

cross brick batting on the National Highway. On the same day some minor fires broke out in a corner of Avantipura town as brick-bats were being exchanged between the local residents of the town and Awami Action Committee workers returning from Anantnag. It is reported that 8 houses 4 shops, 5 kothas and 9 cow-sheds were damaged. The cause of the fire is being investigated.

The State Government have taken steps to ensure that while the legitimate election activities are allowed to be carried on in a free and peaceful manner, there is no intimidation and the anti-social elements are not allowed to vitiate the atmosphere. Sufficient police posts have been set up in the areas affected by violence. Otherwise, normal life including the usual tempo of tourist traffic continues uninterrupted.

We are most anxious that free and fair elections should take place in Kashmir in an atmosphere of peace and harmony. I seek earnestly the co-operation of all political parties in this task. At the same time, I would like to emphasize that attempts to intimidate or to rouse communal passions or to resort to violence will be firmly dealt with according to law. The State Government will be given all support and resources to maintain peace and not allow anyone to disturb the prospects of a free and fair election.

SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY (Karnataka) : Sir, can I seek a clarification ?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI LOKANATH MISRA) : No. Now we go over to further discussion on the Railway Budget.

THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS) 1977-78— GENERAL DISCUSSION—contd.

SHRIMATI RATNABAI SREENIVASA RAO (Andhra Pradesh) : Mr. Vice Chairman, Sir, the Railway Budget for the year 1977-78 is a *status quo* budget. The task of framing the Railway Budget for 1977-78 was rendered easy for the Railway Minister by a spectacular improvement in the finances of the railways during the last year and the great improvement in the railways by the introduction of a

large number of super-fast long-distance trains and other services. In one of his recent speeches, the honourable Railway Minister has been reported to have said that the Budget would contain many concessions to the Railway employees and many pleasant surprises. But we do not find any surprises at all.

The freight rate on goods—especially mass consumption goods—might have been reduced on a selective basis as a measure to keep their prices under control. This concession could have been very well given as the Fifth Plan target of carrying 250 million tonnes of goods is expected to go up to 260 million tonnes.

The reduction in platform ticket rate from 50 paise to 30 paise was not called for, and will have no impact on the people. It is only a populist measure. Though, on the face of it, it appears a concession, how often do the people go to the railway stations to receive or give send-offs to their friends or relatives ? This measure does not benefit the people significantly. On the other hand, it is a loss to the revenue of the Railways, however small the loss may be. In fact, this will benefit only the affluent sections of society as they are the people who go to the railway stations to give send-offs to or to receive their friends and relatives. The poor people do not get such send-offs or receptions, except very rarely. If the platform ticket rate had been reduced to 10 paise, then it might have benefited the poorer classes also.

Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the honourable Minister to the large number of Railway accidents during the last two months all over the country. Late arrival of trains has become a normal feature. Long distance trains are very often late by 10 to 15 hours. The *K. K. Express* which left Bangalore on 26th May was held up at Jolanpet Junction for more than 7 hours as there was an accident near Katpadi where an Express train had collided head-on with two freight engines which were stationary on the same track. This accident was due solely to the negligence of the Railway staff who failed to alert the Express train and gave clearance to it. Consequently, the *K. K. Express*

[Shrimati Ratnabai Sreenivasa Rao] arrived at Delhi more than 15 hours late. To my knowledge, two or three Railway accidents have taken place within the last two months near Katpadi alone. These can be attributed solely to the growing slackness and indiscipline among the Railway staff.

Burglaries and thefts have also increased on goods and passenger trains. The value of goods stolen in Railways has shown a steep rise during the past few years. While the value of recovered property has shewn deterioration in terms of percentage, the number of cases booked and persons arrested has also shown a steep fall. The Railway authorities have to take a serious view of this and tighten the security measures.

The honourable Minister has said that all employees who were suspended or dismissed during the 1974 Railway strike have been reinstated. But what is going to happen to those who were substituted in their place at the time of the strike? Are they going to be retrenched? If not, how will it affect the Budget? No mention is made at all in the speech of the Railway Minister on this aspect, but the Railway Board Chairman is reported to have said in a press briefing that the reinstated employees would merely fill vacancies existing in the normal course so that the staff expenditure would not go up. How can thousands of employees be reinstated without retrenchment of staff or creating new posts and consequent increase in the staff expenditure, is beyond the comprehension of a lay person like me.

However, I am glad that the Minister has come out with a firm decision not to extend the period of superannuated employees.

The Railway Minister proposed to open new Railway lines in backward areas, but no new Railway line is included in one of the most backward areas in the country, *i.e.* Rayalaseema, in Andhra Pradesh. This area is sadly neglected. Conversion of metre gauge to broad gauge between Katpadi and Tirupati, a distance of 72 kms. only, is a long-felt need of the people of that area, but has been turned down by

the Railway Board as economically not viable. But economic viability should not be the criterion for laying new lines or conversion of lines in backward areas. The object should be development of those areas. As it is, it takes about 3^{1/2} to 4 hours to travel this distance by train.

4 P.M.

Besides, the timings of the trains are so inconvenient that people prefer to travel by bus in this section. I am sure if Katpadi-Tirupati line is converted into broad-gauge, a large number of people will prefer to travel by train and it will become economically viable. I would request the Railway Minister to examine this matter and order survey as early as possible and include this in the Sixth Plan.

The metre-gauge is generally very neglected. The unpunctuality of trains is a regular feature and sanitary conditions on the trains are hopeless even in First Class.

Sir, some trains have been mentioned as having been extended. I find in the list that Katpadi-Pakala passenger train has been extended to Renigunta. In fact, the trains which were previously running from Katpadi to Renigunta now terminate at Tirupati, only 10 km. short of Renigunta. One day suddenly the Railway authorities took a decision to terminate all metre-gauge trains at Tirupati. The reason for discontinuing the running of trains to Renigunta which is an important junction and is on the main broad-gauge line connecting Madras and Bombay and New Delhi-Bangalore and Trivandram by the newly introduced K. K. Express, is not known. Passengers getting down at Renigunta by these trains and wish to proceed towards Katpadi, have to take a bus to Tirupati a distance of 10 km. and board the train there. There is a shuttle which operates from Renigunta to Tirupati on the broad-gauge line, but it operates according to the whims and fancies of the Railway staff at Renigunta and does not seem to have any schedule timing. If it has schedule timing, it never runs on schedule. The same hardship is felt by passengers who get down at Tirupati travelling from Katpadi-Pakala side and wish to proceed further towards Renigunta and onwards.

Conversion of Kapati-Tirupati Metre-guage into broad-guage will remove the hardship of the travelling public in this section and it will also become economically viable.

Further, introduction of a new express train in that area has come to mean for us who live in that area cancellation of at least two passenger trains on revision of the time-table so that it does not suit the travelling public.

Sir, I wish to draw the attention of the Minister to the first class complimentary card passes that are issued by the Railway Board to some organisations and individuals. These do not carry photographs of the persons who can use them nor are the reservations confirmed in the pass or anywhere else. These passes could be misused if the persons to whom they have been issued lose them. Therefore, these passes should carry some sort of identity of the person who can use them and make them foolproof.

Sir, I have to repeat what my honourable colleague, Smt. Leela Menon has said about catering service in long distance trains. Much desires to be done in the matter of catering service in the longdistance trains. Lunch and dinner are served in hindalium trays which are discoloured and dirty. These should be replaced by stainless steel trays. The bearers are usually in dirty uniforms carrying with them dirty napkins. This is especially so on the G.T. Express. Naturally, most passengers are revolted by the food served in such an unpalatable way and prefer to carry their own food.

Another point I would like to emphasise is that most of the bearers are hired on commission basis. Their income per month is hardly sufficient to maintain themselves on subsistence allowance, let alone their families. They are a class of miserably under-employed persons. The Railway Board should employ the bearers on a permanent basis and assure them the minimum wages on par with the class IV employees. Besides, they should be given winter uniforms also. The bearers attached to the G.T. Express, the Tamil Nadu Express, the K. K. Express and the Andhra Express are

on the train continuously for about 4 or 5 days of which at least two to three nights have to be spent in the northern region where they are exposed to bitter cold in the winter season. The least the Railways can do is to provide them with winter uniforms.

Though it may appear a very minor point, I would like to suggest in the interest of better sanitary conditions on trains that the western style of toilet should be done away with on all trains in all classes, except perhaps in air-conditioned first class, because I find that passengers are averse to using these and these are, without exception, always very dirty, badly maintained and highly insanitary. The Railways should think of replacing even the existing western style toilets by Indian style toilets which are easier to keep clean. This will in fact mean addition of one more toilet in the coaches.

I am glad that the Railway Minister is thinking of construction of new second-class coaches providing more amenities to the second-class travellers and I welcome the proposal of giving priority to the requirements of the poorer masses by introducing long distance class-less janata trains in the near future. This should be accomplished as early as possible.

The proposal to restructure the Railway Board and abolish superfluous committees is to be welcomed.

On the whole, the Railway Budget for the year 1977-78 is disappointing in that much expectation of pleasant surprises and concessions was created, but we find that it is only a review of the Railway finances and continuation of works and projects that were already under way or approved by the previous Government. I hope that at least these works will be completed on schedule.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR (Maharashtra) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, there is hardly anything in the present Railway Budget which deserves special congratulations. I can only thank the Minister for the only redeeming feature of not increasing the fares, like last year.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN (Delhi) : No fares were increased last year.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR : I said, like last year. The Railways have already emerged out of the tunnel—which they have proved during the Emergency with their spectacular record of high efficiency and performance of work in practically all spheres of Railway working. Not a single man-day was lost; there was an increase of passenger traffic, progress in the manufacturing of indigenous articles, reduction of ticket less travellers and pilferages and many other similar things which we can count in almost all spheres. But the only fear is, how long the Railways will be able to sustain this *tempo* of work ? If this tempo is slackened even to some extent, I am afraid, Sir, that when the year 1977-78 ends, we will have a completely different picture. So, Sir, I would like to add a word of caution to the hon. Railway Minister that not only has he to maintain this, but he has to make all efforts to improve it at all levels. All these noticeable improvements in the Railway operations since 1975-76 are now further to be consolidated and therein will lie the test of the Railway Minister and the Railway Board.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the hon. Railway Minister to some suggestions for his consideration. In spite of heavy investments in dieselisation, in track improvement, in signalling and many other items, the wagon turn-round is still very low. One major bottle-neck lies in the Rail ways taking through fast trains bypassing congested interchanges and important junction yards. It is absolutely necessary that the Railway Ministry gives adequate emphasis on improving these yards. One more thing that can help is construction of more fly-over routes. To cite an example, the North-South cross-country superfast trains should be able to move smoothly by passing the congested yards of Nagpur and Balharshah. Further, Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Minister about the progress of construction of a direct link between Itarsi and Wardha. In this connection, I would like to urge upon the hon. Minister that there is a strong feeling for opening the North-South metre-gauge link to facilitate through super-fast

passenger and goods traffic. And here I would like to say a word about the metre-gauge. As long as we have this metre-gauge system and as long as we have not entered the phase of having an entire broad-gauge system as desired by one of our colleagues on the other side, we have to utilise these metre-gauge routes and we have to minimise the loss, and not neglect these routes at all. The needs of the users of these routes should also be borne in mind. So I suggest that introducing a direct fast train between Delhi and Bangalore on the metre gauge will not only help the passengers of that route but will also open up many backward areas which have some growth potentialities. This will also reduce the pressure on the Grant Trunk route.

Sir, it seems from the Budget that the outlay on signalling and telecommunications has been reduced. This is not a happy or an encouraging thing. We all know that improved signalling can give improved line capacity, sometimes even better than doubling it. Even Prof. Galbraith, while working at the Indian Statistical Institute, has drawn the attention of the Indian Railways somewhere in mid-fifties to the great possibilities of centralised track control. But it seems that not enough attention has been paid because we see the progress in this area is very poor. Instead we have seen that the Railway Board has undertaken track doubling and track trebling without proper adequate planning and some where even the post doubling to track could not attract increased traffic and so we cannot justify such huge outlay for track doubling. It is indeed unfortunate that civil and mechanical engineers while planning for railways are ignoring interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary approach to this problem. Sir, I appeal to the honourable Minister to look into the problem thoroughly and find out the possibility of improved capacity through modern signalling which is neglected to a certain extent. I do not know how many exactly, but the railways have a large number of computers—might be 14 or 15—and the railways should make much more intelligent and better use of these expensive processing equipments. And in doing that, I would like to draw the attention of the honourable Minister to the recommendations

made by the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, regarding creating a Centralised Data Bank centre in the Indian Railways. Sir, earlier in my speech I pointed out deterioration in wagon turn-around in spite of better tracks and locomotives. The Railway Convention Committee has not only suggested but emphasized the point for more research on the payload of wagons. This research and design work should not be left only to the RDSO but, if necessary, we should seek foreign expertise also. This does not mean that our RDSO is not efficient, but there is always room for improvement.

Another suggestion I would like to make to the Railway Minister is this. There are three production units of the Railways — Chittaranjan Locomotive Works, Diesel Locomotive Works and Integral Coach Factory. They are under the control of the Railway Board which sees to their day-to-day working also. I personally think that these units should be made autonomous public undertakings. Even all the three could be combined into one undertaking. If not, at least the two locomotive works should be brought under one company and you can even think of inviting BHEL which is manufacturing electrical traction equipment to participate in the equity. I feel that for some reason or the other the Railway Board has a much conservative and short-term outlook and approach for the entire planning of the railways resulting in the same unimaginative way of working which has been the legacy of many years and Imperial days. These production units should be more vibrant and should have more utility value. They should diversify their products for non-railway purchasers and earn more revenue and reputation. I think the honourable Minister should appoint an expert team to go in detail about the possibility of making these units autonomous public undertakings and not only keep them as departmental units.

Sir, in this world of today where science and technology is reaching different heights, it is very necessary that we should also to some extent depart from our working methods. So I would make my humble suggestion to the honourable Minister who

is also a professor who could understand and appreciate it more, that the time has come that we should induct brilliant engineers and technocrats in higher echelons of the various railway services directly in intermediate and higher stages. Sir, let it not be misunderstood that I refer to any person individually. I only say it in the larger interest, that the person who occupy interest, that the persons who occupy these high technical positions started their careers years back with or without much theoretical knowledge, and so to a large extent they failed to keep themselves abreast of the up-to-date and latest developments unless they had an opportunity that such latest knowledge was canvassed to them by the salesmen of foreign companies.

To have an up-to-date team of scientists and technocrats the RDSO at least should have the latest and up-to-date consultancy available with them. They should send— the Railway Ministry should make all facilities available to them for this purpose— senior railway administrators and technicians for refresher and orientation courses in higher institutes of technology and management. I am not going to repeat the demand of West Coast Railway as I am sure it is very much in the mind of the hon. Minister. Nor am I going to repeat my demand about the underground railway for Bombay. I would mention one point and draw the attention of the hon. Railway minister to a most humanitarian problem of our Bombay city. There is a lot of land vesting in the Railway Ministry. On this land there are a number of slum dwellers' hutments. The negotiation for the removal and resettlement of these slum dwellers is an acute problem and has been hanging fire for many years. By the time the Central Government and the State Government take a decision and make their mind about the land, about the mode of payment etc. the situation will become really worse. According to the Collector of Bombay there are more than 13,000 hutments on this land with an approximate population of nearly a lakh of people. Practically all these slums do not have latrine facilities. The Bombay municipality and the slum dwellers themselves are prepared to construct latrines provided the

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permission is granted by the Railway Ministry. Will it be too much to expect from the hon. Minister, known for his humanitarian values, to grant this permission immediately even for a temporary period till the issue is settled so that in this monsoon the hutment dwellers can have latrines—a basic amenity to which they are entitled? I hope this appeal of mine will not go unheeded. I am sure the hon. Minister will lose no time in granting this permission.

SHRIMATI SUMITRA G. KULKARNI (Gujarat) : Sir, I am surprised that my hon. friend Mrs. Adivarekar did not find any point commendable in this railway budget which is under discussion and could not think of congratulating the hon. Minister. Sir, for the last three or four years, if I am not mistaken—I say this after exercising my memory—she has been repeatedly requesting that the Konkan area should be opened up because it is backward and it requires a railway line urgently so as to exploit its mineral wealth. I would like to say for her information that paragraph 9 of the hon. Minister's speech emphatically speaks of opening up and development of backward areas of Konkan as well as Bas-tar, Tripura and Bhavnagar-Tarapore. This alone should have been sufficient for her to congratulate the hon. Minister because she is getting in her area a railway line.

While speaking on this budget, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister for opening out these backward areas which have been crying for the railways for the last 20 to 30 years. Nobody has so far thought of providing a railway line in this region which is rich in minerals. Now I feel that prosperity will be taken to these areas as well as the country will benefit by the easy transportation between these backward regions and the rest of the country.

Another point which commends to me is this. This is very important. Something should be done to reduce the multiplicity of the gauges. We have got the metre gauge, narrow gauge and broad gauge. The hon. Minister has thought of converting these metre and narrow gauges into broad gauge. I would only like to submit

that this process should be expedited and taken up on a top priority basis. Unless this is done industries will not be started and the area will not be developed. I am grateful that the hon. Minister has taken up Delhi-Ahmedabad line for conversion on a top priority basis. I have got a small suggestion in this connection. This Delhi-Ahmedabad line is a long track of 750 kms. Till this conversion work is taken up, we may consider utilising the Western Railway's broad gauge right upto Dohad. And from Dohad a small sector with broad gauge can be opened up, so that Delhi can be connected with Ahmedabad, and I am sure that passenger facilities will also be increased on this route. It is not at all an expensive suggestion. This is another small suggestion that I have to make in the matter of conversion.

There is another thing which is very much commendable. It is the classless trains or Janata trains which the hon. Minister has proposed for the new trains which are likely to come. My question is, why is it specific only for the new trains which will be introduced? I personally think that this facility can be easily introduced even on the existing trains in a phased manner. It can be done without incurring any extra expenditure and also without adversely affecting the comforts or the convenience of the passengers. I would like to submit that as early as possible we should start streamlining these trains and have only one class of trains all over India. This is the view which I have been expressing for last so many years and I would like to repeat this that Janata trains should be introduced very easily and rapidly by the Janata Government.

Another point which the hon. Minister has made is about the re-structuring of the Railway Board. It has been overdue and I welcome the suggestion. However, I would like to ask, with what objective you want to restructure the Railway Board? If it is only for the sake of restructuring it, then I do not think it will achieve any particular objective. We have to have the goals fixed and stipulated, otherwise it will be a futile exercise.

Sir, for the first time the Janata Government has come at the Centre. For the last

thirty years the Congress Government was there and they had their own pattern of administration. Now, if the new Government wants to have a separate path, it is necessary that they should spell out exactly what is wanted on the Railways in the next six years. It is not enough that we have a programme from year to year. It is essential that six years' consolidated programme should be drawn up.

Today, Sir, whenever we think of railway reservations, the only thing that comes to our mind is rush for the tickets, long winding queues, delays, uncertainty, undependability, etc. All these things are the specialities of the Indian Railways. Sir, if only these can be eliminated, then we would have achieved a lot. It is time that the Railways should indicate to what extent the people of this country can depend on their services. The Indian Railways are known for their undependability. I would like to submit that some effort should be made to make them dependable. I know and I fully realise that within a day no programmes can be implemented, no improvements can be achieved and even in one year nothing much can be done. But certainly, Sir, six years period is quite reasonable and a lot can be achieved in this period.

Sir, unfortunately, in this entire budget there is no mention about punctuality. Sir, punctuality is the most essential part of the railway services, and at least now it should be ensured that hundred per cent punctuality should be offered to passengers—for passenger services as well as for freight transportation. If this is not promised, then I would say that always the passengers will be in difficulty. They have been suffering from this for a number of years in the past. Therefore, I would like to submit to the hon. Minister that before anything else is taken up some special guidelines should be put up. These are some of the goals that occur to me.

So I would like to recommend for your consideration : first, there should be hundred per cent punctuality; second, there should be adequate accommodation available on the railways both for passengers as well as for freight; third, there should be readability that what is despatched on the railways reaches its destination; fourth,

there should be comforts for the passengers travelling on the Indian Railways and safety of passengers as well as of goods should be ensured.

Thefts should be reduced and economy should be introduced in the cost of services offered by the railways. Efficiency of railway services should be increased. Lastly, there should be greater frequency of the trains available in the various parts of the country. If these goals are acceptable, then the Minister has to place these goals before the Railway Board officers and ensure that they are achieved within this period of six years. I am not talking in terms of one year. I am aware that not much can be achieved in one year. But certainly six years' period should be taken up together for achieving these goals. I do not think that these goals are very difficult goals which the Indian Railways cannot achieve. We want to depart from the old style and the established pattern. We want to have innovations also. We want Railways to offer efficient services consistent with the needs of the community. If the Janata Party's programme has to succeed and make out a mark for itself, a distinct pattern has to be established. It is my suggestion that the Railways should undertake a radical programme of modernisation of railways. Then only we can achieve something in terms of greater facilities and achieve these six or seven goals. Once these goals are set up, then the structuring can be thought out. Restructuring of the Railway Board can also be considered in that context. Then we can think of as to how to implement it, where from to get resources, how much resources are available, etc. This should be the method of planning. First we fix up the goals. Then comes structuring and implementation. Then comes the question of resources, I regret to submit that not only in this budget, but in all the previous budgets that I have had occasion to speak on, I have noticed that the Government has a habit of planning only from financial point of view. One year's planning is done on the basis of whatever meagre resources are available. This is, in my opinion, not a correct way of planning. We want to assure excellent services for our countrymen. We want to plan for plenty. If we

[Shrimati Sushila Shankar Adivarekar] want to plan for plenty, we certainly cannot restrict planning according to resources. We have to think and plan out what exactly are our requirements. Once these requirements are established, then certainly resources can be thought of. Then we can think how to produce those financial resources. As against this, I am afraid we have been planning perpetually on the basis of scarcity and thereby perpetuating nothing but scarcity. The butt-gets can be seen year after year. It is only perpetuating scarcity and not providing for plenty. It should be done. Though we may not be in a position to afford it today, certainly at the end of six years we will be able to afford it. We have to prepare and plan for that. Finance should not be a constraint. This is the basic difficulty with out planning, whether it is general planning for the country or planning for the railways. It is my submission that the hon. Minister should set up the task before the Railway Board officers telling them that these are the goals to be achieved. He can come before this House with a consolidated programme of six years. I am sure if he comes with the consolidated programme, this House as well as the other House will help the hon. Minister in raising resources and support him to the hilt. This is my suggestion. Time and again it is made out that there is lack of money. I do not agree with this theory that we are short of finances. We will always remain short of finances. It is the ability of the Government to raise resources. Simply because there may not be sufficient resources in the Reserve Bank today, it does not mean that we cannot have projects which will cost much more. My submission is that money can never be a constraint for a vital Government activity like the railway transportation. If the Railways have a right approach and know what they want to offer to our countrymen, then certainly the World Bank can come forward with their loans. World Bank loans are the softest loans in the world with only 2 per cent interest. As transportation in the backward regions is a top priority of the World Bank they can be approached with this request.

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही (उत्तर प्रदेश) : अंग्रेजी में आप बोल रही हैं तो बल्ले बैंक कैसे आयेगा ?

श्रीमती सुमित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी : बल्ले बैंक का भाषा के साथ लेने देन नहीं है ? जिस भाषा में बल्ले बैंक मान जाय मैं उस भाषा में बोलने के लिए तैयार हूँ।

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : जब गांधी जी की पोती अंग्रेजी में बोल रही है तो बल्ले बैंक कैसे आयेगा ?

श्रीमती सुमित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी : श्रीमान्, मैंने बहुत अंग्रेजी में पढ़ा इस लिए मैं अंग्रेजी में बोल रही थी। मुझे हिन्दी से बहुत प्रेम है।

श्री नागेश्वर प्रसाद शाही : किस ने कहा अंग्रेजी में पढ़िये, हिन्दी में पढ़ती।

श्रीमती सुमित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी : दोनों भाषाएँ इस सदन में मान्य हैं। श्रीमान्, मैं माननीय सदस्य की इच्छा के अनुसार हिन्दी में बोलने का प्रयत्न करूँगी। बल्ले बैंक से हम चाहे उतना रुपया ले सकते हैं। हमने अपना प्रोजेक्ट तरीके से तैयार किया है तो मैं समझती हूँ कि रुपया प्राप्त करने में कोई कठिनाई नहीं होनी चाहिए। अगर बल्ले बैंक का पैसा सफ़ीशिएट नहीं होता तो दूसरा तरीका है। इंडियन रेलवे स्वयं जा कर बल्ले स्टॉक एक्सचेंज से, न्यूयार्क स्टॉक एक्सचेंज से, पेरिस स्टॉक एक्सचेंज से लोन ले सकती है और स्वयं भी लोन फ्लोट कर सकती है। कोई जहरी नहीं कि गवर्नमेंट आफ इंडिया उस को अन्डर-राइट करे। न्यूयार्क में यूनाइटेड स्टेट्स आफ अमेरिका की गवर्नमेंट उस को अन्डर-राइट कर सकती है। इंडियन रेलवे बहुत सफल संस्थान है। उस को कठिनाई नहीं होनी चाहिए। इंडियन रेलवे स्वयं बल्ले स्टॉक एक्सचेंज से पैसों की मांग कर सकती है और प्राप्त भी कर सकती है। इस लिए

मेरा यह कहना है कि पैसों की कमी की वजह से कोई योजना रोकी न जाय और हमें यह न कहना पड़े कि 6 वर्ष के बाद हम इतनी उन्नति कर सकेंगे, इस-इस तरीके की सुविधाएं उपलब्ध हो सकेंगी और ये-ये सुविधाएं हम यात्रियों को दे सकेंगे। यह सुनिश्चित होना चाहिए और इस की तरफ प्रयास होना चाहिए।

इसके पश्चात मैं रेलवे मंत्री का अभिनन्दन करना चाहती हूँ कि उन्होंने दूसरी श्रेणी के यात्रियों की सुविधा के लिए हम को आश्वासन दिया है कि मार्डन टेक्नोलॉजी नये तकनीकी तरीकों का उपयोग किया जायगा। इसकी बहुत सालों से आवश्यकता थी। इसके लिए उन को धन्यवाद।

लोग कहते हैं कि भारतवर्ष की ट्रेनों में बहुत भीड़ होती है, इसलिए उस की व्यवस्था करना कठिन होता है। श्रीमन्, मैं इसके साथ सहमत नहीं हूँ। जो भी विकासशील और विकसित देश होते हैं, वहां रेल ही एकमात्र साधन होता है यातायात का, वहां पर हमेशा भीड़ होती है, चाहे आप इंग्लैंड को ले लीजिये जापान को ले लीजिये, फ्रांस या जर्मनी को ले लीजिये, सब देशों में बहुत भीड़ होती है, हर एक ट्रेन और स्टेशन पर। मात्र अन्तर यह होता है कि वहां सुविधाएं ज्यादा होती हैं और बहुत समय से ट्रेन आती हैं, सुरक्षा का पूरा प्रबन्ध होता है। इसलिए यह कहना कि हमारे यहां बहुत भीड़ होती है इस लिए ठीक व्यवस्था नहीं कर सकते, यह मैं मानने को तैयार नहीं हूँ। रेलवे मंत्रालय और रेलवे बोर्ड इस तरफ ध्यान देंगे तो वे जरूर देख पायेंगे कि जापान में इतने सुव्यवस्थित तरीके से रेलवे चल सकती है तो भारतवर्ष में कोई कठिनाई नहीं होनी चाहिए।

दूसरी चीज जो आप के माध्यम से मैं विशेष रूप से रेलवे मिनिस्टर साहब से निवेदन करना चाहती हूँ वह यह है कि वर्षों से हमारे देश में रेलवे चल रही है और इतने वर्षों में उन्होंने ने एक बहुत ही कुशल मैन-पावर की, बहुत बड़ी तादाद में कुशल कारीगरों की व्यवस्था की है जिनको रेलवे की तकनीक मालूम है और अनुभव है। इस चीज का हम को उपयोग करना चाहिए। जब हमारे पास यह एक्स-पर्टीज एवेलेबिल है तो उस का विशाल पैमाने पर और ज्यादा गहरा उपयोग करना चाहिए। इस बारे में मेरा सुझाव यह है कि जिस तरह से वैस्टर्न रेलवे है, सेन्ट्रल रेलवे है, दक्षिण रेलवे है, उत्तर रेलवे है उसी प्रकार रेलवे मंत्रालय को एक इंटरनेशनल डिवीजन खोलना चाहिए जिस को जनरल मैनेजर के स्तर का अफसर कंट्रोल करे और उस की व्यवस्था करे। उस का एकमात्र कर्तव्य यह होना चाहिए कि बहुत बड़े पैमाने पर देश से रेलवे टेक्नीकल फेसिलिटीज, टेक्नीकल एक्विपमेंट और टेक्नीकल एक्सपर्ट्स को एक्सपोर्ट किया जाये। हम लोकोमोटिव बनाते हैं, वैगन बनाते हैं, हमारे यहां सिग्नलिंग डिवाइसेज है, एक्विपमेंट है, हमारे यहां ट्रेक्शन एक्विपमेंट एवेलेबिल है, इतनी सारी एक्सेसरीज एवेलेबिल हैं। इस सब को बहुत बड़े पैमाने पर विदेशों में भेजना चाहिए। जब तक हम यह कार्यवाही नहीं शुरू करेंगे तब तक भारतीय रेलवे का विकास नहीं हो सकता और न भारतीय रेलवे सुदृढ़ हो सकती है। अगर यह कार्य एक खास इंटरनेशनल डिवीजन खोल कर किया जा सकता हो तो मेरा सुझाव है कि उसे करना चाहिए। दुनिया के दूसरे बड़े बड़े देशों में मार्केटिंग रिसर्च करने के लिये और मार्केटिंग इंटेलीजेंस एकत्रित करने के लिये भारतीय रेलवे अगर कोई पग उठाती है तो वह अच्छा होगा। उस के लिये

[श्रीमती सुमित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी]

वह अपने दफ्तर वहां खोले और सतत इस बारे में जागरूक रहे कि किस प्रकार की एक्सपोर्टिंग हम को पैदा करनी है और किस किस देश में कहां कहां पर हमारी भारतीय रेलवे जा सकती है और कहां कहां हमारी भारतीय रेलवे की वस्तुएं विक्रि सकती हैं। श्रीमन्, मैं इस संबंध में भारतीय रेलवे को एक नया स्लोगन देना चाहती हूं कि 'इंडियन रेलवेज आर दि रेल रोड बिल्डर्स आफ दि वर्ल्ड।' सारी दुनिया के अंदर भारतीय रेलों रेल बनाने का काम कर सकती हैं और कम से कम खर्च पर कर सकती हैं। आज कोई भी विकसित देश नहीं है कि जो इतने कम खर्च पर रेल बिछाने का काम कर सकता हो, रेल की वस्तुएं इतने कम खर्च पर उत्पादन कर पाता हो। इस पर भी आज कल हमारा जो एक्सपोर्ट का कार्यक्रम है वह तो आप समझ लीजिए कि बहुत ट्राइपलिंग है, बहुत कम मात्रा में है जिसको देख कर, समझ कर मन में हमें संकोच होना चाहिए कि इतनी बड़ी भारतीय रेल और उस का एक्सपोर्ट इतना कम है। क्योंकि हमारे यहां भारतीय रेल कोई एक्सपोर्ट नहीं करती। एक्सपोर्ट का काम स्टील मिनिस्ट्री करती है और स्टील मिनिस्ट्री रेल गुड्स का उत्पादन नहीं करती क्योंकि उस का कहना है कि रेल मिनिस्ट्री से उन की डिमांड नहीं है। तो इस झमेले में विदेशों में रेल गुड्स का जो बाजार है उस में हमारी वस्तुएं नहीं विक्रि पाती हैं। न हम इस के बारे में सोचते हैं और न कोई प्रयत्न करते हैं और न इस बार में कोई खास कदम उठाते हैं। तो मेरा अनुरोध है कि यह एक बहुत ही जरूरी चीज है और आप इस के बारे में आलस्य न करें और इस के बारे में जागृत होकर विदेशों में भारतीय रेलों की जहां जहां

भी आवश्यकता हो वहां वहां अपने कारखाने लगायें और रेल की वस्तुओं का व्यवसाय बढ़ायें।

एक आखिरी प्वाइंट है। अभी अभी दो एक महीने पहले का किस्सा है कि 8 मिलियन पाउंड्स का सामान यूनाईटेड किंगडम ने हर्नर्स रेस का, घुड़दौड़ का, साउदी अरेबिया को बेचा है। एक पाउंड 20 रुपये के बराबर होता है। अगर यूनाईटेड किंगडम इतने रुपये का सामान हार्स रेस का उत्पादन कर सकता है तो हम भी पेट्रोडालर देशों में जहां पर उनको जरूरत है हर तरह की रेलवे फैसिलिटीज उन को पहुंचा सकते हैं और उन के विकास में मदद कर सकते हैं और उन से पूरे-पूरे कांट्रैक्ट लेकर अपना भी विकास कर सकते हैं। उन के पास इतना पैसा है और हमारे पास इतना अनुभव है, सामान है। और कुछ नहीं तो साउदी अरेबिया के इतने पैसे वाले प्रदेश में हर शहर में बच्चों की एक ट्वाय ट्रेन ही बना सकते हैं। अगर 50 हजार डालर एक ट्वाय ट्रेन पर खर्च आता है तो उस का दो लाख डालर दाम हम उन से ले सकते हैं और इस तरह से अपने देश की आय बढ़ा सकते हैं और रेलवे की आमदनी जो कम है और जिस की वजह से उस का विकास रुका रहता है उस को पूरा कर सकते हैं। तो यह दृष्टिकोण है जिस के बारे में रेल मंत्रालय को जागृत होना चाहिए। अगर वह पुराने दक्खिनूसी तरीके से सोचना चाहते हैं और उसी ढर्रे पर रहना चाहते हैं तो उन को हमेशा पैसे की कमी भी रहगी और विकास का पथ भी अवरूद्ध होता रहेगा। अगर वे इस तरह से नये विचारों को अपनायेंगे तो मुझे भरोसा है कि जहां सरकार के द्वारा रेलों की जो नयी व्यवस्था होगी वह देशवासियों को भी फायदा पहुंचायेगी और अपने देश के व्यापार में भी समृद्धि होगी।

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN : Sir, it is a very interesting experience to address an empty House, and, unfortunately, the hon. Minister is also not here. Of course, hon. Shri Advani is here but I do not think he would care to note down the points that we make.

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI LAL K. ADVANI) : Of course, I will do.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN : Before I say anything about the Budget of this year, I would like to remind this empty House about the performance of the last two years of the Railways because these two years have been tremendously very outstanding years and a memorable landmark in the chequered history of our Railways which is our greatest national enterprise employing about 17 lakhs of people.

Sir, no doubt, the Railway Minister has spared the nation this time of any increase in fares and freight, but I must remind the House, this empty House I should say, that the fares were also not increased last time and there was a very marginal increase in freight adjustment. Of course, the little mercy which the hon. Minister has shown is about the platform ticket, the cost of which has been reduced to 30 paise from 50. paise.

In the speech of the hon. Minister, I find that the surplus for 1977-78 is expected to be of the order of Rs. 32.50 crores. Well, this has almost been reduced to about 50 per cent of the last year's surplus although the Minister himself has admitted that there has been a tremendous increase in the freight and he expects an increase of about 6 per cent in the passenger traffic.

[THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU) *in the Chair.*]

In spite of this increase in the passenger traffic and the freight, why should there be so much less net surplus at the end of the year under review ? No doubt, I agree, that the Railways have to bear a lot of social burden and the authorities concerned must compensate Railways for this social

burden as Railways are not expected to carry on this sort of social work or social service, because Railways are supposed to be a commercial organisation and they must run on commercial basis. Sir, I quite appreciate the hon. Minister's optimism in this regard that the Railways are doing very well and the Railways' finances are also improving but if we take into consideration the indebtedness of the Railways which is of the order of Rs. 440 crores, it seems that the finances of the Railways are in a very bad shape and unless some remedial measures and some radical measures are taken, the present financial situation will continue and it will not be possible to improve the financial condition of the Railways. It is just possible that at the end of the current financial year, we may find that the expected surplus is completely eroded by the additional expenditure.

Regarding the speech of the hon. Railway Minister, I would like to say that there is very little originality in his speech. Of course, I must appreciate his drafting which has been done very carefully so that it may give an impression that whatever it contains, almost everything of it is original and a new idea. For instance, about the construction of 25 railway lines in hand, I would like to point out that they were taken up in hand not during these last two months. They were taken up much earlier and I am not very sure whether the same hon. Railway Minister will be there when they will be completed. Well, I will be happy if he is there when these lines will be completed. But credit for initiating this action for these lines must go to the previous Government and to the previous Railway Minister. Similarly, the hon. Minister has stated that additional long-distance trains to be introduced will be all class-less Janata trains. May I know if it is an original idea of this Government or of this Minister, because a large number of Janata trains are already in operation and this idea is also not an original idea because we were running these trains and now it will be only additional trains if they are going to be introduced. If honourable Shri Advani will kindly make a note of it, I would like to point out that all these Janata trains have been given different names. I would very

[Shri Khurshed Alam Khan] much like that one of the Janata trains running from Delhi to Ajmer should be given the name of *Garib Nawaz* because *Garib Nawaz* really means the train for janata and *Garib Nawaz* is the shrine of our saint at Ajmer. I hope this much of concession will be given for the sake of our famous saint of Ajmer.

As regards the improvement of amenities for second class passengers, I must say that it is a continuous process. It has been in process for a long time and this is also not a very original idea. This is not a new idea. We would like to know what the new Minister and the new Government are going to do in continuation of what has been done in the past and what we have done in the past.

Regarding the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission, a very vague statement has been made in the speech of the hon. Minister. It is not correct that the previous Government did not do anything about it because the process of decentralisation of administration started earlier and it is one of the recommendations of the Administrative Reforms Commission. What further he is going to do, he has not indicated. He has not taken us into confidence, he has not told us as to what he is going to do, although we very much expected to know and desired to know about what he was going to do in this respect.

I would certainly like to know what reorganisation of the Railway Board is contemplated by the hon. Minister about which he has mentioned in his speech. In fairness to the Railway Board it must be said that most of the criticism is unjustified sometimes. Let the Minister use his knowledge and experience to do some purposeful reorganisation rather than only take the plea of inaction by the previous Government. The previous Government had definitely taken these recommendations in consideration and implemented some of them gradually. To the best of my knowledge the study has recommended no change in the present structure of the Railway Board and has suggested that it should continue to combine both the executive and secretarial functions, but the Chairman

should be relieved of the responsibility of specific departments which have been under his charge and he should devote more time for higher problems, like planning, co-ordination, etc. I suppose, it is a very good suggestion because the Chairman should not be involved in day-to-day administrative matters; he should take more interest in long-term planning.

I would also like to know from the Minister—as he has not spelt out—what recommendations have broadly been accepted by him. As I said earlier, decentralisation process, being one of the recommendations, has already been started. Now what else is he going to do? He should tell us in his reply when he is replying to the debate.

Regarding amendment to the Indian Railways Act, 1890, here I would again say that nothing original has been done by this Ministry because this suggestion was made by me more than a year ago, and the then Minister for Railways, Shri Kamalapati Tripathi, had promised that the Indian Railways Act, 1890, would be completely eroded by the extra expenditure under consideration and the Act will be revised and made up to date and it will be introduced in both the Houses as early as possible.

About the Budget for the year under review. I must say that there is nothing unique about it. A surplus of Rs. 32.50 crores is doubtful at the end of the year because it might be eaten away or completely eroded by the extra expenditure that might be incurred during the course of the year. But here I would like to mention one particular thing that in incurring expenditure no savings are likely to be achieved. Nothing has been mentioned by the Minister in his speech about this. The Janata Government had stated that they are going to effect 10 per cent saving in the expenditure. If this 10 per cent saving is going to be effected on all the expenditure, why should the Railway be exempted from it? Why should not the Railways be covered by this principle?

The present railway administration has inherited a very healthy trend in the growth rate of passenger and goods traffic, extensive leakage has stopped, ticketless travel, unauthorised pulling of chains and

travelling with unbooked luggage has been minimised. In short, the Railways have made history in a series of record-breaking performances during the last two years. Let us hope that you would continue to keep up these records and also make improvements.

I must say—and I suppose the other hon. Members have also stated—that there is great scope for rationalisation of railway staff to curtail expenditure on the staff. The staff expenditure is more than 65 per cent of the total operating costs and is one of the major elements in the operating costs. Therefore, this needs special consideration.

Sir, I would like to know from the hon. Railway Minister what is the percentage of rest and leave reserve allowed for the running staff and for the other staff, because this is an important matter. If you could reduce the percentage of the rest and leave staff, surely you will effect saving in expenditure. Besides, this saving could also be effected if the running staff particularly is given some incentive for punctuality in attendance so that they take less leave, they absent themselves less and you need a lesser percentage of the rest and leave reserve staff.

I am glad to note that the hon. Minister has stated that steps are being taken to streamline and simplify the machinery to settle the claims on railways. But what about prevention of theft and pilferage of goods in transit? What is the amount which is paid annually as compensation for theft and loss of goods in transit, or in the custody of the railways? This is a very pertinent question in relation to the expenditure that is incurred on the Railway Protection Force. On the one hand we are inclining huge expenditure on the Railway Protection Force, and on the other, we are paying large amounts as compensation to the consignors and consignees for the goods lost or damaged in transit.

We quite appreciate the efforts that were mentioned by the hon. Minister in the direction of participation of labour in the management. But I must caution the hon. Minister here that this will be a self-defeating exercise if any one particular union

or federation is encouraged in preference to the others. I would also like to know if it is a fact that the All India Railway men's Federation has been given three rooms in the Rail Bhavan, while the National Federation has not been provided such facility. If this is true, why is this discrimination there? If this discrimination is there, this must be removed forthwith.

Participation of labour in management is a universally accepted fact. But here I would like to mention particularly that this should not interfere with the legitimate functions of the management regarding postings, transfers, recruitment because that has nothing to do with the participation of labour in the management.

Another question that I would like to know is, what are the plans and what is the thinking about the rapid transit system that is to be provided for the metropolitan cities of Calcutta, Bombay, Delhi and Madras and what has been done so far? I was fortunately associated with the team which made studies for five years and submitted comprehensive reports for providing the rapid transit system for these metropolitan cities. .. (*Time bell rings.*) Sir, I have some important matters to raise; so please allow me a few minutes.

The subject of metropolitan transport is very important and unless this is given due consideration at this stage, it will not be possible later on to provide any sort of rapid transit system—under-ground or over-head—and without the help of an under-ground or overhead rapid transit system, it will not be possible for us to meet the requirements of the metropolitan cities in future. Now, another important question is: What is being done about the transport system for the national capital region? The entire scheme of the National capital region will be defeated and it will not serve its real purpose if a proper railway transport system is not provided in the national capital region. It is not only the question of Delhi. The national capital region comprises of so many towns around Delhi, which are called satellite towns, and unless there is a proper and quick transport system between the capital city and the

[Shri Kharshed Alam Khan] satellite towns, this scheme will never materialise.

Now we have three types of traction in our railways—diesel traction, the conventional locomotive traction and electric traction. I would like to know whether any studies have been made as to which is the cheaper type, which is the best type and which is the type that is going to be more useful for us in future. Now with the difficulty about crude, we are finding that diesel traction is very expensive. I would like to know whether we are going to continue with it or change over to the old, conventional loco traction or going to stress more on electric traction.

Whether you admit it or not—unfortunately there is nobody to hear—there is a slide-back in the operational efficiency of the railways and unless immediate steps are taken I am afraid we might go back to the same state that we were in two years ago and it will take another five years before we will be able to do something about it.

Inventory control is another very important matter. In an inventory, crores of rupees are invested and I would like to know what has been done to reduce the cost on inventories and what is being done to get rid of obsolete and dead stock which is on the inventories of the railways and our production centres. Nothing has been mentioned by the hon. Minister in his speech on such an important matter. He should have said something and I hope in his reply he would be able to tell us what steps are being taken in this regard.

Now, cleanliness and catering is another big problem. The standard of cleanliness and catering has further deteriorated during the last few years. I recently had the misfortune of travelling by the Taj Express which is our show-piece, and I tell you that the kitchen of this Express was most dirty, the dining car was most dirty and the dinner which was served to me, costing Rs. 16/—, was hardly worth Rs. 4/—. Besides, it was an experience for me to find beggars begging in the Taj Express at the New Delhi railway station. This is the situation to which we have come now.

Now the Minister has stated that he has abolished all the committees which were advisory. Well, he has done it in his wisdom but I suppose some of the committees were doing very useful work and they were a sort of eyes and ears of the Railway Minister and helpful to the travelling public and the railway administration. I suppose the Railway Minister should reconsider the whole question, see which of these committees were doing useful work and restore such committees.

Another matter about which we feel quite concerned is that the high-rated traffic is gradually being diverted to road transport. Unless there is co-ordination between rail and road, high-rated traffic will not increase and the railways will continue to lose this traffic, particularly now because about Rs. 50 crores of the railways are invested in Road transport. I suppose the railways have not invested this money in road transport for wasteful competition.

I would also like to know whether it is a fact that about 16,000 employees of the railways were involved in dismissal, discharge and various kinds of punishment as a result of their participation in the last strike and also whether it is a fact that out of these 16,000, except 500 all were taken in service and, if so, if at all any credit is to be taken it is to be taken by the previous hon. Minister that out of 16,000 only 500 people were left to be taken back in service.

5 P.M.

Sir, I am just finishing. Last time I mentioned about the recruitment of minorities in the Railways. I was sorry to receive a letter from the honourable Minister drawing my attention to the fact that there is no such provision in the Constitution. I know the Constitutional provision. If the Constitutional provisions were there, I would not have gone to the Railway Minister with a request but would have demanded it and got it. Here, I would like to mention that, in his speech, the ex-Railway Minister, Shri Kamalapati Tripathi, had definitely mentioned that the minorities will get their due share in employment in the Railways in future,

Also, the Railway accidents have increased and the worst type of accident happened in Assam recently, which, it has been stated, was an act of God. I do not think it was an act of God. It was purely due to the negligence of the Railway staff. When the inquiring report is there before the Railway authorities, they will know it.

Crimes in the Railways are a common feature. When shall we be able to give protection to our passengers and a sense of security to them when they are travelling ?

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU): You may say your last word.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN : Now I would like to say something about the maintenance of locomotives of various types. We have laid down certain scales of fuel consumption of different types of locomotives. Now, if the engines are in absolutely A-I service condition, they will consume fuel according to the scales laid down. I would like to know what excessive expenditure is being incurred on fuel consumption because of improper maintenance of locomotives—whether they are conventional locomotives or diesel locomotives, they are consuming more fuel than as per the scales laid down.

The previous Railway Ministry had set up two subsidiary commercial undertakings. One was the Indian Railways Construction Company and the other was the Railway Technical Services Company. I would like to know about the performance of these two Companies, what they have done, how much foreign exchange they have earned, and whether they have been able to get some contracts outside—because our neighbouring countries like Afghanistan and Iran are going in, in a big way for the Railway network, and I am sure that if we can make some efforts, we can get a lot of orders from these countries.

The last point I would like to make is that during the last regime a demand had been made to break the monopoly of the catering contractors and the book stall-holders in the Railways. I am afraid, nothing has been done so far. Unless something

is done about it, the people are going to suffer and the monopoly of the book stallholders and catering will continue.

Sir, I hope that these points will be passed on to the Railway Minister and he would look into them so that when he would be giving the reply tomorrow, he would also be replying to these points.

Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU) : We may have to sit for some time more, even though it is past 5 P.M. now, and I hope the House would not mind it. So Mr. Koya may speak.

SHRI B. V. ABDULLA KOYA (Kerala) : Sir, I would take only 7 minutes.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, let me at the very outset congratulate the Railway Minister for presenting a surplus Budget without having to increase the rates of passengers or goods. It is indeed a good thing to have reduced the platform ticket charges by 20 paise, even though the relief is very negligible. However, when we look deeper into the Budget we cannot have much satisfaction. The long demand for new railway lines, especially in the Southern region, where the Railways have been indifferent, has not been met even in this Budget. As for the Allenpy-Ernakulam line and the Guruvayur-Kuttipuram line or for the electrification of the Ernakulam-Trivandrum line, no concrete proposal has been made in spite of the welcome offer from the State Government to supply electricity at cheaper rate and land free-of-cost. I would, therefore, request the Minister to look into these. Corruption prevailing in the Railway Department has not been eradicated. Very often we find that perishable articles like fruits and vegetables are not accepted for loading unless and until some *mamul* money is given to some of the Railway employees concerned. Tickets at the metropolitan cities like Bombay, Delhi Calcutta and Madras are not easily obtainable for days together unless you pay; some *bakhshish* to the Railway servants I am just asking the Minister when will he be able to eradicate these social evil and malpractices and save the traveller from the agonies. The bad tendency of

[Shri B. V. Abdulla Koya]

running trains late has come up again. Unless you are prepared to nip this tendency in the bud the notorious old experience of having late-running trains will be there again. Coming to the urgent need of new railway lines in Kerala which have been neglected for years together, I would earnestly request the Minister to give deserving priority to the new lines of Alleppey-Ernakulam and Kuttipuram-Guruvayur. For these lines the former Minister had already given a promise to the chambers of commerce and public at large. Then again about the electrification of the Ernakulam-Trivandrum line, here the Ernakulam-Trivandrum line, here the Kerala Government is prepared to give electricity at very cheap rate, and I would request the Minister to give his sincere consideration. Then, I would request the Minister just to see the Malabar Express which is supposed to be very very crowded to dieselise it so that more carriages can be attached and it can be speeded up also. In fact, if we want to go to Madras, we can reach Madras within 18 hours covering 440 miles, whereas a train from Cananoor to Trivandrum which is our capital city, takes at least 18 hours to cover only half of that distance which is very surprising. Therefore, something should be done. Now, a train which starts at nearly 4 o'clock from Calicut, reaches only in the morning at Trivandrum which

can be avoided if that particular train is also dieselised. Before I conclude, I would request the Minister to stop completely the old practice of the Congress to put only their party men in the various committees of the Railways and Posts and Telegraphs. I am telling this because it has become a bad custom of the party in power to have their own nominees whether they are fit for those committees or not. For example, the Calicut Posts and Telegraphs Department or the Telephone Advisory Board has only the Congress people. I would request the new Minister at least to see that proper people are taken.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAIL)) : Do you mean that they should take from the opposition party ?

SHRI B. V. ABDULLA KOYA : From opposition and others also. The representative should be an active member of the chamber of commerce instead of a party man will be able to do nothing in such matters. With these words I conclude.

THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SHRI V. B. RAJU) : The debate will continue. The House stands adjourned till 11 AM. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at ten minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Thursday, the 16th June, 1977.