

As regards what Shri Mani said, there was actually no talk of any package deal in the Chief Ministers' Conference. These words were not used. I do not know what has appeared in the newspapers. Now, all these points which I have referred to are all important and we have to consider as to how to implement them and whether they are feasible of implementation.

In regard to the services, of course, there is no objection to what he said that the Government of India if necessary, might consult the Chief Secretaries also. As I said, these are important matters, very vital and in a way they are connected with the unity and integration of the country. We have therefore to be very careful in considering these problems. The services, of course, it is only the civil services that are meant, not the Defence Services.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Technical services.

SHRI LAL BAHADUR: Well, for the time being, it is the All-India Services and the Central Services. These are the two categories.

About what Shri Vajpayee said, there is no condition as such, no compulsion as such but it was generally accepted, and all the State Governments adopted it, that there should be the three-language formula in the country and that this formula should be implemented in all the States. Unfortunately, it has not been fully implemented and in order to bring about cohesion and integration in the country, it is essential that there should be a link language, a common language and therefore Hindi, English and the regional language—this group is provided. It is better that the other parts and other States also try to learn one of the languages of the other States. For example, people in the Hindi-speaking States should learn one of the other modern languages or the language in use in other States. In this regard, the Statement has said that people in the Hindi-speaking States should read one of the other regional languages but it is preferable if it is one of the four South Indian languages. So it is left to the discretion of the boys and the others to choose any

of those languages but it would be better if one of the Southern Indian languages is learnt.

I would not like to say much, Sir, but I would end by saying that this is a problem which is most vital for us. It is related with the unity and the integration of the country. I do hope, Sir, that this problem will be considered coolly by every section of the people and that there will be no attempt on the part of any section of our countrymen to pressurise Government in a way which would not be desirable or justifiable.

I would certainly like to consult other political parties and I have also announced that I would be meeting the leaders of different political parties in Parliament. I hope I shall be able to arrange it soon.

MR CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 2.30 p.m.

The House then adjourned for lunch at thirty minutes past one of the clock.

The House reassembled after lunch at half past two of the clock, THE VICE CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) in the Chair.

THE BUDGET (RAILWAYS) 1965-66—
continued

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR: Mr Vice-Chairman, Sir, when I was speaking last, I was referring to the vigilance organisation set up by the Railways. Now I do not know how the vigilance works in the Railways. It may be that some traps are being laid or some secret organisation is working. But I would like to refer to the corruption which is prevalent in the running trains. Many hon. Members who spoke before me complained about corruption at the Reservation Office but I would submit that in the train itself corruption is rampant and there is no agency to detect it. I will illustrate my point

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Suppose reservations are made in the Pathankot Express from Bombay to Gwalior. Then certain berths fall vacant at Gwalior station and the staff there charge extra money from the passengers to give them those berths and they do not pass any receipts nor do they account for it in the Railway books. They just take the money from the passengers. I have got this experience. My friends always travel by this train in the night from Gwalior to Delhi. The train comes to Gwalior at about midnight and many berths fall vacant when the passengers get down at Gwalior. And the Railway staff take some Rs 5 from each passenger and allow them to occupy these berths. And when there is so much overcrowding elsewhere the passengers also find it easy to tip the conductors, enjoy their sleep and reach Delhi easily. There are many other cases of this type. Then people holding lower class tickets travel by higher classes after paying money to the staff for which also no receipt is passed. In such cases the Railways do not get any advantage but the staff on duty gets the benefit. So I would suggest that some detective machinery should be set up so that this sort of ticketless travelling may be checked. In a way this is also ticketless travelling because although the person has a ticket for the lower class if he travels in the higher class and enjoys sleeping accommodation he deprives the Railways of its earnings.

Now I come to the most controversial and the most unpalatable proposal which the hon Railway Minister has placed before us and that is the increase in fares. I do not see any justification for the increase in fares. The argument of the hon Minister is that on account of the increase in expenses and on account of so many development activities this increase has become necessary. He also says that the increase will be only marginal and that it is done only in certain cases. If you compare the fares that obtained ten or fifteen years ago you will find that this is the fourth or fifth time that railway fares have been increased and there have been many such mild doses which the Railway Minister has been giving every now and then. When the Railways are unable to

give any facilities when they are unable to ease overcrowding, I do not think there is any justification for them to take more from the travelling public.

And why do they want this money when they are not able to spend even the money allotted to them? Only yesterday I came across this Audit Report which has been given to us and it gives startling statements. On page 4 of the Audit Report, it is said that many of the grants were excessive and unnecessary and that they were not utilised. I will not read out the whole page though it is very revealing. The hon Minister should look at this. They say that the following table would indicate that the supplementary provisions obtained under grants were entirely unnecessary during the last five years except in 1961-62 when it was largely in excess of the requirements and so on. I would not dilate on this point. Whatever money they get sanctioned from Parliament is not being utilised; they are not able to utilise it and there is no justification for taking more money from the travelling public. Now even though this is a marginal increase, as you are aware it starts a sort of chain reaction, a sort of cycle of reactions and the prices go up. There is already inflation and this price rise will add to that inflation. In fact when the Railways are making so much profits we expected that some relief in fares would be given by the Railway Minister but nothing of that kind has been done. On the contrary there is a marginal increase in the words of the hon Railway Minister. So I oppose this proposed increase in fares and I would request the hon Minister to take back this proposal.

The hon Railway Minister has said that the relations of the Railways with the labour are cordial. They are cordial no doubt and no effective strike has taken place so far, but I would submit that there is discontent among all the railway workers. They have got some small grievances and their demands are very modest but no attention is being paid to them. Such small demands are also rejected only on account of the bureaucracy that is working in the management of the Railways. I am associated with certain categories of railway workers and I have been submitting their demands now and then. For example, take the case of pay clerks. They are a

small group in the whole of the Railways but there is no uniformity with regard to them in the Railways; there is no uniformity in their scales; there is no uniformity in the amenities provided to them. So I would submit that their demands should be considered properly and they should be treated as other workers.

Similar is the case with regard to casual workers. I have seen that nowadays on account of the doubling of the railway lines so much casual labour is employed by the Railways but no facilities are provided to these poor labourers who have to work hard in the rainy season, in winter and in summer also. Last year they met in a conference at Katni and presented a charter of demands. Their demands are very simple. They want that they should be provided with quarters, that there should be lighting arrangements in their quarters and as this labour comes from all over India they should be given facilities of pass while returning to their homes, and so on. But no consideration is given to their demands. They are small demands. I am not speaking of fundamental things relating to basic policies or general increase of wages etc. But these minor demands, are also not looked into and are being rejected because they come from the labour.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) : You have taken ten minutes.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR : I will take only ten minutes more.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) : Ten minutes ?

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR : All right; five minutes.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA) : No, no.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR : All right; I will finish now.

Coming to some specific suggestions, I would submit that there is much overcrowding on the platforms. At important stations so many things are left lying on the platforms that it is very difficult for

people to get entry into the trains. I wish that the Railway Minister and the Railway officials see that the platforms at important stations are clean and that there is no overcrowding by unnecessary things lying here and there so that the passengers are not inconvenienced.

Then, I come to the question of cold drinking water. Now, at various stations they have the refrigerating system, but in summer I have always experienced that one does not get cold water. Always the refrigerating system, or whatever it is, is out of order. You do not get cold water except at one or two stations. For the information of the Railway Minister, I can quote a number of stations where it is the order of the day that those machines are out of order.

As regards conductors, I have a very sad experience. I am going to write to the Railway Minister about it. I would say that the number of train conductors is very inadequate and they are not as helpful as they should be. I wish that there should be a conductor in each compartment and their place should be so fixed that one has not to run here and there to find him out. When there is so much of crowding even on the platforms it is very difficult to locate the conductor.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA (Orissa) : When there is a crowd, he conceals himself.

SHRI R. S. KHANDEKAR : Whatever it is, that is also a complaint.

Many things have been spoken about overcrowding in third class, but I have to submit that there is overcrowding in the higher classes also, in first class also. I have had the experience that even during day time there is no place in first class for one to sit. I do not know what the Government is doing in that respect. As far as second class is concerned, it is no class. Either they should abolish it, or if they want to retain it they should provide facilities. They are charging more from the second class passengers, but they are not providing any facilities for second class passengers. Firstly, the carriage is not big and then the other passengers also rush

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in and there is no agency to take any action against unauthorised persons. No facilities are provided in second class.

Lastly, I would say a word about changing NG into MG or BG. Now, it is a common experience that the NG lines are running at a loss. So, the sooner they are changed to MG or BG, the better it would be. If possible, they should be extended further. For example, I would say from Bhind, from Gwalior to Bhind which is an important district in Madhya Pradesh, if that train is extended to Etawah, both Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh would be joined together. Similarly, the NG line from Gwalior to Sheopur should be extended to a place in Rajasthan and from Shivpuri, it should be extended to Guna. Already there is a line from Guna to Maksi, so that from Gwalior to Maksi there will be one route.

One more minor suggestion. The railways have boards. They have been translated into Hindi, but the translation is very repugnant. For example, I would say only one thing. They have translated "Sandas" for latrine to read 'Sandas Stree' or 'Sandas Purush'. It means 'Mutri Stree' or 'Mutri Purush'. There is no reason why the Government should not write clearly 'Streeyon ke liye' or 'Mahilaon ke liye' or 'Purushon ke liye'. But they have just translated woman into 'stree' and man into 'purush'. These are very small things but they should be looked into.

Then I was going through non-Hindi areas. At certain stations the boards are not written in three languages, viz. the regional language, English and Hindi. Sometimes at many stations only in one language it has been written. For example, in Madras only in Tamil it is written. In any non-Tamil knowing person travels that area it will be very difficult for him to locate where he is at that particular moment, unless he looks into the time table. That is also only possible if the train is running to the right time. Otherwise it would be very difficult for him. I would suggest that every board should be written in three languages as we have adopted the three language formula. With these words, I conclude.

SHRI S C DEB (Assam) Sir, I thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak. First of all, I welcome our revered Railway Minister and Railway officials who have taken part in the Railway Administration. We are very confident of their leadership and I hope the Administration will do better in future. I agree that so many achievements have been made by the Railways. Doubling of most of the important lines, introducing new trains and also third class sleeper coaches, all these have been done. But to one thing I do not agree, namely, the proposed increase in the fares and freight. In principle, I do not agree to them. If your observation is that to meet the extra cost of operation you have to increase the passenger fares, I do not agree. There cannot be any comparison of the cost structure between passenger service and other services. Another thing is you are trying to have economy. We appreciate it, but why do you not have further economy in the cost structure itself, so that you can meet all the obligations that you are confronted with? In principle, I do not agree. Why should passengers pay for all your obligations? If you say that it is a national undertaking and the most important undertaking you have also to see that it is a welfare State. So, the passengers should not be taxed without sufficient grounds.

Now as regards the speed of trains, I find that your mail trains never reach in time. All the important mail trains do not reach in time. Why? There may be some defect in the track. When we travel by train we find so many engineering restrictions here and there. So, the trains are running late. Some Members made the observation that because of overcrowding the trains run late. There are other reasons also. Your track is defective. The track is not strong enough to carry the load. So, it goes slow. Now you are making an experiment between Delhi and Agra. The speed of the train is going to be 75 miles an hour. This is an endeavour for the first time. I think. All these years, we are seeing this. I may refer to the Kalka Mail. Previously from Howrah to Delhi, it took 24 hours. Now, you are taking 26 hours. Gradually your speed is going down. In this respect, Mr Anandan has told us that there is some basic defect in your

track. You cannot avoid so many engineering restrictions. They are there. So you cannot speed up the running of trains. Now, coming to overcrowding, may I suggest one thing? You know why there is overcrowding. You can introduce more trains, and you can do another thing. You can introduce more local trains so that you will be able to overcome overcrowding in some measure.

I am very much thankful that you are giving more attention to Assam. The necessity of the country requires that. Necessity requires that you must pay more attention to Assam. There is one broad gauge from Siliguri to Jogigupa. May I, in this connection, draw your kind attention to the fact that the Assam Government is wanting that from Jogigupa to Gauhati there should be a broad gauge? Maybe you may appoint some Committee or find out some other way to do it, but the great demand is there. You will also appreciate that there is a necessity for it.

Another thing I would like to say. When you are introducing so many new trains, in my part, i.e. Silchar to Karimganj of the North Eastern Railway, there were in a day five trains running from one end to the other, five trains from Karimganj to Silchar and five trains from Silchar to Karimganj. Now there are only three trains. I bring this to your attention. We appreciate that you are introducing new trains to serve the necessity of the public.

Another thing which is important. In my part there is the Lumding-Badarpur Hill Section. It is a very important section of that part. Already you have a new line from Kalkalighat to Dharmanagar. You have to proceed further, if you are to serve that part of the country, to Agartala and Manipur. The demand is there. You should have a good track. It is a hill section and a difficult section. There are 37 tunnels in that small portion of the area and we often find that accidents occur. Sometimes a train is stuck up in a tunnel for hours, for days. The running of trains is stopped. That being so, may I ask you humbly to have some of your engineers deputed there to check the line and the

track and the section which is under tunnel so that sufficient strength will be there, so that this kind of accidents do not occur and the running of trains is safe and timely?

I would like to ask you another thing. You are introducing third class sleeper coaches. May I draw your kind attention to this? From the southern side of Assam up to Barauni there is a mail train and a third class sleeper coach is there, but sometimes it is out of order. May I ask you to introduce two sleeper coaches, because so many people are going, not only the general public but your Defence people are coming every now and then and your important Central Government servants are also going and there are other staff also? So, overcrowding is there. I am thankful to the administration that they have introduced a new train from Barauni to Delhi, we are very much thankful, because necessity demands it. So, I would like to draw your attention to the necessity of providing two third class sleeper coaches in that particular train.

Another thing is, some Members are asking for a Wage Board for employees. Would you kindly give careful consideration to the setting up of a Wage Board as there is in other industries?

Regarding the maintenance of passenger trains, we often find that there are so many defects. Nobody attends to them. You will find that in your bathroom there is no water coming in the tap or your shower is not working. All these defects are there, and also the shutters and doors generally get stuck up. The handle is not working. It is not moving this way or that way. There are often defects which, if a little attention is given, can be rectified. Proper attention for daily maintenance and for seeing to the comforts of the general passengers is not given. In our area we find often that electricity fails. That is the general complaint of the public. May I humbly ask you one thing? In many stations good drinking water is not supplied. That is an important thing. I do not know why the Railway Administration cannot supply pure drinking water in every station. Why cannot you supply pure drinking water even? That is the most

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vital amenity to be given to the travelling public. Kindly see to it that in every station good drinking water is supplied. If it is done, there will be appreciation from the general public that the administration is doing something for them. In my area we are finding that for years together good drinking water is not supplied. Maybe, there may be some defects but why are they not attended to? The difficulty is there not only in Karimganj, in Badarpur, in Lumding and in Silchar but in Chaparmukh and other areas also.

3 P.M.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD (Maharashtra) : Mr. Vice-Chairman, I will have my observations on the Railway Budget which has been introduced by the hon. Railway Minister. There are lakhs and lakhs of workers who are engaged by the Railway departments on daily wages. The wages which are given to these workers are too inadequate. Generally speaking, they are not in a position to make both ends meet in these hard days. As far as my information goes—the information was asked for by way of a question but the information was not supplied, it was not available with the Government—the persons who are engaged on daily wages hardly get Rs. 35 to Rs. 40 per month. You will find that whatever dearness allowance we are giving to the Grade IV servants is more than what is given by way of daily wages to the workers who are working on the railways. These workers have been serving the Railways for years together and even then, they are not made permanent. No railway facilities have been provided for them. Sir, the act of the Railway Ministry is anti-constitutional, if I am not to be mistaken in saying so, because article 46 clearly says that Government will stop the exploitation of the people. In my opinion, giving inadequate wages means nothing else but exploitation and hence, Government themselves should consider this matter once more and see that adequate wages are paid to these workers. Therefore, I propose that these daily-paid workers be paid not less than Rs. 3.50 daily because on Sundays they are marked 'absent' and nothing is paid to them on that day.

AN. HON. MEMBER : Why not both ?

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD : When I say Rs. 3.50 P. it has some calculation. I do not want to say off-hand Rs. 4 or whatever amount comes from my mouth.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : If it is Rs. 4, it will be better.

SHRI G. M. MIR (Jammu and Kashmir) : You suggest Rs. 4 and they will give Rs. 3 (Interruptions.)

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD : Secondly, those workers who have put in a year's service should be made permanent. And thirdly, whatever concessions are being given to the railway workers should be given to them also. They should be paid for Sundays and holidays and what you call travelling facilities should be given to these workers.

Then, at several places and at several times railway workers are compelled to work for more than eight hours a day.

[THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.]

I had also put a question to that effect but the hon. Minister was pleased to reply that my information was not correct. But most humbly I wish to bring to the notice of the Railway Minister that if he investigates into the matter, he will be satisfied that the workers are working for more than eight hours without getting any extra allowance, any overtime allowance. So, I would request the Minister to investigate into the matter.

My other point is this. On the Central Railway—I have seen it personally several times—there is always a heavy rush, and it has been spoken of by several other Members also. Particularly on the Central Railway, whenever I travel, I find that the mail and express trains are always overcrowded. It is a very pitiable scene when a third class passenger along with his family and children tries to gain entrance into the third class compartment. Pick-pocketing is always there when people try to get entrance into the train. That is done

at all the stations, Madam. I have seen—sometimes the husband gets into the train whereas his wife and children do not get entrance into the train and he goes away and his wife and children are left behind. That is the position. Third class passengers always go in and get out through the windows only because third class compartments are always closed due to the heavy rush. The passengers throw their luggage and baggage and bedding through the windows and due to that, the passengers who are sitting inside get injury. When they get injured, naturally there is always the reaction and the reaction is that they also throw the incoming passengers' luggage and beddings outside. (Interruptions) This pitiable state of affairs must be put an end to by starting a daily Janata Express—give it any name you like.

I would also request the hon. Minister to start one special additional train from Delhi to Bombay on the Central Railway. I hope that the Minister will consider the matter sympathetically and see that the train is run as early as possible.

There are some categories of railway servants who do not get any night allowance though they do their night duty on running trains. I fail to understand why this invidious distinction is being observed—because if those who work during daytime on running trains are given some extra allowance, in the same way those who work during night-time should also be given extra allowance.

Some railway employees after serving for some months were removed at Bhusaval, Central Railway. They were appointed as gangmen two years back. In the police verification, the police reported against the persons that they had participated in the land *satyagraha* and therefore they were sent to jail. On the basis of that report from the police, nine persons were removed from the railway service at Bhusaval. Similar is the case of a man who had joined service in the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, New Delhi. A representation was submitted to the Ministry of Defence to which the Under Secretary, Ministry of Defence, was pleased to reply in his letter No. 22(37)/162/2951/IIIID (FX) dated 6-9-63 saying that *bhumihar*

satyagraha is not a criminal offence. A representation was also made to the hon. Railway Minister on the 10th September, 1964, to which he has given his acknowledgment on the 15th September, 1964, wherein he has said that Government is considering the cases sympathetically. I therefore request the Railway Minister to please look into the matter and see that, if it is not a criminal offence, the persons may be taken back in the railway service.

It is a well-known fact that it is very difficult to get foodstuffs from the Government cheap grain stores. Everywhere in the country people have to stand in the queue for hours together. Therefore, I propose that the Railway Ministry should start its own grain shops for the railway employees wherever it is possible.

Madam, on the Central Railway there is a station called Amla between Itarsi and Nagpur. The mail trains reach the station at lunch and dinner times. The passengers are provided with lunches and dinners at Amla. But the catering servants of Amla railway station are not allowed to travel along with the train to collect their utensils and bill charges from the passengers on the ground that the distance between Amla to Nagpur and Amla to Itarsi is over 80 miles. Madam, you are aware that mail trains do not stop anywhere between Amla to Nagpur and Amla to Itarsi. It is, therefore, necessary that catering servants must be allowed to collect their utensils and bill charges from the passengers. So they should be allowed to travel from and to these stations at least by making a special case if there is a rule that the catering servants should not be allowed to travel more than 80 miles.

Madam, as there is reservation in the Railway services for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Government is pleased to issue several circulars and resolutions to the effect that the reserved seats should be recruited from the deserving Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates. But I am extremely sorry to see that these orders are not implemented by the Government officers concerned. There are several duly qualified and suitable candidates from the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe available. But they

[Shri B. K. Gaikwad.]

are not appointed. The reserved seats are made general seats and other Caste Hindu candidates are being appointed in their places. This state of affairs must be ended immediately. The hon. Railway Minister is, therefore, requested to look into the matter personally and see that due percentage from these down-trodden classes is recruited.

Then, Madam, there are several complaints made by the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates that injustice is always being done while fixing the seniority according to roster points. They are always put below the list in spite of the Government orders. The Government was pleased to issue a model roster of 40 candidates which indicates that the 1st, 9th, 17th, 25th and 33rd vacancies are reserved for the Scheduled Castes and the 2nd and 21st for the Scheduled Tribes. This is not implemented at all while fixing seniority and confirmation.

There are several class IV Government employees who are not provided with Government quarters. At several places and particularly at Bhusaval some class IV railway employees constructed their huts on the vacant railway land. As the huts were constructed without the previous permission of the Railway authority, they were ordered to be demolished. I request the Government to consider such cases sympathetically. Of course, a representation was made to that effect to the hon. Minister and the huts are allowed to be there. I request the Government that unless and until alternative accommodation is provided to the railway employees, their huts should not be demolished.

I will say a few words as to why the Sholapur Division should not be included in the new South-Central Zone.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please wind up now. There are many more speakers.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: The Railway Ministry has argued to substantiate the claim of creation of the new zone . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You must restrain yourself, Mr. Gaikwad.

Otherwise you would not give chance to others.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: . . . and bifurcation of Sholapur Division and inclusion in the new South-Central Zone that such a reorganisation has been planned to achieve maximum efficiency and economy. This argument, in other words, means that the Sholapur Division is an inefficient Division. But from the facts and figures it will be seen that Sholapur Division is the most efficient Division not only in the Central Zone but on all Indian Railways.

(Time bell rings)

Organisational changes should be made on the grounds of better operation to improve services for the public and not to meet the pressures.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am sorry, Mr. Gaikwad.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: Just one minute.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You should adhere to your 15 minutes. I will give you one minute more to wind up. You need not read all that. Just give the gist.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: Let me finish this.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Even that you need not read.

SHRI B. K. GAIKWAD: The immediate problem the railwaymen will have to face is the mass transfer. This will cause real hardship to the workers as it involves serious difficulties with regard to housing. This would mean disruption of family life, disruption of social ties and trouble in the school career of the children, etc. If a man is transferred from a Marathi-speaking area to a Kannada-speaking area or vice-versa, the difficulty of language for the children will come in their way . . .

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I think that will do. Miss Mary Naidu.

MISS MARY NAIDU (Andhra Pradesh): Madam Deputy Chairman, kindly

permit me to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways for the presentation of this Budget wherein he has shown an improvement in the reduction of accidents. Safety comes first and the rest follows only if the man is alive. We must appreciate the drive for inculcating safety-consciousness among the railway staff throughout the year. I hope next year he will be able to see that accidents are nil.

Now, most of my friends have criticised the rise in railway fares. I too agree with them but only to a certain extent. Money is necessary in order to progress, and money cannot be got unless some way somebody is pinched. So it has to pinch. But unfortunately just now the common man is so overburdened that even a straw is too much for him to bear. That is where every Member had to say that the rise in freights is hurting the people. But along with the rise, if there are facilities also, I am sure nobody will mind.

About the facilities everybody has mentioned and I will have to repeat them.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : You can say about absence of facilities.

Miss MARY NAIDU : But, anyway, Madam, one has to repeat sometimes. The first thing, of course, is overcrowding in the trains. About overcrowding in trains I will mention in one sentence. On certain trains relief is given to a certain extent but not on others. I have noticed in some through compartments, going from Bangalore to Coimbatore and from Bangalore to Cochin, the passengers huddled together. The passenger compartments meant for 30 were crowded with 90 and 100. They could not move at all. And that was the condition at the starting stations. We can then understand what happens on the intermediate stations, while the train is on the move and other people have to get in. This, of course, is specially in the third class compartments. I request that some sort of committee is appointed to look into the affairs and bring it to the notice of the hon. Minister so that he can add

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a bogie here or there to relieve the congestion. That is all that is wanted and people will be happy when they are helped in that way.

Of course, everybody had spoken about the cleanliness part of it. Cleanliness follows overcrowding also.

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA : You suggest one thing to the Minister. Let us take him and push him into one of those compartments so that he experiences it.

Miss MARY NAIDU : He need not be. I was not pushed into it but I understood what the difficulties are. Once in the train I heard a loud cry and shouting and I got down to see what was happening and found people who could not get out of a compartment, and others could not get into it. The children could not even breathe and there was so much misery there. Perhaps it is only in those through compartments of the mixed trains, because people get into the same compartment which will reach the destination without changing. If there is an extra bogie this condition can be relieved. I said the cleanliness part of it follows overcrowding, because when there is overcrowding, how can anybody supply good food? How can they get up and go to the latrines, leave alone keeping the train clean? When the Budget shows a rise in the fares, it is only just that we should also give them some facilities. My friends had already mentioned about the three-tier coaches—travel there is a punishment. People cannot sit up at all during the night. Old people travel in it thinking that it will be comfortable. On the contrary, it is just a misery. Those are introduced so that it may be cheaper and more convenient and more people could be accommodated but that does not work and I hope the Ministry will see that those are converted into two-tier bogies.

SHRI N. PATRA (Orissa) : Let it continue for some time till some other arrangement is made.

Miss MARY NAIDU : Overcrowding has also another impact. One day I was travelling in a certain train. The chain was pulled and the train stopped. I thought

[Miss Mary Naidu.]

perhaps it was some accident and I got down. People were laughing. It was for those ticketless travellers to get down and run away. I asked some of those boys why they were doing it—if it was want of money! One showed me a wad of notes saying he could afford to pay ten times the fare. He said: 'Why should I pay when day after day I travel either standing or hanging to the bars? Should I pay the Railways when I have not even sitting space?' I had to keep quiet.

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA (Bihar): Was his argument convincing?

Miss MARY NAIDU: There was no place. It was in one of the loop-lines. It was convincing. Many boys do hang on to the bar outside. That is not prevented. We do prevent buses being overcrowded, taxis being overcrowded, they are not allowed to take one more passenger. Why should we allow trains to be overcrowded? Of course there is less danger in trains than in overcrowded buses and taxis, but that does not mean that we should put 90 to 100 people in one compartment meant for 30 and the ticket collectors only go on collecting the tickets without any other consideration. Is it because this is a nationalised industry that we should take advantage of our own people? Of course, it is not possible for us to give them all of a sudden enough of trains and compartments but still, considering the difficulties, we have to see that we treat them like human beings. When we book animals, we do not book more than the number required for the bogey and when we put human beings we push them into overcrowded compartments. I do not think it is just to do that.

Regarding lateness of trains, here also if the Department pulls up the administrative faults, it could be improved. I was travelling in a Nagpur passenger and got into the train at 9 A.M. at Kazipet and reached Hyderabad at 6 P.M. The distance is only 80 miles. Disgusted I sent for the guard and asked him what was the matter and why the train was running late. He

looked surprised and even offended at my ignorance. He said: 'That is the way with the train every day' and we waited at one station for one hour. No train passed and then the signal was given for our train to proceed. It is only administrative defect. We could understand if some mail trains have to come from important stations. The officer who is responsible for giving signal and sending the message does not bother. "It is after all a passenger train. Let it wait there." That train has to wait till finally somebody thinks of having pity and gives the signal to proceed. These things cannot go on. This is the kind of administration that one would like the Minister, who is so capable and under whom the public hope and trust the Railway Administration will improve, should look into and have a drive to improve.

Another thing that you can club along with this and have a drive as you have for safety is about cleanliness. A train starting from a starting place like Delhi is dirty. There are people paid to clean the trains when they arrive, there are officers paid to look after the workers who have to clean a train and what are all of them doing? Where is the mistake? Why should a train start from the starting point so dirty and what will happen to it on the way? I found the condition in North India is a little better. At every station they ask us. I do not know if it is only in the first class, or also in the third class. First class they automatically come and clean but down South it is not so good. It is dirty throughout and nobody bothers to come and clean. In all my travels—from my childhood my hobby is to travel—I found trains starting from Madras and going down South are clean. I say 'going down South' because the G.T. Express does not enjoy that cleanliness again. So I thought perhaps now that you have new zones, if you introduce some competitive spirit among all zones for cleanliness, perhaps it will be some sort of impetus for the workers to go on doing their duty. I do not say that anybody is neglecting his duty. Usually the man who has to clean a compartment might have been employed by some officer to do some other work. But somewhere there is some mistake and the administration should see to it.

Shri Desai was saying that the zonal system was not well formed and complained that from Manmad a person has to go to Secunderabad for some claims. I would like to point out that for years from the remote parts of Andhra, people had to go to Trichy which is also far away. So it is not possible for everybody to have a zone but all the same I do agree that the people in Sholapur and Guntakkal are unhappy over the zonal system and if the Minister can see his way without the administration suffering, I hope he will make both the places happy, if possible.

My most urgent and important request is for a new line; some friends had been arguing for backward places—not backward but interior places—to have more lines.

AN HON. MEMBER : Like Kashmir.

MISS MARY NAIDU : From my point of view and also from the commercial point of view what I request will serve both the purposes. We in Hyderabad have been suffering for long and we require a line via Nagarjunasagar to Nellore from Hyderabad. That would serve both the purposes of helping long-neglected areas and at the same time the Railway will not suffer from finance.

Lastly, I draw your attention to the road-cum-rail bridge on the Godavari river. It is already mentioned by the Member from Andhra but I request the Minister kindly to take greater interest. During the Second World War, the British built a road-cum-rail bridge for their own benefit on Godavari river and after the War they destroyed it. But now we feel that it is very badly needed for us. It saves forty miles on the round-about route. The State Government is willing to give one crore of rupees. The Railways have promised to give fifty lakhs of rupees, and only one crore more is needed to make good the total expenditure. Now is it too much to ask the Finance Ministry to give one crore of rupees to a State that is supplying over one crore bags of rice every year to the country? And even if he collects one rupee as export-import duty on a bag, he will get that one crore within one year. And even if the toll is taken at one rupee

per lorry, we will get it in a couple of years. So I would beg of you to see that there is some co-ordination between the Finance Ministry and your Ministry so that we may get the badly required road-cum-rail bridge over the Godavari.

While talking about co-ordination and co-operation, I also suggest, Madam, that our public needs education, education to taking care of public property, and I request that your Ministry co-operate and co-ordinate with the Broadcasting Ministry and see that the public are told, in the programmes that they broadcast to the villages, that the property belongs to the public and that we should all take care of it, should keep it clean and guard against theft. All this could be done by means of little plays and songs which appeal to the villagers. Simply saying that railway property is being stolen, is being destroyed, will not help unless we educate the people somehow or the other.

One of my friends the other day said that the railway people were responsible for faults of bookings. Everybody had been blaming the railway people for manipulating the booking of berths. I would like to bring it to your notice, Madam, that I have found that it is not their fault always. A certain number of berths are reserved for the Ministers, for the Military officers, for the Railway officers and so on, whose tour is an essential part of their duty, and the booking people or other people connected with reservation of berths cannot say till the last minute whether they are going or not, and naturally these berths cannot be given to us when we ask for it, and that is the reason why we find that the berths are vacant when we get into the compartment.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA (Maharashtra) : Is that the only reason?

MISS MARY NAIDU : There may be one or two people manipulating things and showing favouritism, and they may like to help their friends, but on the whole that is the reason. Also, the tickets have to be bought first in order to book berths against them. How can they simply keep the berths vacant in the hope of tickets

[Miss Mary Naidu]

being bought and presented to them subsequently?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI RAM SHIBLAG SINGH) There are a large number of free passes also

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN I am afraid you will have to wind up. You have taken more than your time

MISS MARY NAIDU All right then Madam, I do not want to take any more time. Most of the important things I have said. I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA Madam Deputy Chairman, I am here to express my admiration for the Railway Minister for presenting this Budget. I do not say this Budget is a perfect one. Nothing in this world can be perfect but, in the existing situation, financial and otherwise. I do not think a better Budget could have been presented. Mr Patil is noted for constructive genius as well as for a balanced approach. Both of these qualities are amply manifest in this Budget. So, I pay my tribute to him.

There are one or two very small matters to which I would refer his attention, first to the increase in passenger fares. Perhaps he was helpless, if he could help it, he would not have done it. Perhaps circumstances forced him. Realising his difficulty, I would like to urge upon him to see that at least for the first 150 kilometres the III Class fare is not raised, and if he does this, it will do a great deal of help to the people who move about in their local areas go to their district courts and go even to the High Courts. This will help the people, and I do not think this will take away much from the railway revenue.

The second point Madam, is rather a selfish one. Members of Parliament have been given I Class tickets to go about, all over India, to see things, so that we can carry on our parliamentary duties properly. I am one of those who seldom go beyond between Patna and Delhi, sometimes to Calcutta of course, once in a blue moon to Bombay of course, and then nowhere else.

SHRI P. K. KUMARAN (Andhra Pradesh) This is the case with all.

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA But my difficulty is that if I travel a long distance in the I Class, I am bound to get fever the next day because of the dust in the I Class compartment, that goes into my throat in spite of the best intentions and best efforts of my friend, Mr Patil. My throat is rather susceptible to all this, may be something wrong with my health, but there it is. Now, just to avoid getting the fever, I go in for the Air conditioned Class for long journeys. Madam, now the rates have been increased and when I go to Bombay I have to spend not less than Rs. 160 for coming and going, only for the air-conditioning, in spite of the I Class ticket with me. If I go to Patna, which is the place of my permanent residence, I have to pay Rs. 56 for a single-journey over and above the I Class ticket with me, whereas I find with me travelling not very senior officials, either of the Centre or of my Bihar State, without paying anything rather getting something per kilometre more. I would not ask for a whole concession because he is raising the III Class passenger fares, but I would beg of him to consider my request, if it is possible for him. The Committee of both the Houses have thought over the matter but they do not want to embarrass the Railway Minister. But Mr Patil can stand many embarrassments. I wish he could be here. He promised me that he would be here. But I do not know, perhaps he is having a cup of coffee which he badly needed. Suppose they charge one-third of the difference from us, that will give a little relief to us. Although the Railway Minister is not here at the moment his two very able lieutenants are here and they will please pass on this request to him. If they charge one third as I said it will become very much financially bearable by us because we fall in the category of Rs. 500 even after the enhancement in our salary. Many stenographers get much more than that. I do not grudge it, rather I want they should get even more but our plight is the plight of a poor man and our difficulty is not always realised.

Now, Madam, I will tell you one or two very interesting things and I would like my

friends and the senior officers of the Railways to hear. On the 30th January this year, Madam, I left Patna by the II Up for Delhi. I came to Kanpur at 8.30 in the night and I had dinner and after some time I went to sleep. In the morning, I got up thinking that I had reached Delhi. It was six o'clock but it was not Delhi, it was Etawah which you reach at 11 in the night. It is only 2 hours and 12 minutes journey from Kanpur. Fortunately I fell fast asleep. Etawah is a district headquarters, but you cannot get genuine tea there. You get something in the earthen pot with the leaves or whatever it is, being boiled for hours and hours. Once I took it and I had what is called food poisoning and I was treated—when Dr. Rajendra Prasad was President—by Major General Mitra. He treated me and I was on the point of death. Therefore I would rather go without tea than take that. One Sardar Arjun Singh was the conductor-guard—a very nice man—and he came to my rescue. He got me some hot water from somewhere. I always carry my tea leaves because the tea supplied by railway catering is not good. I tell my friends that it is not worth drinking that tea. It will not suit my taste. So I carry my own Orange Pekoe leaves with me and usually the telegram is sent ahead when I travel, "Awadheshwar Prasad Sinha will have tea without leaves" and, of course, I pay 36 paise and also something more to the poor bearer who brings me the hot-water. The sugar also is dirty and so I always carry sugar with me. So he brought me hot-water and so I had something. Then the good man that he was, he went to the bazaar and brought for me half a seer of dahi and I put my sugar in it and that was my breakfast, in the name of my good friends sitting here. All the time the train was there. It was one o'clock and I purchased two guavas and two oranges and from 11 in the night to 1 in the afternoon I had nothing but these two guavas and two oranges.

[The Minister of Railways (Shri S. K. Patil) entered.]

My good friend has come now, but he has missed everything. Madam, I will tell him in a minute. On the 30th morning I left

Patna and by 8.30 in the night I reached Kanpur. I had my dinner at Kanpur that night. You have the best catering in Kanpur. Right from Howrah to Delhi that is the best place for catering. Someone was criticising catering on the Railways. At many places things are inferior, but I must say that catering is very good at Kanpur, Mughalsarai and Allahabad. From Kanpur the train reached Etawah by 11.10 P.M. and I was fast asleep. I got up in the morning to find myself at Etawah. I asked the conductor-guard what was the matter. He—Sardar Arjun Singh—said there was some railway accident between two goods trains, one standing and the other coming and the engine going up the wagons and three railway workers dying. The poor driver also died. It was a very painful thing. That had happened between Shikohabad and Etawah. All the trains from Kanpur were diverted through other routes. There are two other routes which lead to Delhi and our train could have been taken back to Kanpur and diverted either *via* Moradabad or *via* Jhansi. But that was not done, and so in the name of my good friend Mr. Patil I had to go with two guavas and two oranges. He is a very hospitable person and I shall be ungrateful if I did not tell the House that his dining table is always open to me, for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and also his car and fuel and driver. But in spite of his friendship and love for me—I am like his younger brother—I had to do with tea without milk for breakfast at Etawah and the dahi brought by Sardar Arjun Singh and for lunch I had just two guavas and two oranges. That was the only evening that I had to go without taking tea. During forty years that was the only evening that I went without tea. If I don't have my tea then I get headache at once and my good friends sitting there must have had their tea. Of course, Dr. Ram Subhag Singh does not take tea, I know. But then, he drinks a lot of milk, seers and seers of milk. And one reason why there is scarcity of milk in Delhi is that Dr. Ram Subhag Singh takes a lot of milk.

Anyway, Madam, some 200 or 300 students were travelling by that train and also some railway officials, and some professors also. They came to me and asked me : "Are you a Member of Parliament ?" I said, "Yes." "Don't you know your own

[*Shri Awadheshwar Prasad.*]

powers?" they asked me. "Why not you ring up and make the train move?" I said, "I have learnt to suffer things though my friends are in power." But they said, "We must go now. Children are screaming. Women are screaming. The train has been here for more than 14 hours." And then all of them took me, "Sinha ki Jai" was the slogan they had, and they took me to the Station Master's office. I told them, "Look here. I will go with you provided you promise to behave. If you touch any Government property I will be on the side of the Government and I will tell the Government that these people did such and such things." "No, Sir, we will behave", they said and they did behave. So I went to the Assistant Station Master and asked him to do something. But he said everybody had gone to the place of occurrence. From Kanpur to Tundla all officers had gone. This is the way how things are managed. It was the duty of the D.S. to see that the train was pushed back to Kanpur and then diverted.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Then what happened?

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA: I went to the telephone and talked to one Mr. Khanna and the man informed me that the train would go in half an hour or one hour. To serve my end, I had to tell him I was a Member of Parliament so that he may be a little over-awed and he was. Instead of one hour, the train left in half an hour. But then after 15 kilometres at Jaswantnagar it stopped again for two hours and again these 200 or 300 people took me to the Station Master there.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You will have to carry over, Mr. Sinha.

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA: I will finish in two minutes, Madam. I had a talk with him and he said, "All right. Your train will move in another one hour. Again the train moved and came to Bhadan. There I met an excellent young man called Ramji. He did not tell me his surname. He talks in better Hindi than myself. He is from Madras, a young man throbbing with life and energy.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA (*Uttar Pradesh*): You recognise him?

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA: Yes I can. If I am a grateful person, I will recognise him. You know that, He rang up and said, "Look here, this train has suffered most and the passengers have suffered most. It is 14 hours late." By that time three down trains from Delhi had passed on that route, even though they started hours later. But this train coming from Calcutta side, it was not moved. So he managed the thing and when we reached the site of occurrence of the accident my heart bled because the engine was on fire. I must admire the officers and their men at the site who did the clearing business in seven or eight hours. It was a herculean task. I must say that and pay my tribute to them for the way they cleared the line. One of the lines was cleared and I reached my destination Delhi at about mid-night, 18 hours late. Some five or six friends of mine had come to the station but the Railways were always giving them wrong information, and they were put to trouble. All this happened. What I want to emphasise is this. Of course accidents happen. Someone said that there should be no accidents but this is not within the hands of Mr. Patil. I have already said that he is distinguished among our leaders for his constructive genius, for his ability and efficiency and all that. But even then, no one can say there will be no accidents. Accidents have occurred and accidents will happen. He can only minimise them. But here the train was standing and the people were suffering. All the officers had gone to the place of accident. The D.S. of the area should be held responsible. What was that blessed man doing? That is what I want to know. Why for 14 hours my train was not taken back to Kanpur and diverted? I want an enquiry to be made into the matter. I suffered a great deal. The other passengers suffered even more than myself. Madam, in his absence, I have said . . .

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: Why don't you sue them?

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA: I did not sue them because I love them. This is my difficulty. They are

working under our Government. I love them in spite of their faults That is my difficulty

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN Mr Sinha, I think you have taken enough time

SHRI AWADHESHWAR PRASAD SINHA I end my speech here, Madam

SHRI SANTOKH SINGH (Delhi) Then you pursue them

SHRI SANKAR PRATAP SINGH DEV (Orissa) Madam Deputy Chairman, I start by saying that the Indian Railways are among the four best Railways in the world That thing has got to be maintained My friend opposite, Mr Anandan, described it as a *kamadhenu* but the poor *kamadhenu* is being sandwiched and started and only a paltry sum has been provided in the Budget for the development of the Railways In industrial concerns a minimum of one-third of the profit is re-invested to bring them in proper working order That has not been done and that is why we have started getting diminishing returns.

The first point is that we must put in more for development If there had been development, we would not have twenty-five thousand wagons idling away If we had lines in different parts, particularly in the strategic areas in the frontiers, our wagons would not have been kept idle Of course, slackening of demand for coal in the beginning of 1964 persisted and coal traffic in the first nine months of 1964-65 was actually 2.5 million tons lower than in the corresponding period of the previous year Movement of raw materials to the steel plants has also shown a downward tendency, nor has the anticipated increase of million tons in the carriage of mineral ores materialised The actual increase was just about one-fourth of this figure Freight revenue earning traffic also increased much less than the anticipated five million tons in the first nine months of the year This was higher in the previous year by one and a half million tons Clearly, the shortfall in freight traffic is the result of development programmes lagging behind schedule in such vital sectors as steel, cement, fertiliser, mineral ores, etc Even allowing for signs

of revival of traffic, the best estimate of increase in goods traffic during 1964-65 is three million tons, and in 1965-66, the last year of the Third Plan, the Railway Minister expects that goods traffic will rise by ten million tons. Even if this estimate proves correct, the total goods traffic in the last years of the Plan will be only about 205 million tons, far lower than the revised target of 245 million tons, not to mention the original target of 260 million tons The smaller than expected increase in goods traffic has been reflected in the freight earnings which is Rs. 24.5 crores less than the Budget Estimates The shortfall has, however, to a certain extent been made up by higher than expected increase in passenger traffic The Budget for 1964-65 had expected the passenger traffic to increase by about 4 per cent Actually, suburban traffic has increased by 8.6 per cent and non-suburban traffic by 5.8 per cent and earnings from passenger traffic are likely to be of the order of a sum which is higher than the anticipated figure by sixteen crores of rupees The overall shortfall in gross traffic receipts will thus be about eight crores of rupees This deficit in earnings in net revenue has resulted from an increase of eighteen crores of rupees in working expenses—lower than the expected goods traffic notwithstanding The rise in working expenses is attributed by the Railway Minister almost entirely to higher wages due to two revisions of Dearness Allowance to Railway employees There have been increases in the prices of coal and electric power for traction but these have to a certain extent been offset by what the Railway Minister describes as economy measures and by the level of traffic being below to give a net increase of eighteen crores of rupees in working expenses After paying Rs 104.5 crores to General Revenues, which is about a crore of rupees higher than the Budget Estimates, the surplus of 1964-65 is estimated to be Rs 20.5 crores compared to the Budget Estimates of Rs 30.9 crores and the 1963-64 actuals of Rs 49.2 crores At existing levels of freight rates and passenger fares and given the estimated increase in goods traffic at four per cent, the surplus of 1965-66 would dwindle further to about Rs 8.8 crores Still, the fares and freights should on no account have been increased because prices of all commodities have gone up and if this public undertaking also increases

[Shri Sankar Partap Singh Dev.]

the fares and freights, this would amount to a tax on the users.

Wherever the Minister feels like it, there is an increase in fares and freights without the slightest endeavour on the part of the Government to tighten up the administration, to effect economy and to do away with wastage. They do not care to burden their minds because the easiest thing to do is to tax. Government might take up the plea that fares and freights have to be pushed up because prices of other commodities have gone up but they have to remember that the overcrowding in the trains bring them much more income than they could ordinarily anticipate and even if the prices go up further, they would be able to make a tremendous amount of profit without any increase in the rates of passenger and freight traffic provided there was less of wastage and mismanagement. There is a perpetual demand in almost all the stations for wagons but because of mismanagement, lack of co-ordination in regard to maximum utilisation of wagons, the number asked for is not given. I find many wagons standing in this or that station but when they are demanded, they are not given.

Similar is the case in respect of passenger trains. We can run many more passenger trains and there are so many places where two or three more janata trains could be run but they are not so run. With a little bit of streamlining, many of the lines can be made to accommodate an additional passenger train thereby boosting up Railway revenues. What is lacking is sincerity on the part of the Railway Ministry to make the best use of the present revenue. Well, the less said about the fate of third class passengers the better it is. Perhaps, you have seen the state of affairs in Howrah Station. There, people are treated like baggages. They are carried and put into the compartments through the windows like cattle; they are treated as human chattels. So they should provide more third class compartments and they should make some rules to regulate entry into third class compartments. Except in bigger stations, in other stations, the amenities that are needed are not available to the passengers, particularly the third class passengers who give the bulk of

revenue to the Railways. They are not looked after well.

4 P.M.

About reservation of seats, I find in the stations of Jharsuguda, Cuttack, Kharagpur and Rourkela there is a conspiracy among the staff to take money, to fleece money out of the people. Unless you pay Rs. 5, you cannot get reservation. Cuttack is the worst and Kharagpur and Rourkela come second and third and Jharsuguda last according to my experience.

SHRI DAHYABHAI V. PATEL (Gujarat) : They are only following the general pattern of the State beginning with the Ministers.

SHRI SANKAR PRATAP SINGH DEV : I would like to submit for the consideration of the Railway Minister a demand for having a line from Talchar to Barsua and Talcher to Sambalpur. These are only 65 miles and this will connect the Orissa coast with the hinterland. If these places are connected—they are full of minerals and there is much scope for industries—they will grow and develop.

I won't take much of your time; my last point will be about the most prominent source of wastage through compensation claims which amount to five crores a year. I do not think that the Railway Minister would dare to contradict that more than 50 per cent. of the claims for compensation is avoidable. Much of this is done with the collusion of the Railway staff. The Railway Protection Force and the Watch and Ward are there but they are deprived of the trade union rights and are subject to severe discipline. They are without all the advantages that their counterparts in the Police get. With all these disadvantages, what can you expect from them? People who are entrusted with the enormous responsibility of looking after the huge property of the Railways must be kept above the level of starvation. Their present salary compared to the price rise given to this section of the Railway staff should be carefully looked into. People who cannot ventilate their grievances through trade union organisations are liable to become corrupt with their legitimate grievances remaining unheeded.

Many things have been told about the punctuality of Railways. So I do not want

to repeat them. The Railways do not keep to time. Instead of being punctual, they are punctually unpunctual.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI S. K. PATIL) : Madam Deputy Chairman, the discussion on the Railway Budget, as was expected, ranged over a variety of subjects and naturally so. And it is not surprising when you consider the dominant role of the Railways in passenger and goods traffic and the extent to which the Railways impinge on the everyday life of all classes of people all over the country. I am afraid that in the time at my disposal I may not be able to answer all the criticisms but that does not mean that I do not want to answer them. Very elaborate and careful notes have been taken. I will deal with such matters as are concerned with policy and with some general matters and if anything is left, every individual Member will get a reply to the points that he or she might have raised. I would not particularly refer to any Member; I shall merely refer to the points so that there may not be any invidious distinction between one hon. Member and another.

The Railways Madam, I do not know whether it is a vast empire or a little empire, but it is an empire all the same and right from the Chairman of the Railway Board to the lowest paid gangman we have got a million and a quarter people and if you take all the other casual labour and other people connected with Railway Administration in its manifold activities it might make nearly five to ten per cent. of the entire population in India. Therefore you will quite understand that just as there is diversity in our public life there is bound to be diversity even in the expectations that we have got as to the capabilities and the performance of the Railways.

Before I go further, I must give you some broad picture of how the Railways have developed during the last fifteen years, both structurally and otherwise. The Railways today is not something which it used to be some thirty years ago. It is expanding and expanding fast indeed and, if I may say so, in these fifteen years we find that the pace of progress of the Indian Railways is much faster than in any other country. Therefore with all the weaknesses,

with all the blemishes, with all the omissions, you cannot forget the fact that the Railways today is a something of which the country could be proud. And I want to keep it so, keep it as a solvent, sound concern. It is the largest concern and the most successful concern in the public sector and if our socialist economy has got to succeed in this country we must demonstratively prove by means of the Railways that it can be done where millions of people are employed. Therefore this solvency of the Railways, this capability of the Railways are points of cardinal principles with us and therefore nobody should suggest that for a temporary reason we may ignore its solvency or make it less stable. And I can assure one thing, that while I continue to be the Minister in charge of the Railways I will always see that this solvency is on the increase, that it becomes more creditworthy, more trustworthy, and whenever you think of it, it will be an indicator as to how the various other things that we have taken up in the public sector must make progress.

Now, Madam, this is the second longest line in the whole world. That happens to be so because in America and Canada they are treated as different Railways and they are not added up. That is why we become second; otherwise we will be the fourth or fifth. Anyway it is one of the largest and I am quite sure that in 25 years it might perhaps be the largest—one does not know—at the rate at which we are going. Today we have got something like 57,000—to be exact 56,923—kilometres of Railways and in that the broad gauge and the metre gauge is almost the same, 27459 kms. in one case and 25,143 kms. of metre gauge and the narrow gauge is only 4,321. But there is something that the House will be interested to know. Although this broad gauge and metre gauge is just the same—27,000 and 25,000 do not make much difference—in length, in the matter of haulage capacity nearly 83 per cent of the total freight traffic is handled on the broad gauge while a little less than 16 per cent only is handled on the metre gauge. So far as the narrow gauge is concerned we should not talk about it at all; it is just something like a quarter of a per cent. Therefore so far as freight is concerned, the narrow gauge does not come into the picture at all.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN (Andhra Pradesh): Do away with the narrow gauge.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: We are doing away with it; by and by we shall do away with it. On the 31st March, 1964, that is, the last day of the last financial year we were...

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: What will happen to the hill stations?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: ... having somewhere about 2160 crores invested in the Railways and possibly after five or ten years it will go up by leaps and bounds, perhaps 4,000 or 5,000 crores. That will be the amount of money that we will be putting into it.

I particularly take up this point because many people seem to be thinking that the money that we give to Government, about a little less than Rs. 100 crores—I shall exactly quote the figures, *i.e.*, divided to the General Revenues Rs. 83 crores and 45 lakhs and payment to the General Revenues in lieu of tax on railway passengers Rs. 12 crores and 50 lakhs—is too much. When you take all the capital of Rs. 2160 crores, even if we give the 4½ per cent which is being given, you will see that it is not something which we give them as *bakshees* or as a present to the General Revenues and even if we do give a present to the General Revenues, what is wrong in a commercial system helping the Government in its revenues? But we have not done that kind of surprising thing for which we are taking credit. Therefore, that only shows the solvency of the Railways, that they do pay dividends to the General Revenues. Here I would give you the picture. The Railway Convention Committee, which had its deliberations in 1960, only four years ago, recommended a rate of 4½ per cent dividend and this was approved by Parliament. Everytime it has got to be approved by Parliament. It is not something which the Railway Board or the Railway Minister does. Therefore, you will quite understand it. You are committed to it your credit-worthiness and trust-worthiness depends upon the regular discharge of the responsibility of paying these dividends year after year. It should however, be mentioned that the rate of

dividend does not apply to the whole capital. No dividend is payable on strategic lines. They cost about Rs. 33 crores. They do not bring us money. I am talking of levies for our defence purposes. During the first five years of the the construction of a new line, there is a moratorium. That also does not give anything. It takes five years to develop some kind of traffic and, therefore, that also goes. The portion of the capital-at-charge, which represents no physical asset, like premium paid on taking over certain branch lines comes to Rs. 120 crores. I am merely quoting these figures because what we pay is really not dividend. Probably it is something which is the minimum, almost the irreducible minimum that we have got to do. There is a subsequent increase in the standard rate of dividend. The rate at which the Government has been borrowing from the public has been steadily going up. We must not forget that. Most of the hon. Members forget that. Our Railways are old, no doubt. We have celebrated their centenary some years ago. In respect of the capital that we took then and the capital we are taking now, in regard to the interest that we pay, the rates differ as time goes on. The rate at which we borrow increases. It may go up even more. In future it may mean a higher rate of interest. We have had the World Bank loans at 5½ per cent or 6 per cent. The emergency due to the Chinese aggression came in October, 1962. Having regard to all these factors, it was agreed between the Railway Minister and the Finance Minister that the rate of dividend would be raised to 4½ per cent, instead of 4½ per cent. That means ½ per cent more, but that also makes a difference of crores of rupees, so far as the total that we pay to the General Revenues is concerned. This was announced in the Budget of February, 1963 and approved by Parliament. Everytime any change is made, it is approved by Parliament. The Finance Minister pressed again for a higher rate of dividend, namely, 5½ per cent on new capital, capital invested after 31st March, 1964. The Railway Minister felt that he had to agree to this and the proposal made accordingly in last year's Railway Budget was approved by Parliament. It is not as if the Railway Minister agreed to the increased rate of 5½ per cent in a docile manner. We have to agree when we look

to the fact that they have to borrow money at that interest. Surely we cannot say that they should borrow at a higher rate of interest and we should pay them a little less. However, the rate of dividend of 5½ per cent applies only to new capital invested after 31st March, 1964. Even during the last year of the current Plan, namely, 1965-66, the effective rate of dividend payable by the Railways on all capital to which the full rate of dividend applies, excluding strategic lines, new lines and the Northeast Frontier Railway, which is not paying at all, to which reference was made by my friend there, would be only 4.7 per cent. Therefore, you could see that these arguments are disposed of, that it is not something, as some Members said, that we are having a kind of loot and we are giving money to Government. This is the minimum that we have got to give and my only concern is how it would be possible for me to pay it year after year.

Members, when it comes to increase in freight, are naturally anxious. I wish I was in their place and one of them was in my place, and possibly I would have made the same plea. Therefore, I have no anger with them. But they have got to understand the reasons which are not under the control of the Railways. The wage bill, as a result of the Das Commission's recommendations, has increased enormously. The total increase in working expenses over the Budget this year is Rs. 18 crores, and next year it was estimated at Rs. 28 crores more than that of this year. When I made my speech—the printed copy is in your hands—I had not the least idea that the Finance Minister was going to have another import of a 10 per cent. regulatory import duty, because had I known it I would have told you that it added Rs. 6 crores to the expenditure of the Railways. Therefore, this money of Rs. 25 crores or Rs. 30 crores is the cushion that the Railways, or a body of this dimensions, with earnings of nearly Rs. 700 crores, could ever have. And if this cushion is destroyed, then it means that our credit-worthiness to that extent will become less. Therefore, if I had not done this, possibly next year I would have had to make a bigger impost. In order to give time for the Railways to readjust their finances, etc., so that this painful

necessity of resorting to sudden increase, whether in the tariff of passengers or tariff of goods, should not arise, this has been done. I am merely saying that it is easy to say that we should not have made any increase at all. At the same time, there is not a Member, out of all those who have made speeches, who has not suggested amenities that would cost crores and crores of rupees. Money does not grow on the trees or drop from the clouds. It has got to be found and surely this is one way of finding it. Then what is impossible thing that we have done? So far as freight is concerned, the industrialists have been saying this. I would come to that a little later. I would tell them that so far as export items are concerned, so far as the necessities of life are concerned, there has been no increase at all. We are even considering in some other cases also whether to give a rebate or some other concession for export. When it comes to passenger traffic, they want everything. They want amenities. At the same time, there ought not to be even one paise increase in the fare. What is the increase that we have made? If you have studied it—I do not want to go into it in detail—up to 50 kms, where nearly 70 or 75 per cent of our passengers travel, the highest increase comes to 5 paise, one-twentieth of a rupee. Of course, so far as the long distance passenger is concerned, 800 kms and above, there may appear to be an increase in the third class fare of about Rs. 1.85 p. I know very well that our poor man is very much exercised. He has not got much money, but the Railway is not the only thing where he can expect not to have any increase. In respect of food and other necessities of life there has been an increase of 30 per cent, 40 per cent or 50 per cent. Surely the Railways have not done anything of that sort. Even this I would not have done if it were possible for me by any miracle to bring about a situation whereby I could create a more soft cushion, not of Rs. 1 crore but Rs. 25 to Rs. 30 crores. I cannot present a Budget wherein my balance can be reduced to two or three crores and then go, because that itself shows that our credit-worthiness and the reliance that people keep upon it have deteriorated. I must not create that impression about the Indian Railways. I will not create that

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impression. For that purpose alone this has been done by a regulatory process, so that it should be spread over a larger number of people who travel on the Railways. So far as season tickets are concerned there has been hardly any increase. If there has been some increase anywhere, in Bombay or Calcutta or Madras, it is because for historic reasons and otherwise they were less. Therefore, they have been equalised, so that they—Bombay or Calcutta—have nearly the same standard as Madras. Otherwise, there is no idea of making any money. It is rationalisation so far as the tariff is concerned.

I am sure that my colleague, the Finance Minister, has a right to expect the Railways as the largest public sector enterprise to make their due contribution to the general revenues, which I have now explained to you. Therefore this dividend business that many of the Members mentioned—I am not naming them but two or three Members made the point—surely is not a something over which anybody should really lose his head or say that it is something unreasonable.

Then again somebody deplored the fact that a more substantial portion of the profit was not allocated to the Development Fund and that the allotment to it this year had been reduced from Rs. 30 crores to Rs. 12 crores. Perhaps he is not aware that the entire railway surplus year after year has been credited to the Development Fund, and therefore this kind of distinction does not really remain there.

I have explained at some length in my Budget speech and again now as to why these freights and tariffs have increased. My friend here from Khandesh, I know, has worked all his lifetime for the poor people, he moves among the masses; and so do I. But he has no responsibility of making the money available while unfortunately I have, because I have become the Railway Minister. Therefore, let us exchange positions and look at each other. Let us try to be in another man's shoe as they call it, and he will exactly come to the conclusion to which I have come, although if the facts were otherwise I would have made a different plea. But

unfortunately that cannot be done. Therefore, you could see here that this kind of increase that we have made need not really be a matter of great concern to anybody.

I now turn to the question of freights. Some of the things that are necessary. I hope the House realizes that in respect of the preponderant number of commodities that concern the public, there has either been no change in the rates, Madam, or there has been a reduction in rates in respect of some of the commodities. Even applying the yardstick of contribution to Railway revenues, the proposed rate adjustment affects only commodities which contribute about a third of the total revenue. In respect of the remaining two-third, mostly there has been no change at all or in respect of items contributing about five per cent of the revenue the freight rates have actually been lowered. This overall perspective can be independently obtained from the fact that the net effect of the proposals is only to increase freight receipts expected next year by Rs. 6.9 crores. Otherwise, if they really applied to everything, they would have been five or six times more, but that has not been done. These constitute a small element in the price of commodities, and therefore all the fears of inflation etc. that have been raised here are really meaningless because the increase is very small indeed.

What was more surprising was the apprehension that the budget may affect exports. I have explained that there will be no change in the rates for export iron ore, no increase at all has been made. There will be none either in those for jute products of export manganese ore. There will be a reduction, I may add, in the rates for tea and for cotton textiles, there will be a regular reduction. In respect of a large number of other manufactured products too the budget proposals involve a reduction in freight. Further, as the House is aware, a large number of our export products enjoy specific benefits of concession in freight of 25 or even 50 per cent. The budget proposals certainly should not affect export prejudicially. Besides, we examine this matter time and again and therefore if we find that the exports are affected in a particular way, it is open to us to reduce them or to give subvention or to do any other, thing.

because we are as keen as anybody else that the exports of this country must not suffer.

It has been brought out in the reviews of operating performance circulated in earlier years that our average freight rate, the freight realisation per tonne kilometre, is lower than the rate in Eastern countries, such as Japan, Ceylon, Burma, Pakistan, east or west, and lower than the rate in important Western countries as well, and when we compare ourselves with other Railways, we will find that our rates are not only not higher but in many cases we will find that they are much lower than some of the countries that I have mentioned.

Now a case has been made about passenger amenities. I could tell you that I hold no different views from the views of hon. Members. I feel some of them myself. I have no moral right—although technically or legally I may be right because I must create revenue—but I consider myself that I have no moral right to put any increase in the rates unless I am prepared to spend some of that on the amenities that I am going to give. I am now mentioning some of the amenities that we intend giving them in the not distant future. Progressive expansion of users' amenities at railway stations and in trains has been receiving constant attention. The general policy continues to be to first provide minimum basic passenger amenities at all railway stations and in all trains, basic amenities. The policy in this regard is to provide on a priority basis the following minimum passenger amenities at all the stations, excluding 'halts'—halts where the stop is for half a minute or one minute—on a programmed basis:

Waiting hall, wherever it does not exist.

Benches.

Suitable arrangements for lighting in the Waiting hall and Booking Offices.

Drinking water supply.

Somebody made some observations about water supply. It would be a tragedy if

there is no clean water in the railway stations. But the whole test is so gigantic and spread out everywhere that it takes a little time. But we have taken it as an item of the highest priority. This will be supplied.

Improved type of latrines.

Pucca platform surface.

Proper booking arrangements.

Planting of shady trees on platforms.

Sometimes if the train is delayed, as my friend has said—he is not here just now—he would have some comfortable shade so that his temper can cool.

The Railway Administrations have also been instructed that the following minimum amenities should be provided at 'halts' as distinct from regular stations.

A rail level platform of suitable length.

A small waiting shed.

Lighting where trains stop at night.

Planting of shady trees.

Remember there is another thing. The standard of cleanliness that we expect from the Railways—I am not going to make it an argument—but it is true that it cannot be much higher than the standard of cleanliness of our life. Cleanliness depends upon ourselves. If we have a regard for sanitation and for personal hygiene wherever we go, that regard you will find there, and therefore, although this is no argument that because of that we should not do that—we must do everything in our power and spend the necessary funds in order that the standard of cleanliness and sanitation and personal hygiene so far as the train is concerned is lived up to.

During the First and Second Five Year Plan periods and the first three years of the Third Plan, the expenditure on amenities works has been of the order of Rs. 3 crores per annum. This is the annual capital expenditure and this sum is cumulative; that is, if anything remains, it does not go back to the exchequer. It remains there. If in one year we spend less, we spend more in another year.

Out of 6854 stations on the Indian Railways, all basic amenities have been provided at 4928 stations. But this is no satisfaction unless everybody, every stations gets this.

Subject to water resources being locally available, the policy of the Railways is to ensure that each station has adequate drinking water supply, viz., either a well with a hand pump or a tap as may be feasible. Every endeavour is made to ensure adequate supply of cool drinking water to passengers. The House will be interested to know that in many places it is the water supply that the Railway creates which is being used by other people, not merely by passengers but by other people. But surely that is our service that we owe to the people of this country and we must do that.

Electrically operated water coolers have also been provided at important stations.

Some of the more important facilities provided for third class passengers are :

Introduction of Janata Express trains, which are increasing.

I shall read to you as to how many new trains we have put. Suffice it to say in one sentence before I come to it that, during the last year we have put on more new trains in that one year than we ever did before in the history of the Railways. That does not mean that we should not have done more, and consistent with the resources at our disposal this activity will really engage our special attention.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : New lines ?

SHRI S. K. PATIL : New trains, introduction of Janata Express trains. They have become very popular indeed and we are increasing them. Where they were twice a week, we are making them thrice a week or four or five times a week. The ultimate object is that we will make it a daily train. They do require some kind of insulation etc. but there is a foreign exchange element involved in it. Therefore, it takes a little time, but our constant effort is to add to their number.

And then there is the introduction of air-conditioned third class accommodation apart from the introduction of Janata Express trains, the provision of sleeping accommodation for passengers in third class and the provision of ceiling fans in old design third class coaches. In new coaches this is part of the ordinary equipment. At present two types of sleeper coaches for passengers in third class are available on the Indian Railways, viz., 3-tier (full and partial) and 2-tier. I am convinced by the plea that the Members have made about the inconvenience of 3-tier coaches that we have got. We realise that. Therefore you will find that more and more accommodation will have to be provided so that the pressure becomes less and less.

The number of third class sleeper coaches in use on the Indian Railways at present is as under :—

	3-tier	2-tier
Broad-gauge	228	196
Metre gauge	168	62

During the remaining period of the Third Plan, 220 BG and 142 MG third class sleeper coaches are proposed to be built. No extra charge is levied for providing sleeping accommodation to passengers travelling over 800 kms. in 3-tier sleeper coaches, no charge is taken from them.

There have been complaints about the inadequate length of sleeper berths in the 3-tier sleeper coaches on the metre gauge, because we get taller and taller and we require a little more elbow-room or leg-room, and that attempt is being made and new coaches have to be built with longer berths. To overcome this difficulty, MG partial 3-tier coaches are being built to provide for longer sleeper berths of 6 ft. 3 in. If your height is more than that, naturally you will find it a little inconvenient. But for one tall man we cannot have all these coaches really changed as against the height which is proposed now. Therefore, there is an addition of 1ft. 3 in so far as the length is concerned. I think that will suffice.

The need for third class sleeper coaches on all train—3-tier (full or partial) or 2-tier—involving night journeys has been

accepted. Generally, the policy is to introduce sleeper coaches first on long-distance Mail and Express trains and then extend the facility to other trains running for lesser distances.

Sleeping accommodation in second class has also been introduced on two pairs of trains. That plea was made by my hon. friend—he is enjoying his slumber—but I can quite see to it that even in the train he will have the same facility as he is having here, and we are trying to do that even in second class compartment where, according to the hon. Mr. Sapru, the passengers find difficulty, because the second class is now used by the middle class also, and they must be given the facility. This is engaging our attention and more and more of it you will find. The next time when the Railway Minister speaks on the Budget, you will be able to congratulate the Railway Administration for having undertaken this scheme and acted upon it.

So far as the fans are concerned, the mere number would not impress you very much because it is a much wider thing; as many as 2,03,702 fans have been really provided and we are having more. And then there are the corridor type of coaches, vestibules and all that.

These are some of the conveniences that we have added and are adding to the passenger amenities day after day, and the money is really not enough. We have now got Rs. 15 crores for five years; surely, that can be added to, because after all, as the traffic goes up, more and more money will be required. But this is something which was not done on that vast scale; we have started doing it now.

Instructions were issued in February, 1960, to all the Railway Administrations (except the Northeast Frontier Railway) to provide, as an experimental measure, on one Mail and one Express train, a push button switch to be mounted under the alarm chain in all the ladies compartments both in the upper and lower classes, which when pressed would operate an electric alarm bell and a red light in the guard's compartment and an amber (red) light on both sides of the ladies compartment.

Therefore, you can see how much care and concern we feel for our gentler sex and whenever they travel, the travel is made even more comfortable to them than the other sex. All this is being done. Of course, no improper use should be made of it because it is very much easier to press the button than to pull the chain. But I do not think that the ladies would do anything of that type. All this is done—the provision of amber light, etc.—because people in the adjacent compartments should also see that there is a danger even before the guard comes, and so on. All this is done and it is being multiplied, it will come more and more in use. It would also operate a horn in the adjacent gentlemen's compartment. I hope that their sleep will not be spoiled but anyway when the ladies are menaced or when they are in danger, it is of small concern that the sleep is disturbed. Enough apologies will be made afterwards, when the danger has gone. It is felt that this will provide quick assistance in case of an emergency.

The Railways have now installed teleprinter circuits between important stations covering main streams of traffic, viz. between Delhi and Bombay, Bombay and Madras, Madras and Calcutta and Calcutta and Delhi, with a view to passing on information and to obtaining data on which reservations can be made and the intending passengers advised. This facility is provided. You know that it happens in America that sometimes you get the latest news also. If the passengers are interested in cricket, tennis or any other matches, naturally they are supplied with the news. We have not started doing it but surely, I will examine if it is within our means, apart from booking, etc. These other amenities are provided so that their stay in the compartment, whether it is for five hours or for 24 hours, becomes as interesting and as comfortable as we can possibly make it.

A Railway Users Amenities Committee functions on each Zonal Railway. Annual programmes of amenities are drawn up in consultation with this Committee. There is a National Committee also and those of you that are members of the National Committee will testify to what I am saying—that every suggestion that has been made

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by them is tried to be implemented, we are trying to implement it as far as possible, because actually they are the users. The wearer knows where the shoe pinches and also, the passengers only know what are the real defects in our system or in our administration.

The Convention Committee recommended—and the Railways agreed—to spend Rs. 3 crores per year on passenger amenities. I have made this mention and I need not go into that again.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: Are you not increasing it?

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Yes, that has to be increased too. You are right.

In the Budget Speech, I have already given details of the safety campaign on the Railways which has produced good results and have said that the number of serious accidents involving life or limb or damage to property was less than in the last 20 years. This trend has been maintained this year also, and in the ten months up to January, 1965, the number of such accidents was 25% less than in the corresponding period last year. That does not mean that it is a definite change, that next year they will not increase. I am merely giving factual information as it has been so far.

Somebody drew my attention to the fact that as against 24 collisions involving passenger trains in 1962-63, there were 30 in 1963-64. Apparently, he has not given sufficient weightage to the fact that eight out of these such cases, were collisions between trains and trolleys. As I explained in the Review, there was not any injury to the outsider. That is there, although the number is there.

Now, sometimes when we discuss safety, very often this question comes up of manned and unmanned crossings and I am flooded with suggestions—"Can you not do anything about it?"—and when we examined this question, as the Railway Board has been examining it day after day, we found that out of nearly 30,000 crossings that there are, over 8,000 or thereabouts are manned. Even when the States and we

met some time back, only 1,200 of the remaining have been taken up because they are important. Now, if we undertake to do anything like that, I do not know how many crores of rupees would be necessary or how much recurring expenditure would be necessary. And as I said while replying to a question this morning, this is not done anywhere. I have seen some of the towns in America and of Europe—I am not talking of small villages but of towns. There are the unmanned crossings and there is nothing there except a signal. It is the responsibility of the man who drives the truck or the motor car to see because the railway train cannot immediately be stopped even if the driver tries; it will have to go several hundreds of yards even if he applies the brake. But it is possible for the motor car man to do it. Therefore, the responsibility for safety lies not on the railway itself; a greater part of it lies on the other person. Otherwise it is physically impossible and unreasonable also. To expect that all these remaining 20,000 odd crossings should be manned, is not possible and that can never be done and should not be done. But wherever there is a possibility of doing so, it can be done. So far as the cities are concerned, I have taken a special course for it, because in the big cities there are more chances of the accidents happening. We met the other day in Bombay, we shall meet in Calcutta, to see that with the co-operation of the Central Government, the State Governments concerned and the Corporations in big cities—big cities have got corporations—we should have these crossings either manned or there might be bridges or there might be tunnels—whatever it is—so that the safety margin will increase.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: Madam, if 50% is met by the States then much will be done by the Railways.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: It is a kind of solution, Madam. We incur the expenditure on the man and the State Government pays for the hut etc. In some cases we pay for the man, they meet the other expenditure. In some cases like Gujarat where there are too many crossings—because there were ever so many railways, small railways—we are sharing a little more—so that the question has been solved only

a few months back. It will be acted upon. One hon'ble Member wanted to know what action we have taken on the recommendations of the Railway Accidents Committee, Kunzru Committee as it is called. The Committee submitted its report in two parts, part I in December 1962 and part II in November 1963. A statement was furnished to Parliament on 21-1-63, within a month of the submission of Part I of the report. Decisions have been taken by the Railway Board on them. Out of the various recommendations which are 82, Government have accepted as many as 77 in full and one in part. Four recommendations could not be accepted because of its consequences and the constitutional implications involved. Out of the 298 recommendations in part II of the report, 233 have been accepted. Others are under scrutiny and by and by they will be accepted. Therefore, I can assure my hon. friends that nearly 95 per cent. of those recommendations are in the process of being acted upon and there would be no difficulty at all, because when we really appoint such a committee and request men like my hon. friend, Mr. Kunzru, who used to be a Member of this House, to take part in it as its Chairman, then surely it is not done in a light-hearted manner because their experience, their recommendations to us are really something which we must act upon and we shall do so; there is no doubt about that.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN: You can convey our thanks to Dr. Kunzru.

SHRI S. K. PATIL: Of course. One of the important recommendations of the Kunzru Committee was that safety camps should be started on the Railways. These have been started and hundreds of our people, our own workers, attend it at the cost of the Railways because it is a part of their duty and we encourage it and they know this. Therefore, the attention of the people is really focussed on all these problems. It is, therefore, not possible to directly correlate the impact of a particular safety measure with incidents or accidents. Sometimes accidents do happen. I have seen in Parliament, one day there was some train crash, Madam, and there was some loss of life. But on that day some other thing happened, very big in politics,

and the attention of the hon. Members was so much taken up by that incident that my poor crash was forgotten. Not that I always pray that when anything happens something else should happen in the other direction so that the attention of the Members is directed in that particular direction. But accidents do happen. In spite of what man can do, there are always accidents, and accidents will always remain. There will be no way to avoid some. When the citizens of the United States of America have their national day, not less than 400 or 500 people die. Nobody tells them to die. It is a happy day on which the people should live and enjoy. But in the excitement of enjoyment this thing happens. But, of course, our accidents are not the results of excess of enjoyment, they are real accidents.

Madam, as usual a good deal has been said about catering. Many people have got their pet theories. Some of them want that all catering should be departmental. Others would say that departmental catering is useless and, therefore, everything should be done by the contractor, because the contractor you can dismiss, the contractor you can change, the contractor you can fine. Therefore, there is the admixture of the two. We are experimenting day after day. About the Kanpur catering my hon. friend was saying that the food given there is so excellent that I am quite sure that most of the Members must have made up their mind to have a journey to Kanpur in order to verify whether the restaurant or whatever it is is as good as that. Therefore, these are things that have got to be done because the natural character of the people is also reflected here, because whether they are our caterers or whether they are private caterers, everybody wants to make money at somebody else's cost. Supervision, vigilance, is the only thing that has got to be done, and more and more vigilance would be exercised and experiments made.

Madam, I am personally thinking—well, this is a matter which has not yet been discussed by the Railway Board—about an element of competition even in this so that the men who can really render better service can have the chance. There is nothing wrong in competition. Even if they

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want to compete with our catering department, I do not see why we should feel really allergic to competition if competition ultimately means better service to the community. That can be done.

Here the House will remember that departmental catering was introduced on Railways on the recommendations of a high-power catering committee in 1953 with the intention not of eliminating contract catering but to set a model standard of service. Ninetyseven large stations and 22 pairs of trains now have departmental catering while 5,000 contractors operate on 2,500 stations. Therefore, you can see that a substantial number of contractors even now are there. But unless it is proved that departmental catering is positively good, we cannot take a jump to eliminate something if we are not prepared to create in its place something which is better, something which gives more and better food.

About 4,000 employees on salary basis and 3,000 on commission basis work in departmental catering. Opinion about departmental catering has always been sharply divided. I need not tire you on every question because my eye is on the watch. We are also trying to have a standard menu. As you know, language is not the only difficulty in India. We have many problems, and one such problem is food. Our trains are really national. Well, they go from one region to another, from North to South and from East to West. They traverse areas with diverse tastes of food, diverse languages and everything so that on the stations you can improve your language. Whatever language it is, all that you have to do is to shout. And you need not pay for the education that you incidentally get through the Railways. Therefore, this is most difficult indeed.

As I have mentioned in my Budget Speech, a larger number of uniforms also have to be supplied to these people. Now, many people have said that uniforms are not given. I can tell you I am very punctilious about it. I do not like a dirty man to be near me. If I do not like it, I take it no decent citizen likes it. But often the man who uses that uniform does not care for it. So this depends upon a little bit of

sanitation and personal hygiene and habits. It is not that I tell him to be clean. But he must himself, in his own habits, exercise a little more caution in keeping to the rules of sanitation and hygiene. But it must be both ways. If we give them more uniforms and perhaps a little more durable uniform, if the colour scheme is also good just like the hostesses in our aviation, every time they change it . . .

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : Washing allowance too.

SHRI S. K. PATIL : Washing allowance is one thing. I can give the same allowance to two people and you will find that while the one keeps clean the other does not because he does not know sanitation or personal hygiene. But I can understand if any allowance in that direction has to be given, it shall be my duty to do so.

Now somebody raised the question of the R.D.S.O., The need for research on the Railways is there. A charge was made that one of our officers—that officer's name is Mr. Suri—had gone away and had become the Director of some other laboratory, a National Lab. That officer was a most competent officer. If anybody is labouring under the impression that he went away because we did not want him, that is not correct. He went away because he had a chance of making original research so that he could add to his knowledge. I have gone to his Lab. specially although it is not under the Railway Ministry and seen what wonderful and nice work he has been doing there. I am very proud because whenever a meeting is called I say that this is my Railway's contribution to the scientific pool of India. And surely if we are in a position to make more and more contribution we shall be very happy indeed.

Hon'ble Members referred to overcrowding in trains. I have already mentioned in the speech and now also I say that we are trying to remedy this as fast as we can. More and more trains we have added. I shall read the list later on just to show that 300 more trains have either been added or some other things have been done so that this difficulty would go.

This is not something that the Railways can do all at once because if we want to have more coaches, then surely there must be stronger engines or engines that have got a larger pulling power. That means it must be dieselised or it must be electrified. Therefore, we have to decide that these experiments could be tried and diesel engines could be used for hauling passengers so that 20 per cent. or 30 per cent. capacity would be increased because they have larger pulling power. Experiments will be done. We are trying to do that. Unless we do that, merely having two-tier and three-tier sleeper coaches does not solve the question or solve it very partially but if it has got to be done substantially, then surely this is the method and that is exactly what we propose to do.

There are a few more things. Another demand that has been made by some Members on behalf of labour is that a Wage Board for Railway Staff should be appointed and that the link between pay scales and conditions of service for railwaymen and other Central Government servants should be cut. It has also been suggested that railwaymen should be entitled to bonus on the same basis as the private sector. Both these suggestions smack of getting the best of both the worlds. I do not quarrel with that but you cannot have the best of both the worlds. If you are prepared to have the best of any one world, surely that is a matter for argument and I am prepared to hear that. Railwaymen have benefited substantially by the general decisions taken by the Central Government for all its employees, like the liberalised family pension. You have found how many crores we are spending which is not available in other places. That is an indirect way how we give really more wages, which they could have spent but we are utilising for purposes which are very important to the community as well. There is the reimbursement of secondary school fees paid by employees for their children and the more liberal leave rules, etc. since the First Pay Commission's Report assimilated Railway and Central Government service conditions. It should not be overlooked that railway servants are also Central Government employees or that a public utility service, the entire income from which goes for the benefit of the nation as a whole, is in quite a

different position from the private sector and manufacturing public sector units operating in competition with them. They might be giving or seem to be giving some little more money but if you cash, all the conveniences that we are giving them, when I come to more conveniences, you will see that you will have to add nearly 20 to 30 per cent. to the salary. That is the cost of those conveniences that we have put at their disposal and surely when an occasion comes that we should give a little more pay, then it is given. A sum of nearly Rs. 29 crores has been given and that is why you find today that we have to levy the small, little charge, increasing the tariff in freight and passenger.

Another point made by several Members is about the supply of foodgrains to railway staff. You know we have got co-operative societies and we subsidise them to run fair price shops. When the prices of the foodgrains rocketed, I was of this mind—I knew it because I was the Minister of Food and Agriculture for four years—longest time in a particular Ministry—and there I found that instead of giving them money and when inflation goes up that money reduces in value and therefore I would be very glad to open those shops. I asked my friend the Food Minister whether he would be in a position to give me the grains. Do the hon. friends expect me to open shops in which there is no possibility of getting any grains? Therefore again and again I have been making the request if it is possible for him. He has also his own difficulties, not that he is a bad man, he is a good man but his difficulties are, if he gives specially for everybody, then where would be the common people? And possibly there is a danger that the same people will get from these shops and they will, as ordinary citizens, get from another shop. When there is a large-scale rationing, it is impossible to compartmentalise. That is the only reason, not that I am allergic to it. I am glad that whenever the opportunity comes, I want to do that because if I can keep this million and a quarter families satisfied in India, that means some kind of an addition to the sum total of Indian happiness. Therefore, personally I would be most glad to do this and whenever the opportunity comes, I will examine it again and again.

Some hon. Member stated that there were about 1,000 temporary officers. I do not go into the whole history because there are more important things to be told to you. My only reason is this that this is all done by the Public Service Commission, there are rules about it. They have to appear. About 200 of them have been absorbed. The rules have been laid down. I am not competent to do that. You can understand that any disgruntled man who fails to get justice according to me can rush to a court of law and very often the courts have given judgments not in favour of the Railway but in favour of the men. Therefore it is not something that we can do at our sweet will. If we have to do it, we have to do it according to the rules and that is exactly what we are doing.

One hon. Member wanted to know what was the extent of loss to the Railways on account of the recent linguistic disturbances. I can merely say, not because the matter is now . . .

SHRI M. M. DHARIA : I had proposed that in this matter of industry, the worker should be given a share in active participation in management. May I know the views of the Minister on this ?

SHRI S. K. PATIL : If the time remains after I finish, then surely I can do that.

The hon. Member wanted to know the loss. I can tell you what the loss is. Fourteen railway stations have been burnt, a number of stations damaged, which all costs so much money, 28 coaches, each costing nearly Rs. 2 lakhs, destroyed, equipment of about Rs. 14 to Rs. 15 lakhs was damaged, destroyed in 118 stations in this orgy of madness that took place. I hope it is the last and we shall not see its recurrence again. Nine bridges and 38 level crossing gates were also damaged. The total loss is likely to be—I do not know, they say about Rs. 65 lakhs here but I am not so sure, it might be much more than what is mentioned here. I am merely saying this that while the wrath of God, that is the tidal wave that came to Rameshwaram, resulted in some kind of destruction which may come to under one crore—I shall come to that—but what man has done will cost even more than

that and this is not the last chapter of that whole drama, possibly there will be a few more chapters—I hope not—but surely for all this additional expenditure of crores of rupees in a year there ought to be some cushion and that is the cushion. Therefore again and again I am coming to the same refrain and under those exceptional and unavoidable circumstances the fare has been increased.

My hon. friend talked about the Konkan Railway—I think more than one hon. Member talked about it, I think the lady Member also talked about it. Konkan is something of which everybody should be proud. Those who have not gone should go there to see what kind of enchanting land Konkan is. If I go into those panegyrics, possibly I will take a long time and therefore I am not going into it. Unfortunately it so happens—or fortunately—that I hail from Konkan and therefore I am actively interested in this line but you would understand that Konkan is not the only thing in India because there are competing claims, hundreds of claims that we have to see. But I can assure my friend that when the line has gone from Diva to Panvel and now is going to Apta and Uran, it cannot hang there. We have got to complete the loop and it has got to go some time to Mangalore or Goa or whatever it is. That is inevitable but whether it will be done in one year or two years or five years it is difficult for me to say. The Fourth Plan is not yet complete and therefore I am not going into more details but I can assure my friend coming from Konkan that there is nobody as much interested as the Railway Minister in seeing that this line that has gone to Konkan really goes to its proper destination, makes a complete loop, so that not only these forgotten inaccessible areas are developed—we had a Committee on inaccessible Areas and it has also recommended this—but the standard of life of those people also improves.

Efforts are made every half-year for revision of the time-table. Many complained that the time-table is bad and I can share a secret with you, hon. Members, and with you, Madam, that when I came, on the first day when I sat at my table, I called the Member in charge of transportation and

asked him : 'It is wonderful,' I said; 'Forty years back when I was a boy in college at Bombay, I used to see the Frontier Mail rushing and it used to be the fastest thing in the life of that day because aeroplanes had not come and it used to come to Delhi in 24 hours and now it takes 26 hours. What is this progress in the opposite direction that we have made?' I did that because I could not understand it and surely I can confess my disappointment in that. Many explanations were given and I was convinced but ultimately conviction is not the only thing. We must change it and you could see from this year positive attempt will be made and in the next time-table you will find not one but about a hundred trains where the time has been reduced, except where it is impossible because of something that we are doing like repairs. Therefore that is exactly what we are doing, and the time will be reduced. I do not read the whole list of the hundred names that have been given and when the time-table comes, every one of you will get a time-table so that you will know what it is. I think you have to pay for it. I do not know how they get it. But the largest saving in time is for the Bombay Central Dehra Dun Express. The time would be cut down by 135 minutes, which means two hours and 15 minutes. Some of the timings I am saying. The Dehra Dun-Bombay Express—sixty minutes. On most mail and express trains it is less than 20 minutes, 45 minutes, one hour and so on. From everywhere the time will be reduced so that our travelling will be faster and faster.

SHRI AKBAR ALI KHAN : Is there anything for the G.T. Express?

SHRI S. K. PATIL : The G.T. Express, the hon. Member has reminded me. I can tell you an interesting story of this G.T. Express.

5 P.M.

Somebody came on the telephone very late one day and he asked me late in the night. "Are you the Railway Minister?" "Yes, I am unfortunately" I said, and added, "But what have you got to say?" He said, "Now you call that train Grand Trunk Express. Do you want my

view on the subject?" I said, "I would be very much delighted to have your view. What is that view?" He said, "It is neither grand nor trunk and surely not express. Therefore you better change the present name 'Grand Trunk Express'." Now by merely changing the name I do not achieve what I want to achieve, but I can tell you that this happens because of several other things, other handicaps, the repairs, we are doubling the line; we are relaying the line; we are changing the gauge from this to that, and so on, and when the work goes on, it goes on, sometimes for nine months, sometimes one year, sometimes two years; that happens. But there is an attempt, a positive attempt made, for the first time, after many years, and if you take the total, it will run into several hundreds of hours that we have saved. Altogether, I am saying that there cannot be a miraculous achievement in one term. That is why time has been taken.

Then the total number of trains which have been introduced or extended;—I shall not take more than five or ten minutes—of them there have been about 300. There are also proposals to introduce or extend about 70 trains in the next time-table. All this I am telling in order that hon. Members may not say that we have not been active in doing so. It shall be done; it shall be done in an increasing tempo.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN : Will the trains run faster also, 80, 85 miles per hour?

SHRI S. K. PATIL : Yes, that also, and explaining that would take time. But surely when the question comes from the Chair, it has got to be answered. For that the time taken has to be less and the speed has to increase. For that we have the dieselisation and electrification, which are very fast coming up everywhere. Hundreds and hundreds of crores of rupees we are spending. Now the power of a diesel engine or electric engine is not only to pull heavier trains but also to pull them fast. That is the only remedy that can be had. A steam engine cannot do it. We are trying it and it is in an experimental stage on several trains on several lines. I have got the list but I do not want to tire you out

[SHRI S. K. PATIL]

just now. I shall give it to the hon. Members who have asked for it when I reply to their questions individually.

Alas, there has been the calamity that befell Rameswaram. Many people seem to be under the impression that the train and that bridge had some connection. They had no connection whatsoever. The train did not disappear because of the bridge. They independently decided to commit suicide, because of this tidal wave, which was never expected. In India we had all these strong currents, etc., but all these alarm signals are for a storm, and not for the tidal wave. Just across the Andes, in the Pacific, every year you have got the tidal wave. They are accustomed to it. In other parts in America, they are accustomed to it. In Honk Kong they are accustomed to it—there are the tidal waves—but in known history India had never any such tidal wave. Therefore the storm signal would not have stopped it, and in a storm many people who are afraid of the storm take shelter in the train, because it is the strongest and the most solid thing on the line. But, unfortunately, this train, because of the tidal wave, twenty five feet high, and with a velocity, which is something surprising, you cannot believe, even, *the train disappeared when it was going from Pamban to Dhanushkodi*. And so far as the bridge is concerned—for no reason whatsoever—there was nothing on it in spite of that, the wave destroyed it, and the girders, not one or two, over a hundred girders, girders as heavy as thirty-five tons, concrete girder, steel girders, and the other girders each weighing about ten tons, all were simply swept away. Nobody knows what power it requires, and that the water should have that power and velocity to do this destruction, and that is nature's wrath. Then we said that we shall have this bridge repaired because, unless it is repaired, the trains cannot go to Rameswaram. And that is important; it has got to be done. And they gave us the time, *Madam*—six months—and we thought that by the 1st of June this bridge would be ready. When I said in Delhi that by the 1st of June this bridge would be ready, they would not believe it. They thought that I was saying something that could not be accomplished, yet they were waiting

for the 1st of June. Now I am prepared, and I am very happy, to tell this House that this bridge will be completed and opened on the 1st of March, that is, after four or five days. Therefore three months' time has been saved, and I am very grateful to the engineering staff and the other people of the Southern Railway, and others, who have done a miraculous job, achieved a miraculous success on such a long bridge, more than one mile. The original estimate of time was because we had to have a few girders, in place of those supposed to be lost, but, fortunately, some of the other girders, thirty nine of them were recovered. If they were not recovered, possibly it would have taken some more time. And now I got a wire from the General Manager, Southern Railway, yesterday, because he knew that I was going to make a declaration, an announcement to this House today, that on the 1st of March—there are only four or five days left—this bridge will be opened for traffic, and all that havoc that Nature had wrought will really be repaired by then.

Crossings, I have said; I don't intend doing anything now about these crossings. And I would tell another thing about the crossings. Supposing there are automatic shutters, they could be operated from any station, that as soon as the train starts, you know, that impediment comes in—the shutter. But they are to be connected by wires. And must I tell this hon. House that all these wires are stolen the moment we are putting them? That is the difficulty, and having been the Transport Minister I know how many lakhs of rupees we were losing every year, because telephone and other wires were stolen. Of course we are having a constabulary, hundreds of people looking after it, watching it, and in spite of it, it is a little less, but it has not yet disappeared. Now should I be so foolish that for a long distance, say, of five or six miles,—because it must be from the station from which that train has left, and the crossings are in between; if that is done, it has got to be connected by some kind of a wire, and it is difficult—I should have such a connection? Therefore let us not forget that, in spite of all the will in the world that we might have, something becomes impossible, because our habits are so, not that it will always be so, but

that is there. Of course science has come to our help so that it could be done.

Now so far as the other activities, sport, education, health and other activities are concerned, I have given a lot of it in my report, and I think I may be proud, and the House must be proud, Madam, that the best teams in the sports in India belong to the Indian Railways. Even the hockey championship that we earned in Tokyo—there were five members in that team from the railways; they actually, one among them, scored the goal, and they belonged to the Indian Railways. Now that is not the only thing that we owe to the society. Railway does not only mean the rail and the trains on it; it also means that we must render service to the community, in entertainment, in sports, in everything, and God willing, there will be more and more of these things. I am thinking that those who join, those boys, or may be girls, hundreds of them, in the railways, should be given better facilities, so that they can occupy their time, and in sports also we must be up-to-date. And there is another political reason, Madam, which I must not say, but I can tell you, the more people are kept engaged in healthy activity, they don't indulge in unhealthy activity, they have hardly any time to criticise the Government and snap their fingers at the Railway Minister, because they would be very happy when seeing the other things that have been done. Therefore it pays. You will see on the Northern Railway, what kind of a stadium we have got, the like of which, I maintain, does not exist in this country; it is the biggest, and in their enthusiasm the engineers were telling me that it was the biggest in the whole world, which was rather too thick to swallow, but surely it is the best in India. But I am not yet very sure, because it is enclosed unless I see it myself in action, where 1500 people could sit and watch a badminton match. Of course all that has been done. There are many other things also, hospitals. Some of them are extremely good. I am thinking: Why not have one or two medical colleges? because the boys and girls of our railwaymen do not get admission elsewhere, just as we have got engineering colleges and other colleges. We have got well equipped hospitals and why should we not have even one or two medical

colleges on an experimental basis? so that the Railways can render service in a hundred ways, not merely in carrying passengers, but in every field of life in order to make the life of the people a little more pleasant than what it is today.

On grain shops I have spoken. Then the South Central Zone; I have reserved it because, if I did not make a mention of it my hon. friends may misunderstand me and will say that this is a wrong zone that we have created. Everybody, we all have got a very wonderful fascination, "What belongs to me should be mine, but what belongs to others, a part of it also should be mine." So it cannot be, "Heads I win, tails you lose." These Zones are made only for operational efficiency. They are not made because they are either synonymous or something co-terminus with any Zone or any State because, if I accept this principle, because such and such area is wholly within one State and therefore they must have a Zone, that means that you will have to create fourteen Zones in this country. Already we have enough troubles, on language and other things, and for God's sake let us not have a special trouble in the Zones which every State has been demanding; there has been pressure on me "why should they have two Railway headquarters in Calcutta and Bombay? And their headquarters are in Calcutta and Bombay. Why should they not come here? The railway lines run through other States." I am merely saying this. It is a very delicate matter. I have examined it. A suggestion has been made to me and I have been asked "Why is Gunkatal here? Why not another?" It is this gregarious tendency, not only of our remaining together but our railway lines must also remain together. I cannot understand it, because it would mean, when we spell it out, that every State will be demanding a separate zone etc. That tendency ought not to be encouraged. When Sholapur was going, I thought there was a genuine grievance, not because the area was in Maharashtra but there was something else which I have understood and I asked the engineers and the General Managers if there was any way by which the efficiency would not be impaired and they could do something. Immediately they came with some solution. From Manmad to Dond the line normally

should have gone to the new zone. Some 40 per cent of the section was retained in Central Bombay. But we shall be examining those questions time and again. The hon lady Member from Andhra—she spoke about the other side of the picture—asked if for so many years, for a hundred years, both the people who were coming to Bombay or going to Madras, were coming here, why not people now go to Hyderabad? I don't understand. On that basis of efficiency and on that basis alone and not otherwise, matters must be considered.

Madam, I have given the main picture of the Railways and I may sum up by saying that I am very proud of them. I have seen many Ministries in this Government and like a rolling stone that is gathering no mass I am moving from place to place. But I hope because the Railways are something stable there may not be any more. So far as the Railways are concerned, the administration that we have got is the best and the most efficient. I get every type of co-operation from them. As for our railwaymen and their unions, if something can be done I am always ready

for that. When I was the Minister in charge of Post and Telegraph Department there was no complaint whatsoever because we can sit across the table and resolve all our questions as wise men. We are all sons and daughters of this country and there is nothing that we cannot resolve. Any interest that permanently separates us must be to the damage of this country. If that spirit of give and take is there surely the Railways will give you an even better account of themselves than they have hitherto done.

SHRI M. P. BHARGAVA: I hope the House will agree with me in conveying our thanks and congratulations to the engineers and workers engaged in the construction of that bridge.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The House stands adjourned till 11 A.M. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at thirteen minutes past five of the clock till eleven of the clock on Friday, the 26th February 1965.