Moradabad, Bareilly, Lucknow etc. junctions. But care should be taken to see that the Mafia who bid the contract of liquor or other big contracts, are not awarded the contract of Railway stations, otherwise the common people, the gentleman or esteemed citizens would be harassed by those Mafia people at the stations. Such Mafia people would seek contract for the sake of spinning money only. We also know that only the Mafia

people can get those contracts because other people won't like to indulge in such affairs.

The Government had appointed the Nadujappa Committee. It had recommended that the efficiency of employees should be improved and stern action must be taken against the officers and staff involved in the scandals. The Government should try to implement that report so that some improvement may take place. I would like to mention that if corruption is not checked in Railways and wrong-doers are not punished and the loss is compensated merely by increasing fares & freight, it will be simply reflecting that the dishonest persons are given licence to continue their misdeeds and the honest persons are being punished. Nothing else will be achieved. The Government should probe into the irregularities and scandals in recruitments or misuse of funds and action should be taken against the guilty persons.

There is a case of an important rail-line in Bihar. The Government has already conducted the survey from Girdih district to Kodarma. I have come to the conclusion from this survey that the people of that area want that the new rail line should be linked with other main lines. If the Government lays with new rail line, some justice will be done with the people of Bihar. With these words I conclude.

SHRI MOHAMMAD ALI ASHRAF FATMI (Darbhanga): Mr. Chariman, Sir, while Dr. J.P. Yadav of Sambhal was delivering his speech, the name of Shri Satya Pal Singh Yadav from Shahjahanpur, U.P. of Janta Dal(A) was being shown on the screen of the C.C. TV. It may be noted that he has changed

[Shri Mohammed Ali Ashraf Fatmi]

the party and has now joined Congress. Mr. Chairman, Sir, how such wrong information is being displayed. *(Interruptions)*

DR. S.P. YADAV: Sir, what is this. Even my name has not been shown correctly on the T.V. Screen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has already pointed it out. If name was wrongly displayed on the T.V., it will be corrected.

DR. S.P. YADAV: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the irregularity to which I was referring just now, has been committed by showing my name wrongly by Lok Sabha on the T.V. Screen.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All right, I have asked to look into the matter and it will be corrected. *(Interruptions)*

[English]

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Mr. Chairman, Sir, the railway budget this year has failed to raise any new hope for the common people and for the economy. The performance of the railways has touched all-time low. The physical targets of passenger and goods traffic have not been fulfilled. Yawning gap is being sought to be bridged by raising freights and fares without corresponding benefits to the common passengers. I oppose the hike in freights and fares. For the last four year, the railway freights and fares have been raised. The total amount increased by the Railway Minister for the next year is more than Rs. 5,000 crores.

In the budget for the year 1994-95, the Railway Minister is kind enough to spare the passengers up to 100 kms.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): I have spared throughout.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: He is quite aware that there is a great fall in short-distance passenger traffic. Now, the people—particularly the short-distance passengers—prefer to travel by road transport than by rail because there is much difference between the fare of railways and that of the road transport. The fares of railways and that of the road transport. The fares for the suburban passengers have been hiked to a great extent.

The passengers from Asansol or Burdhan in the Eastern Railways will have to pay Rs. 40 more per month from April, 1994. By changing the taper and by way of reclassification of the goods, the Railway Minister is trying to collect Rs. 800 crores in a year. Some of the essential commodities like coal, cement and petroleum products have not been spared. There is already a hike in the administered prices of all these commodities.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, we know that there is a crisis in the railways and that crisis is because of the reduction in the budgetary support year after year. It was 75 percent and now it is 18 percent. Central Government is trying to covert the railways into a totally commercial organisation. It is very much clear from the Economic Survey of 1993-94 presented to the Parliament. Railways is an important infrastructure. Railways is there not only for the railways but it is for the entire nation. Unless you have a railway line, there cannot be industrialisation. So, there is a necessity for increasing the budgetary support. The

Railway Minister has stated in his speech that he has constituted two or three sub-committees out of the Members of the Consultative Committee. Number of recommendations were made by these sub-groups. One such recommendation is the need for restructuring of railway finance and it was the recommendation of one of the sub-groups that either the budgetary support should be increased or it should not pay dividend to the central exchequer. If budgetary support is not provided for its infrastructure, then the railways should also not pay dividend to the Central exchequer. But the recommendation has not been accepted by the Finance Ministry as stated by the Railway Minister. When there is a resource crunch, there should be prioritisation. But what do we find here? When there is reduction in other important areas like rolling stock, new lines, doubling, electrification, traffic facilities and passenger amenities, there is an increase in the allocation of gauge conversion. We will not have uni-gauge system in future although it is the dream of the Railway Minister to have a uni-gauge system in the Indian Railways. We have 22,000 kilometres of narrow-gauge railway line. We know that there are bottlenecks. But have these things been considered? Was any step taken to make that system efficient? Are there developed countries which are still continuing with this narrow-gauge system? Without such an exercise, the Ministry took an abrupt decision to have uni-gauge system and to spend huge amount for gauge conversion. We are not opposed to gauge conversion. Gauge conversion can be done where it is necessary but when we have to continue with multi-system like meter-gauge and narrow gauge, is there a necessity to increase the allocation for gauge conversion in a massive way when other areas are being neglected like electrification?

The Railway Convention Committee recommended that the Railways should lay emphasis on electrification with an annual target of at least 1,000 km. But the Railway Minister has not taken care of the RCC's recommendation. What is the target for the Eighth Five Year Plan? It was 3,800 km of track for electrification. What was achieved in the first year of the Eighth Five Year Plan? Just 479 km. What is the target for the next year, viz. 1994-95? It is 500 km. If a target of 500 km a year is fixed, how can we achieve the Eighth Five Year Plan's target of 3,800 km? This target cannot be achieved at all. Now, this target has been scaled down because of massive allocation made for gauge conversion. That means, new lines will have to wait and hilly, remote, tribal and inaccessible parts of our country will not be connected with railway lines to the mainland, to the other parts of the nation. That means, Agartala will never be connected to the mainland.

Then there are 26 pending projects. The Minister of Railways has stated very categorically that once a project is sanctioned, it must be completed within the time schedule. But this is not reflected in the Budget proposals. 26 projects had been sanctioned in the year 1972! Foundation stone for a very important project for the State of West Bengal, Howrah-Amta Railwayline, was laid by no less a person than late Shrimati Indira Gandhi. Last year, the allocation for this project was increased from Rs. one lakh in 1972 to Rs. one crore in 1993-94. But suddenly, in the month of June, the Ministry of Railways took a decision not to spend a single paisa for the project. That money has been diverted to some other project. I do not want to mention the name

[Shri Basudeb Acharia]

of the project for which the allocation has been diverted.

Similar is the case the with Eklakhi-Balurghat project. Here, even the headquarters are not connected with a railway line. Vast areas remain unconnected because there would be no railwayline. This project was sanctioned in 1986 and Planning Commission approved it in the next year. Last year, the allocation was increased to Rs. one crore. In the month of January last, the Railways took the decision to increase the allocation. And just after six months, the Ministry suddenly reversed the decision and decided to divert the increased allocation to some other project. This increase in the allocation was effected last year after duly considering the fact that the project is very vital for the State of West Bengal.

Similar is the fate of other projects viz. electrification and so on. We are not against gauge conversion. The Standing Committee of Railways had unanimously taken a decision. But the Ministry of Railways did not care to read the last sentence. I would request the hon. Railway Minister to read the last paragraph viz. paragraph 70. I quote:

"The Committee are of the view that these recommendations should be borne in mind by the Ministry of Railways while finalising the proposal for the Railway Budget for 1994-95."

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: What was the recommendation?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: It will take time to read all the recommendations.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: You did not read the recommendation.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: If the Chairman allows me, then, I will read the recommendations.

MR. CHARIMAN: You read the last two lines.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Without reading the recommendations, if you say "recommendations", what is the use?

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The Report had already been laid on the Table of the House. Now, I will quote:

"The Committee set up by the Planning Commission and the Railways themselves observed that gauge conversion should be done on a selective basis."

Now, you will understand what was the recommendations of the Standing Committee. I fail to understand the purpose behind setting up of all these Committees. After putting in so much exercise, if not a single recommendation has been implemented, then what is the use of having these Committees? The First Report was on Passenger Amenities. When this Committee recommended for enhancement of passenger amenities, Sir, you will be surprised to know that in three Railways viz. Eastern, South-Eastern and Western Railways—I am not mentioning about other Railways—in more than 800 stations, there is no drinking water facility. There are about 600 stations where there are not latrines. The items which were selected in 1952 as passenger amenities, all those items are still continuing. When the Standing Committee recommended

for enhancement of allocation for passenger amenities, the Ministry of Railways reduced the allocation from Rs. 63 crore to Rs. 60 crore in the current year. Similar is the fate of new lines and pending projects. The Standing Committee had unanimously recommended that all the 26 projects should be completed.

The National Transport Policy was set up in 1978. That Committee submitted its Report in 1980. That was discussed on the floor of the House.

They formulated some guidelines for these projects; and all the 26 projects were within the guidelines. Some projects were developments oriented projects for backward areas. There was a unanimous recommendation of the Standing Committee that once an allocation is made for a particular project, that should not be diverted to some other project; once a project is sanctioned, that should be completed within the time schedule.

There is a Standing Committee on Calcutta Metro. It has made unanimous recommendations and submitted a Second Report. It has allocated Rs. 165 crores, but the amount which will be required for completing the project is Rs. 385 crores. So, we expected that at least a minimum of Rs. 200 crores would be sanctioned by the Ministry of Railways in order to complete the project by 1995. With this allocation, it is doubtful whether this project—this project was sanctioned in 1973; and the construction work was started in 1976; the original estimate was Rs. 141 crores; now it has been escalated to Rs. 1,441 crores—would be completed and commissioned by 1995; it is an inter-

state project—from Dum Dum to Baliganj. The target date has been fixed. Similar is the fate with Metro Railway—only 5 km.

Why I am mentioning all these things is, I was a Convener of the Study Group of the Standing Committee. I had an opportunity to visit three Metropolitan Cities. The Standing Committee of Railway also submitted a Report on Suburban railway. We consider the Suburban traffic as the most important traffic. Out of 1 crore, 66 lakh commuters come under the suburban traffic. Calcutta has only 6 percent growth rate; whereas Bombay has 12 percent, Madras has 16 percent and Delhi has 22 percent. Unless Calcutta Metro is completed—5 km.—we cannot make much progress. You have no intention to complete it. You have stated in the Explanatory Memorandum that small work has been undertaken or is continuing; it means there is no intention to complete it. There is some problem with Calcutta Port Trust; and for the last several years, it is continuing. Why is it not being sorted out with the Ministry of Surface Transport?

There was a unanimous recommendations. There is a need for a separate corridor. There is a separate dedicated corridor in Bombay suburban. Why should it not be there for Calcutta suburban? Why should there not be a double discharging platform both at Howrah and Sealdah? There is no provision in the Railway Budget.

The line capacity should be increased between Howrah-Banskura. There is no allocation for the third and fourth additional line from Banskura to Kharagpur. There is need for an additional line between Howrah—Bander. There is no provision for that.

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Shri Sharad Dighe gave some figures.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: I can also give you figures. You know that South Eastern Railway is contributing 34 percent of the total revenue. If he claims for Bombay Sub-urban, we will also claim for Bengal, Orissa and Bihar. What is our share for gauge conversion—only Rs. 5 crores, that too for my district; Rs. 15 cores for Shri Saifuddin Choudhury's district; and nothing for our Chairman of the Committee.

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA (Jadavpur): All that money is diverted from other sources.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: There was a unanimous recommendation of the Railway Convention Committee not to import ABB locomotives. I have with me the action taken report of the Committee. If he wants as he asked me earlier, I can quote from the report. I think he has gone through the report.

Page 36, para 38 of the report says:

"After having examined various documents and information placed before the Committee and evidence & views before them, the Committee has no hesitation in reiterating their earlier observation that contract entered into by the Ministry of Railways with M/s. ABB of Switzerland for import of 36,000 HP 3 Phase locomotives is not only unwarranted but uneconomical too."

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: But finally left to the Government!

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: He has not taken care to implement the

unanimous recommendation of a very important parliamentary committee like Railway Conventional Committee.

There is a marginal increase in rolling stock but reduction in acquisition of the rolling stock. There is a reduction in the acquisition of wagons.

Last Year, in the original budget, it was 22,000 wagons; then it was reduced to 20,000 in the revised estimates. This year it is only 18,000 wagons. The capacity of manufacturing units of West Bengal is 15,000 wagons.

There is one Bharat Wagon in Bihar in Muzzaffarpur and Mokama. Then there is private sector also. This year the Railway Ministry has placed orders to two wagon units of South India also. Previously the practice was that the Wagon India used to indicate the number of wagons that Railways would acquire and the Wagon India used to distribute among various units. Now this practice has been done away with. They are directly distributing the number of wagons to the units both in the private sector as well as in the public sector.

If it is 18,000, the units of West Bengal will get 60 percent of their capacity and if the wagon manufacturing units suffer then thousands of ancillary small scale industries will close their shutters down.

These units are depending on the wagon manufacturing units. They will meet the same fate as Bharat Brakes and Valves. The hon. Minister knows the problem of that unit of West Bengal very well. Suddenly the Railways said, "We are for upgradation of technology". But some sufficient time should have been given to the units and to the industry. When the

tender was floated, it was finalised and the order was to be placed, suddenly the Chittaranjan Locomotive Works was asked not to place the order with Bharat Brakes and Valves for what is called the Northay Exhauster because the Railways had decided to have a uniform system of air brakes. That is good. But they should have given some more time, at least one year, to the units to switch over to the new technology. If somebody is asked to switch over to a new technology from the next day how do you expect that unit or the industry to do so?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): We have been telling them for the last two years.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: No written advice was given; only oral advice was given.

If the Railways had written to them that from 1994 onwards the railways would not purchase this Northay Exhauster from Bharat Brakes and Valves, then the Railways should not be blamed for that. But suddenly why was the tender floated? Why was it finalised by the Chittaranjan Loco Works while the CLW itself has got a manufacturing unit of the Ministry of Railways?

SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF: We gave them oral advice.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The CLW is a production unit of the Ministry of Railways under the administrative control of the Railways. They were not aware that the Railways were going to change over to the new technology.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please wind up. You have taken half an hour.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: I am winding up. I will take another 10 to 15 minutes and conclude.

MR. CHARIMAN: No, no; you have already taken half an hour.

SHRI AMAL DATTA (Diamond Harbour): It is like the Indian Railways. If you give him 24 hours he will take 30 hours. It is like that.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: The Railway Minister has given a new idea. We have been asking for workers' participation; workers' participation in policy decisions, workers' participation from floor level to Board level. He has stated on page 19 of the speech:

"There is now a corporate enterprise group in apex, zonal and divisional levels. Now it would be renamed as groups for Participation of Railway Employees in Management."

I want to know who will be the members of this PREM, Participation of Railway Employees in Management, how the selection will be done and whether there will be a secret ballot.

There are two recognised federation NFIR and AIR. When there are two federations, why should not there be three? There is one confederation, All India Railway Employees Confederation. When there are two recognised federations why should not there be three? Or there should be one federation and recognition should be decided by a secret ballot.

We know how the Railway employees were harassed. In spite of a

[Shri Basudeb Acharia]

number of assurances on the floor of the House loco-running staff were not reinstated by the Railway Minister when the Supreme Court pronounced a judgement. The Supreme Court ordered their reinstatement.

17.00 hrs.

It took three months to implement the Judgement of the Supreme Court and today also they are being harassed. The spirit of judgement is being violated. They are being transferred to other divisions and their arrears are not being paid. And even those who have retired are yet to get their salary arrears. *(Interruptions)*

SHRI AMAL DATTA: Mr. Minister, you should not have done that.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF): It is patent denial of facts.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA: I had given you a number of facts when I met you. So, there is a need a review of the recognition policy of the Unions and the Federations in the Railways. And if the Railway Minister wants a meaningful participation, then it should be decided through a secret ballot and not by selection. If there should be two federations, then there should be three federations also.

Sir, the Railway Minister has not taken care to mitigate the problems of the common passengers. The passengers' amenities are not taken care of. The allocation has been reduced year after year. There is a reduction in the acquisition of passenger coaches. There

are two production units, one at Madras and another at Kapurtala. Next year, Railways will acquire 1400 passenger coaches in addition to only 200 EMU coaches. M/s. JESSOPS, because of sudden and abrupt decision taken by the Ministry of Railways to have a uni-gauge system and not to manufacture metre gauge rolling coaches, has already suffered. They used to manufacture metre gauge coaches and that capacity is not being utilised now and in future also. In the year 1993-94, Railways have proposed to acquire 350 EMU coaches and the number of EMU coaches proposed to be acquired by the Railways in the next year has been reduced from 350 to 200. Already, Shri Ram Naikji, while initiating the debate.... *(Interruptions)*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Acharia, please stop your speech for two minutes. The Minister of State for Textiles, Shri G. Venkat Swamy wants to make a statement.

17.04 hrs.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Disconnection of Power Supply to NTC Mills in Bombay

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): Hon'ble Members had, during Zero Hour in this House on 7th March 1994, expressed concern on the disconnection of power supply to the mills of the National Textile Corporation in Bombay by the Tata Power Supply Company Limited due to non payment of dues.