

## THE RAILWAYS : A CATALYST TO NATIONAL GROWTH\*<sup>£</sup>

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Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am extremely thankful to the house for scrutinising the budget in such great detail. Encouraging words and words of appreciation and cheer for the railwaymen have been expressed throughout in the House. There have been criticisms and suggestions made; we will try to benefit by them.

Shri Gopalan initiated the debate and he sounded a pessimistic note. Since the budget was introduced in this House, there have been comments in the Press, general and specialised. Economic journals, trade and commercial journals have also commented on the budget: they have welcomed it except one or two, of course. In this House also, there has been general appreciation. In a huge organisation like the railways, spreading over vast areas and serving millions of people, there are bound to be lapses here and there. I am not here to claim that we are perfect in all respects. As I have said, we always try to profit by the criticisms and suggestions made in the House and on this occasion also, we will do that.

I really admire the spirit and the sentiments expressed by Shri Asoka Mehta, and his objective and constructive approach to the railway problems. I have taken note of his suggestions and I shall follow them up. Although he has been modest enough to say that he is making only marginal comments, he has really covered extensive ground and raised numerous queries which practically touch upon the entire economic structure of the railways.

It is not reasonably practicable for me in this speech to cover all the points in such a comprehensive manner as I would have wished, but I shall endeavour to give a broad analysis of the economic and operational results which I hope would indicate and explain the position and clarify the doubts. If we wish to review the whole financial picture in retrospect I would think we might only go as far back as 1951-52. By that time the merger of the old Princely States had been implemented and conditions of work had also been stabilised after the impact of partition. Regrouping of railways then led to a

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<sup>£</sup> Replying to the General Discussion on Railways Budget, 1959-60 as the Minister of Railways.

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re-distribution of jurisdiction of zonal railways which vitiates comparison of statistical data of each railway system but taking Indian Government railways as a whole the field of work underwent only a minor re-adjustment with the accretion of new lines.

The gross earnings and working expenses in 1951-52 were as follows:

Route mileage 33,343.

Gross earnings Rs. 291.8 crore.

Working expenses Rs. 225.8 crore

Net earnings Rs. 66.1 crore.

In 1957-58 the figures were as follows:

Route Mileage 34,462.

Gross earnings Rs. 381.4 crore.

Working expenses Rs. 309.8 crore.

Net earnings Rs. 71.6 crore.

I am not trying to draw any inference from it. The biggest single item of cost on railways is the cost of staff. In 1951-52 the total number of staff was 9,23,069 costing Rs. 121.71 crore. I am taking that as index number 100. In 1957-58 the total number of staff is 11,11,026, costing Rs. 172.94 crore, the index being 142.09. Between 1951-52 and 1957-58 the cost of staff alone went up by over Rs. 51 crore representing an increase of about 42 per cent. The House is aware that during this period a number of measures were taken to ameliorate the conditions of the employees, including the implementation of the Rajadhyaksha Award regarding hours of employment etc. The incidence of increase due to these amounts to about Rs. 27 crore. In consequence the cost per head of staff has gone up from Rs. 1,325 in 1951-52 to Rs. 1,588 in 1957-58, an increase of about 20 per cent. Between 1956-57 and 1957-58, that is, in one year there has been an abnormal increase amounting to Rs. 16.62 crore. About Rs. 4 crore out of this was due to the interim relief sanctioned on the recommendation of the Pay Commission from 1 July 1957 and Rs. 4 crore due to the earning of grade increments and the balance due to large increase in the strength of staff amounting to 54,334. This large increase was largely due to an appreciable increase in staff due to the introduction of intensive patrolling and double patrolling at bridges after the Ariyalur and Mehboobnagar accidents. Such measures introduced in panic do not necessarily enhance safety. We should, therefore, do what is reasonably justified, and has stood the test of prolonged experience. I, therefore, propose to review these arrangements and make necessary readjustments to avoid large expenditure.

In regard to the ordinary gang strengths for maintenance of track, the norms already exist. Likewise in the case of a larger number of staff on shift duty at stations and the running staff, the strength is determined according to the Adjudicator's Award. Amongst the operating staff, this leaves a small fraction of staff employed on maintenance of structures and buildings and temporary gangs engaged from time to time. A large number of watermen and carriage cleaners have also been added in recent years to ensure better amenities for the travelling public and upkeep of rolling stock. Several instructions to the railways have been issued to exercise the greatest care in sanctioning additional staff and to ensure a better standard of work and higher output. In these directions attention will be further intensified.

Then we come to workshop staff where the output per man is certainly capable of improvement. A special organisation under a Director of Production has recently been set up in the Railway Board to determine the norms for each operation separately for each workshop and to introduce the incentive bonus scheme. This will, I hope, not only improve the *per capita* output but also add to the income of the labour and help to keep down investments in additional productive equipment.

The output of the clerical staff also seems to be capable of improvement. On the one hand, it is necessary to reduce clerical work for which certain studies have been made and further studies are contemplated. Job analysis is an effective method for determining the requisite strength of clerical staff in each office, but the staff are so allergic to it that it has not been possible to make a headway. It is here, perhaps, by creating public opinion it will be possible to undertake a job analysis and determine the strength of the staff with a view to obtain a better output. It is unfortunate that erroneous news is set afloat in a propagandist manner by parties whose only interest lies in causing agitation which deters the Railway administrations from tackling this problem in an effective and proper manner. I wish to assure that it has never been my intention to retrench the staff already employed. It is, however, a national problem of some importance for the upliftment of our country economically, morally and socially that our men engaged on various tasks may rank high in their output and efficiency, and in this endeavour I seek the co-operation of everyone concerned.

The next important item of expenditure on railways is coal. The pithead cost of coal on broad-gauge and meter-gauge railways was Rs. 12.41 crore on broad-gauge and Rs. 3.89 crore on meter-gauge in 1951-52. In 1957-58 the relevant figures were Rs. 2135 crore for broad-gauge and Rs. 6.29 crore for metre-gauge. Thus, the increase in the cost of coal consumed from 1951-52 to 1957-58 has been about Rs. 9 crore on the broad-gauge and Rs. 2.4 crore on the meter-gauge. Besides the increase in consumption there has been a substantial increase in the average price of coal from Rs. 15.14 to Rs. 19.4.

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Simultaneously the stowing excise duty has also gone up from Rs. 3 to Rs. 6. Coal costs alone during the one year between 1956-57 and 1957-58 account for a total increase in expenditure to the tune of Rs. 5.25 crore.

Increase in the total coal consumption has not been due to any increase in the rate of consumption. The well-recognised statistics are 'pounds of coal consumed per 1,000 gross tonne miles' and these have rather made progressive improvement.

In the case of goods traffic, both on broad-gauge and metre-gauge, and passenger traffic in the case of metre gauge, results obtained in 1957-58 have been the lowest during the last seven years inspite of various factors which tended to depress these results.

The Expert Committee on Coal, which has examined this question in great detail, have made a number of suggestions which are being followed up.

Shri Mehta has specially commented upon one factor and this is the increase in train engine hours to train miles. This is purely a reflection on the drop in the speed of the goods trains mainly owing to three factors, namely, increase in the density of traffic, increase in the tempo of works and consequent speed restrictions and increase in the load of goods trains. In some cases it is also due to hold-ups of goods trains outside the marshalling yards which are being remodelled and expanded to meet the demands of increased volume of traffic.

In the case of coal supplied to the Railways, there has undoubtedly been a deterioration in the quality of supply, particularly, in relation to the pre-war days. Previously, the Railways procured a large percentage of coal from their own collieries and purchases from private collieries was done by selection and the Railways retained the authority of selection of collieries, inspection of coal and power to take action against collieries which did not supply the appropriate quality of coal. Since the introduction of coal control and the transfer of railway collieries to the Coal Controller the position has changed. The number of collieries which supplied coal to the Railways has now grown tremendously and this has added problems of stacking and examining the quality of coal of each individual colliery. However, it has now been agreed by the Ministry of Steel, Mines and Fuel that the Railways will enter into agreement with the colliery owners who will be jointly selected by the Railways and the Coal Controller for supplies of the requisite quality of coal and the Railways will be empowered under these agreements to impose suitable penalties for unsatisfactory supplies. Inspection arrangements will also be intensified.

With the increase in the demand of coking coal—this is another problem which is likely to arise in the near future—by the steel factories, the supply of coking coal to the Railways will practically disappear and its replacement by an equal grade of coal seems problematic. There is a difference in the consumption of coal between coking and non-coking coal of the same grade to the extent of five to eight per cent. Railways have been pressing upon the Coal Controller that the replacement, therefore, should be by a higher grade, but higher grade coal supplies are limited. In the result, therefore, we may have to face some increase in the rate of coal consumption. Every endeavour is being made to ensure that this is avoided.

Another big item of expenditure is in respect of repairs and maintenance the cost of which is debited to Demand No. 5. The total cost under this head in 1951-52 was of the order of Rs. 62.5 crore which on a comparative basis went up to Rs. 90.6 crore in 1957-58, the corresponding figure for 1956-57 being Rs. 86 crore. The main items included in this Head are way and works and rolling stock. In 1951-52 the way and works cost amounted to Rs. 18.5 crore and rolling stock costs amounted to Rs. 31 crore. The balance was due to other items of expenditure. In 1957-58 the way and works cost amounted to Rs. 32.75 crore and rolling stock maintenance cost amounted to Rs. 44 crore. Broadly speaking, the increase in expenditure to the *ad hoc* increase in staff costs which amount on an average to 20 per cent, increase in train miles of the order of 25 per cent resulting in increased maintenance costs, increase of Rs. 4.5 crore due to a change in the allocation procedure in accordance with which the cost of supervising staff in Class III has been debited under Demand No. 5 instead of Demand No. 4 as was the practice in 1951-52, increase of Rs. 3 crore due to special safety measures involving the employment of a large number of staff and increase in the cost of materials, particularly, steel, the price of which during this period went up by 45 per cent. All these factors combined largely account for the increase in expenditure under repairs and maintenance.

I do not suggest that there is no scope for reduction under this Head but I do wish to point out that the general order of increase by and large has been commensurate with the increase in assets and the various factors already mentioned. Every avenue of economy, however, is being explored.

Coming to the question of earnings the position is that credit for the entire increase of about Rs. 90 crore between 1951-52 and 1957-58 cannot be assigned to increase in traffic because during this period changes were made in freight rates and fares which alone account for an estimated increase of about Rs. 28 crore. The balance of Rs. 62 crore is attributable purely to the increase in traffic.

A significant fact worthy of note, however, is that the goods earning for general goods per tonne mile between 1951-52 and 1957-58 dropped from 13.9 pies to 13.1 pies, or a drop of 5.76 per cent in spite of a 12.5 per cent increase in freight. The average earnings per tonne mile instead of increasing by 12.5 per cent have actually gone down by 5.76 per cent. Considering that the earning of general goods traffic accounts for about Rs. 200 crore in 1957-58 after making allowance for the fact that the second increase of 6.25 per cent applied from 1 July 1957 and also for the fact that the increase was not applicable to foodgrains; this drop might be considered to be of the order of 14 per cent resulting in a loss of about Rs. 28 crore.

Here, I would like to point out that this diversion was from rail to road. The question of rail-road competition has agitated the minds of many hon. Members of the House and many things have been said in favour of rail-road transport. I do concede that road transport provides certain facilities which the Railways do not provide. Door to door delivery is one of the factors which proves to be more attractive. On the other hand, road transport has certain advantages over the Railways. I do not propose at this stage to go into the details, but as I said on the previous occasion that I am not against road transport, what I say is this that there should be proper co-ordination between the various modes of transport, whether it is rail, road, inland river transport or coastal shipping. The question of pilferage and quick delivery by the Railways is engaging the attention of the Railways. The whole question as to how this co-ordination could be affected is under the consideration of the Planning Commission, the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Railways. Let us hope that a satisfactory solution will be found of this so that all possible causes of duplication of the transport capacity in the country could be avoided.

Shri Asoka Mehta has asked me to indicate the criteria for assessing the efficiency of operation. I would suggest that the statistical data on the following lines provide sufficient material for judging the efficiency of operation, namely, wagon miles per wagon day which shows the mobility of wagons; net tonne miles per wagon day which includes both mobility and the load element; engine miles per engine day in use and on line—the former indicates the mileage obtained per day from engines in use and the latter includes also the engines which are under repairs or are lying spare in locosheds. In this connection, I should like to point out that attention might better be focussed on goods engine statistics because in the case of passenger engines the miles obtained are governed by passenger train timings and the engine links which can be fitted with the timings and, therefore, links are dependant on the time table—the speed of goods train, density of traffic, load of goods train, net tonne miles per goods locomotive day. This is a composite statistics which gives the output per goods locomotive and is a measure of earning potential

of an engine. Likewise, the net tonne mile per wagon day gives the earning potential of a wagon. I would not like to discuss all these items here. The hon. Members will find all the information in the detailed statistics contained in the Volume, Indian Railways, 1957-58. I would only refer to two important statistics which sum up the performance both of the wagons and engines and are internationally recognised. The net tonne miles per wagon day shows steady improvement both on the broad gauge and the metre gauge. This has gone up from 463 in 1951-52 to 580 in 1957-58 on the broad gauge and on the metre gauge from 198 to 225.

Shri Asoka Mehta has made certain comparisons with America where the distances are somewhat similar to ours and our figures are comparable. The comparable figures are:

Net tonne miles per wagon day,

U.S.A., in 1957—976 in short tonne of 2,000 pounds;

India, in 1957—586 in long tonne of 2,240 pounds.

Average carrying capacity per wagon : U.S.A, 54.5 short tonne, India, 22.2 long tonne. Equated net tonne miles per wagon day adjusted to the average carrying capacity of the Indian B.G. wagon: U.S.A.,—355; India, 586. Our figures are thus quite favourable considering the average carrying capacity of our B.G. wagons. The 'Net tonne miles per goods locomotive day' shows an improvement of 33 per cent between 1950-51 and 1957-58 on the broad gauge and 50 per cent on the metre gauge. If we take into consideration the average tractive effort, and equated results are worked out, the improvement on broad gauge is 21 per cent and on metre gauge is 43 per cent.

He has particularly referred to the 'Engine miles per engine day' figures and stated that comparatively it is very much lower than the corresponding figure in the U.S.A. and Russia and that our performance at present is what it was in those countries in the thirties of this century. I will say that our performance is quite satisfactory because 30 years ago, in those countries, traction was steam traction and at present their traction is not steam traction, but it is diesel traction. That margin will have to be allowed. So, it is quite natural that what their performance was 30 years ago is our performance today, because, the majority of our locomotives are steam locomotives and we use steam traction. I will give certain figures. In our case, the results are based on the use of steam locomotives. The average effective output per day does not exceed about 13 to 14 hours where as in the case of U.S.A., there are very few steam engines in use. A diesel engine or an electric engine can be effectively used for 22 hours out of 24 as against a steam engine which can only be used for 14 hours. This largely accounts for the disparity in the

Engine mile per engine day figures. A few diesel engines that we have got are also working for 22 hours. We are, however, not at all complacent about this matter. Every effort is being made to improve the speed of goods trains which of course, largely depends on the completion of the doubling works. As the House may be aware, even after a new double line is through, it takes some time to complete signalling and inter-locking and a season or two must pass before full speed can be allowed. By the end of the Plan period, however, full benefits of line capacity works which have been taken in hand will accrue and I hope speeds will show tangible improvement of which there are already some indications. This will correspondingly be reflected in the average mileage per engine day.

Shri Asoka Mehta also commented on the disparity in the increase in earnings between 1954-55 and 1958-59, on the one hand, on the Western and Northern Railways and on the other, on the Eastern Railway. So far as the Eastern Railway is concerned, owing to its bifurcation in 1955, the financial position could not be completely separated between the new Eastern Railway and the South Eastern Railway. We must, therefore, when revising the results, take the earnings of both the Eastern and the South Eastern Railways together. If this is done, it will be found that the actuals of the combined Eastern Zone in 1954-55 were Rs. 76.60 crore whereas the anticipations in 1958-59 when combined work out of Rs. 53.17 plus 51.95 became 105.12 crore, which shows an increase of about 37 per cent.

The impression which Shri Asoka Mehta has formed that the rate of increase in the railway earnings in any particular area represents the economic prosperity of that area, perhaps, is not tenable. I wish we could read the economic conditions whether that is stagnant or progressive from the working of the Railways. But, that will not hold good because a large, proportion of railway earnings accrue from through traffic for which the prosperity of the area itself is not concerned. Quite a large volume of imported foodgrains traffic which originated in Bombay and moved over the Western Railway does not represent the productivity of that area itself. Then, again, the nature of productivity is also an important factor. In the case of the Eastern Railway, the main originating traffic is coal and the incidence of freight is low. The hinterland served from Calcutta also leads to a short lead traffic as compared with hinterland served from Bombay Port, which again leads to disparity in earnings. I would, therefore, suggest that no clear inference is possible of the prosperity of any particular area purely from railway earnings of that area.

He had made one suggestion that there should be something presented to the House regarding the performance of the Railways. I have been examining that. I do propose to present something to the House regarding the performance of the Railways, not in the next Budget session, but even

before the next Budget session. That will give an idea of the performance of the Railways and we can of course, draw many inferences about the economic conditions of our country from the performance of the Railways. I will try to make it as useful as it can possibly be.

My hon. friends, Shri A.K. Gopalan, Shri A.C. Guha, Dr. Krishnaswami and Shri Mahanty made reference to the Railway Plan and its implementation. While generally conceding that the total allotment of the Plan would be spent they were apprehensive of the fulfilment of the physical targets and sought information regarding the adjustments made in the Railway Plan. As I explained in my Budget speech, the Railway Plan has had to be adjusted not only because of the limitation in resources and the difficulty in foreign exchange, but keeping in view other factors such as trends and pattern of traffic, and progress in other sectors of the national economy. I might mention that when the Second Five Year Plan was drawn up, the data available to the Railway Ministry on the basis of which proposals for development of new lines, doubling of the existing lines and dieselisation and other schemes were taken up, was not exactly firm and on this account, some re-adjustments became inevitable. In the light of appraisals and re-appraisals of the Second Five Year Plan as a whole prepared by the Planning Commission, the Railway Plan has been under constant review and examination and necessary adjustments and rephrasing adopted. This necessitated charges in the outlay of funds proposed for the various schemes of the Railway plan. In carrying out the changes, however, it has been ensured that the needs of the traffic are fully met and that the safety aspects are not affected. The allotment for railway users and for staff welfare works will not be curtailed.

In the case of rolling stock, while the original allocation was placed at Rs. 380 crore, it is now estimated that we shall have to spend about Rs. 430 crore. This revision is to accommodate the increase in cost and probable additional wagons which may be required if traffic materialises in excess of 162 million tonne. We are preparing ourselves to carry an additional 6 million tonne or so over 162 million tonne.

As against the Plan target of 2,364 steam locomotives, the procurement programme is to place on line 2,161 locomotives inclusive of 178 diesels which have a much higher performance. As regards wagons, it may be necessary to procure 6,000 wagons more for handling the additional traffic.

As regards coaching vehicles, the programme has been curtailed and it is now proposed to procure 8,838 coaching vehicles on additional and rehabilitation account. The shortfall will be compensated by keeping on line some of the over-aged stock by heavier repairs and more intensive maintenance. Progress of receipts of rolling stock are very satisfactory figures

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up to December 1958 being over 72,000 wagons, 3,890 coaching vehicles and 1,401 locomotives.

The House will be perhaps glad to know that our position regarding metre gauge wagons is very comfortable. Today we are in a position to export, and as a matter of fact, we are exploring the possibility of exporting, some of our metre gauge wagons. The State Trading Corporation is taking certain steps in this matter.

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It is not due to the shortage of wagons, but it is due to the shortage of line capacity.

In respect of line capacity works, the allocation of Rs. 186 crore would be retained. However, the extent of doubling provided in the Plan would be rephased, limiting it to 1,300 miles out of 1,600 miles included in the Plan. The reduction will be achieved by resorting to patch doubling for the time being on certain sections. But this, however, will give the required section capacity for the present requirements. In view of their importance both from the safety angle and for traffic capacity, it is not proposed to make any curtailment in the track renewal programme, and the necessary funds have been reallocated to cover the increase in costs.

On the subject of new lines I would clarify that the 842 miles included in the Plan were mainly to serve the needs of traffic in connection with the development of coal and steel. The lines in progress so far aggregating 424 miles constitute essential lines required for the present. In addition to completion of these lines, work will also be completed of over 400 miles of line on which the construction commenced in the First Plan.

In so far as electrification is concerned, the Plan envisaged electrification of 826 miles on 3,000 volts D.C. system. The mileage proposed was revised upward to 1,442 miles on the A.C. system, but having regard to the immediate needs of traffic, the work is being re-phased to suit the anticipated demand of traffic during the Second Plan. It is expected that about 800 miles of electrification would be completed during the Plan, while work would be in progress on the balance. The expenditure of Rs. 675 crore for the three years on the Plan represents about 60 per cent of the total plan allotment for the railways. This includes the value of construction material collected and to be drawn up for the execution of the works next year. The physical progress corresponding to this expenditure, I may assure the House, has not lagged behind, and it should be realised that a large number of works are in various stages of construction and completion in addition to the works and assets already completed.

In regard to some of the detailed figures quoted by Shri Bharucha—whenever Shri Bharucha speaks, he brings his knowledge to bear on several aspects of the Railway Budget—I would like to explain the position. The third class earnings which were about Rs. 95 crores in the year preceding the Second Five Year Plan, *i.e.* 1955-56, went up to nearly Rs. 106 crore in 1957-58 and, though estimated now for the current year at about Rs. 103 crore, are expected to go up to about Rs. 105 crore in 1959-60. The position cannot be said to be altogether static.

In the upper class passenger earnings also, there has been some improvement over the figure of Rs. 12.85 crore in 1955-56, and the figures in the revised estimates of 1958-59 and the Budget Estimates of 1959-60 are Rs. 13.47 and Rs. 13.52 crore respectively. I do not know how he referred to an increase of only 20 per cent in goods traffic receipts in the course of four years. The increase in goods earnings anticipated in 1959-60 over the figure for 1955-56 will be more than 50 per cent, *i.e.* Rs. 272.58 crores against Rs. 180.28 crore.

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Anticipation only for the Budget, not for the current year.

Similarly, the increase of 13 million tonne, lifted by the railways which he referred to was an increase in two years interval only and not in three years—137 million tonne anticipated in 1958-59 as compared to 124 million tonne in 1956-57. The increase in the tonnage of goods over the figure of 114 million tonne lifted in 1955-56 *i.e.* in three years would be 23 million tonne.

He has made special mention of the increase in working expenses, in repairs and maintenance and under operation fuel. Page 64 of the Explanatory Memorandum on the Railway Budget, 1959-60 no doubt, indicates an increase in operation fuel from about Rs. 27 crore in 1956-57 to Rs. 48 crore in 1957-58, but he will find an explanation for the difference of about Rs. 11 crore if he will refer to paragraph 13 (vii) of the Explanatory Memorandum on the Railway Budget for 1957-58 which was part of the White Paper on the Railway Budget for 1957-58 presented to Parliament in March 1957.

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I will not go into the details of that. I will refer him to that only.

As regards his reference to the need for rationalisation of workshop procedure with a view to controlling expenditure on repairs and maintenance and fixation of norms of work and for issue of stores, I invite his attention to paragraph 37, page 17 of my speech in which I alluded to the setting up of a productivity cell recently for this very purpose.

The increase in capital-at-charge since 1955-56 is not Rs. 910 crore as assumed by Shri Naushir Bharucha. This is only the total of the Plan outlay in the year 1956-57 to the year 1959-60, but out of this a sum of Rs. 408 crore is expenditure charged to Open Line Works-Revenue, Depreciation Fund and Development Fund which were accepted by the Parliamentary Committee on Railway Convention as being non-revenue earning heads and therefore not chargeable to Capital. Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri, while introducing the Railway Budget of 1956-57, made it clear in his speech that only Rs. 680 crore of the Railway's Second Plan provision were chargeable to Capital. Shri Naushir Bharucha himself admitted that all the investments do not go to form the capital-at-charge. But I did not follow his further allusion to nearly Rs. 300 crore of assets retired as worn-out, for which no depreciation has been provided. The increase in capital-at-charge over the figure of Rs. 968 crore on 31 March 1956 is about Rs. 500 crore. The ratio of increase in net traffic receipts from Rs. 58.07 crore in 1955-56 to Rs. 93.21 crore in 1959-60 or in the quantum of traffic is not disproportionate to the increase of capital-at-charge from Rs. 968 crore to Rs. 1,473 crore in this period.

I appreciate his concern that the present annual contribution of Rs. 45 crore per annum to the depreciation fund is not sufficient. The consideration on which the present contribution of Rs. 45 crore per annum was fixed was indicated in para 17 of the speech of Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri when introducing the Railway Budget for 1956-57. Government will certainly consider the question of augmenting the contribution as necessary when the railway surplus increases with growth of traffic. All the aspects of this matter will be put before the forthcoming Parliamentary Committee on Railway Convention to whom this matter amongst others will be remitted.

He also referred to the temporary loan of Rs. 22 crore in the two years 1958-59 and 1959-60 from the General Revenues to finance the Railway Development Fund. I tried to explain this at some length in my budget speech. The fund now is not for development in the sense of construction of new lines. According to the Report of the Railway Convention Committee, 1954, the cost of certain operating improvements and railway users' amenities as well as labour welfare works is charged to this fund. The intention of the 1954 Railway Convention Committee evidently was that non-revenue-earning works of the nature referred to should not be charged to capital, involving recurring dividend liability for the railways. It can hardly be expected that the total cost of such works which are really of a capital nature should be met entirely out of the revenue surplus from which solely the development fund is fed.

For the execution of the Second Five Year Plan, it was estimated that an expenditure of not less than about Rs. 92 crore would fall on this fund, and

even when the expectation of outlay was much less than this, the Railway Convention Committee, 1954, had explicitly provided for such loans from General Revenues being taken, when having regard to the magnitude of the amount involved, such a course becomes necessary.

He has asked for clarification as to the purpose for which the Revenue Reserve Fund should be utilised. This was made clear in the recommendation of the Railway Convention Committee, 1949, which has stated that the scope of the Revenue Reserve Fund in future should be limited to the dividend equalisation that is ensuring payment of the fixed dividend, and bridging any budgetary gap in the undertaking.

In regard to Shri Naushir Bharucha's suggestion for introducing diesel and electric traction to economise on coal, I may assure him that these matters are receiving attention. The measures in hand in this connection were briefly referred to in my Budget Speech. I may further inform the House that recently we invited tenders for the supply of diesel engines. One of the conditions in the tender was that they will have to manufacture diesel locomotives in collaboration with Indian partners. The tenders have been received, and they are being further examined. The intention is that diesel locomotives, especially diesel engines, should be manufactured in the private sector in collaboration with foreign firms. So far as the electric locomotives are concerned, the intention is to manufacture them in the public sector, most likely in Chittaranjan. The mechanical and other parts will be done there, and the electrical parts will be supplied by the Heavy Electricals Factory at Bhopal.

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Of course. The idea is to have diesel for the metre gauge also. Metre gauge will not be ignored in this respect.

I have covered most of the financial and operational aspects. Certain other aspects which were raised in the House were covered by my hon. friend the Deputy Minister yesterday.

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I shall come to that also. I am dealing with important matters first.

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If I shall explain, the hon. Member will realise perhaps that I am dealing with aspects which are more important than this.

My hon. friend, Shri Frank Anthony when he spoke on the Budget was swayed more by sentiment than by reason. And when one is swayed by sentiment and sentiment alone, one loses his feet; and he did that.

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I am sure that perhaps if he will read his speech he will realise that. I do not want to comment much on that.

According to him, class IV staff have lost all sense of discipline, class I officers are a relief and follow the colonial traditions.

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Class II officers are frustrated because they do not get quick promotions to class I, and class III staff do not do the work. So, according to him, all the grades of the railway employees, whether they are class IV or class I or any other are not working, due to one reason or the other. That is a description of the railways which hardly any sane man will accept. He said that today, two to two and a half men were doing the work which was previously carried out by one person. It is not borne by statistics or figures, of growth in the work on the railways, which Shri Frank Anthony may himself check from the figures available with him. This colonial tradition is a pet phrase which perhaps he is not in a position to shake off. Whenever he speaks on the railways, he has used this phrase. I was looking into his speeches for the last six or seven or eight years, and I find that it has sat on his head.

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If the class I officers have got any tradition, I am here to speak with personal knowledge, they have a tradition of devotion to duty and hard work. But for their devotion to duty and hard work, the Indian Railways would not have functioned. Then again, to say that class IV staff are indisciplined, they do not listen to anybody.....

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He said that there has been quick promotion of class I officers; there has been, in the very nature of the things. As for the class II officers, I do agree that they are the backbone of the railways, and we always see that they also get their due share in promotion. We have a rule by which 33.3 per cent of the vacancies in class I are reserved for the class II officers. These vacancies can be filled only by promotion from class II, and I am sure, Shri Anthony is aware of it.

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I might add that last year a total of 121 class II officers were selected for promotion to class I. Against 1,473 sanctioned posts in class II, 1,792 officers are working and 300 of them are today officiating in the senior scale.

He also complained about the disposal of cases. It will be no exaggeration if I say that from among the Members of Parliament, the largest number of letters was received from Shri Anthony. I admire his perseverance; I admire the time and amount of labour he puts in for representing the cases of all these persons. I admire him for that. But the only thing is this. Sometimes these cases are of individual employees which have been examined by successive Ministers, not once or twice but any number of times. They are cases of grievances of individual employees which have been examined by Shri Santhanam and Shri Gopaldaswamy Ayyangar, by Shri Alagesan and Shri Lal Bahadur Shastri and replies have been sent. But the cases will not be closed unless the decision is taken to the satisfaction of Shri Anthony. So, his grievance remains pending. There is no doubt that there will be no finality unless the administration sees in the same way as Shri Anthony sees it. That is my difficulty.

He makes a complaint or grievance that the General Manager of the Southern Railway, returns a case to him whenever he sends one to him, and requests him to send the case to the Minister. Well, the General Manager is not to blame. There has been a letter issued by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs indicating at what level the Members of Parliament could correspond. And, the General Manager of the Southern Railway does nothing more than what that letter seeks to lay down. I have also requested our General Managers that they can use their discretion and send replies to the Members of Parliament, if it is a matter of some public importance. But, if it is a case of the grievance of some individual employee, they may, well, politely request the hon. Member of Parliament to take up the matter with me. The General Manager of the Southern Railway is following the instructions I have communicated to him.

I receive letters from Shri Anthony and I do attach due importance to them. I may assure him and all other hon. Members of this House that whenever I receive any communication from a Member of the House I do examine the case. Sometimes, it takes very long because references have to be made to the Railways or to the Divisional offices. But I assure them that I do examine all the cases and I try to reply to all these letters personally. It might be that in certain cases, in order to save time, some letters are issued over the signature of some officer of the Railway Board. But, in a majority of cases, even to Shri Anthony, I have been personally replying to the letters.

The real difficulty with my hon. friend Shri Anthony is that his union is not a recognised one. And, perhaps, it may not be possible to give recognition to that union not because there is any idea of any discrimination but because the recent trend among the railway employees—and that is causing great anxiety to me—is that a number of functional unions and associations have

been organised. And, if you look to the number of cut motions of which notice has been given, you will see that several of them urge recognition for such unions. If all the unions are recognised, they will cut at the very root of trade unionism among the Railways. The demand is for the recognition of All India Station Masters' Association, the All India Ticket Examiners' Association, the All India Drivers' Association, the All India Commercial Clerks' Association, the All India Ministerialist Staff Association so on and so forth, and I do not know how many functional unions will grow. They will, as I have said, cut at the very root of trade unionism in the Railways. Therefore, it is better that this process of disintegration is checked in time and the process of consolidation of the railway employees starts. This brings me to the claims of the two Federations.

At present, even if I do accept the claims of the two Federations, and the figures given by both of them—one claims that its membership is 3 lakh and the other also claims that its membership is 3 lakh—the total membership of both the federations will be only 6 lakh, out of a total strength of nearly 11 lakh of railway employees. Some of their members do include a number of porters, who are not Railway employees and are not included in this strength of the railway employees.

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I am coming to that. Will my hon. friend have patience because I have just started dealing with this? Even if I accept the figures given by both of them as correct, the total number of railway employees who are unionised will be 6 lakh, out of a total strength of 11 lakh. It means that more than 40 per cent of the Railway Employees are not unionised. It is not a very satisfactory state of affairs. As I said, the process of disintegration has started in the formation of these sectional and functional unions. And, if these unions are recognised—I am resisting the demand for the recognition of these sectional and functional unions—then, trade unionism on the Railways will be finished more or less.

It may be that both the federations are trying to encourage these functional unions. I have requested them to desist from this. But I find that both these Federations are trying to encourage these functional unions. Perhaps, they are not aware that at one time these functional unions will eat up the Federations themselves. I want to make it clear.

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I have not yielded. What is this?

My hon. friend Shri Hem Barua has put the question why we have recognised one Union and not the other. I have done nothing. When I took

over the position was that one union was recognised and the other was not in existence....

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I am explaining the position, the historical facts as they stand because the hon. friend put the question to me as to why one is recognised and the other is not. I am telling him that when I took over one was recognised and the other was not in existence. You will mark this position. After the unity agreement when Jayaprakashji took the move in the matter, only one federation i.e. the National Federation of Indian Railwaymen remained and the All India Railwaymen's Federation ceased to exist. The dispute of the two factions which was referred to as the Madras Group and the Bezwada Group was not that of the All India Railwaymen's Federation. They were two groups of the National Federation of the Indian Railwaymen. One was the Vasavada group and the other Guruswamy group. At that time there was no A.I.R.F.. When these two factions of the N.F.I.R. could not combine together the unity move or the compromise formula between the two failed, then the Guruswamy group revived the A.I.R.F. in 1957. A strike threat was given and something like that was done. I have tried in my humble way to see whether unity can be effected between the two. At one stage I thought it was very near success. I must admit that for the time being I have failed in achieving this unity. But I am not pessimistic. I am still hopeful when everybody says and declares that in the interest of the railwaymen unity is essential. Whether it is those who owe their allegiance to the A.I.R.F. or it is those who owe their allegiance to the N.F.I.R., both of them declare that unity is essential in the interest of the railwaymen. Therefore, I feel encouraged and optimistic. In this House also everyone feels that unity is necessary. I am encouraged that given the will from all directions, it is not impossible to achieve unity among the Indian Railwaymen. When the unity formula was given and when the question of arbitrator and observer was raised, there was one commitment on my part. A channel of representation was demanded by the A.I.R.F., and I had suggested at the time of the unity agreement itself a provision for a channel of representation. I was committed to this that in case this channel of representation failed, I would provide a channel of representation to the A.I.R.F. so that it may approach the Railway Board and the Railway Ministry. I have done that.

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But what are you driving at? I am not apportioning the blame.

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I agree that it is not anybody's birth right to have recognition. I am giving the historical facts and I am not at present blaming this federation or

that. It will not be fair or correct to say that I have no opinion about one federation or the other, but I do not want to say that at this stage because certain schemes that I have in view may be prejudiced by that. I was saying that I have provided virtual recognition to the A.I.R.F. Recognition to the unions on the railways is granted by the General Managers. Recognition to the All India Federation is accorded by this Government or by the Railway Ministry and then they are free to approach the Railway Board or the Government and discuss and correspond with them. The A.I.R.F. has received virtual recognition though not formal recognition. They are free to correspond with the Railway Board and the Minister and they do receive replies from us. Not only that. They meet the Railway Board regularly and they write and represent and they receive replies. The question is when the formal recognition should come, and I will request the House to leave that to me for some time. I have certain schemes, and if I succeed, that will be better for the railwaymen and for the trade union. I do not want to discriminate—between any unions, and by the action I have taken during the last two years it should be clear that political considerations do not weigh with me in my dealings with the unions of the railwaymen.

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So you must remember that if there is only one union and no other, it is not a question of discrimination as you are also aware, that in Perambur also there is one union. One union belongs to one federation and the other to another federation. Both of them have not been recognised. If I had recognised one union and not the other, you could blame me of discrimination. As I was saying, there has been no discrimination. I am considering the question of Chittaranjan and Perambur and a decision may be taken in due course.

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Sir, I have dealt briefly with the question of retrenchment. There is no intention at all, as I have said,—I want to reiterate it—to retrench any railway employee but at times misapprehensions are created among the staff. I will see that not one single railway employee is retrenched due to measures of economy. But we have taken certain measures. Shri Vajpayee was reading a paragraph from one of the letters issued to the General Managers of Railways by the Railway Board. I do not know how he managed to get that letter. But there also what was indicated was that the General Managers should be cautious to see that the working expenses do not become disproportionately higher than what the traffic demanded. There was nothing wrong in that. And that letter produced its results. The trend was arrested. In certain railways which were showing as trend of running into deficit, that trend was arrested.

Therefore, what I am saying is, even though we have issued instructions that the posts which have remained unfilled for a few months and which are not necessary should not be filled, even though we are taking all those steps, I may assure the House that there is no intention to retrench any single railway employee. Of course, somebody pleaded the cause of casual workers. At present more than 2.5 lakh casual workers are working under the Railways on various projects and various other activities. It will not be possible, even if we have the intention and the will to do it, to absorb 2.5 lakh of people on the Railways. But in the Central Government we have got this procedure, that whenever any project comes to an end we do circulate the names of retrenched employees to various employing ministries or new projects that are likely to be started requesting them to absorb as many of the retrenched people as possible. Beyond that, it is not possible to absorb all the casual workers who may on some occasion or the other be called upon to work on the railways temporarily.

Shri Gopalan raised the question of the Code of Discipline. One should not forget that there is a difference between the private industry and the Railways. On the Railways, we have many things established which do not exist in the private industry. We have channels of representation, channels of appeal, first appeal, second appeal, and then the employees may approach the Minister or even the President. All these facilities do not exist in the private industry. So the Code of Discipline was drawn up specially for the private industry. We have, no doubt, extended the scope of that Code of Discipline to companies and corporations run by the Central Government, but the application of the Code of Discipline to departments directly run by the Government itself has not been finalised—perhaps, the Labour Minister is considering that question.

But I may bring another aspect to the notice of those interested in the trade unions on the Railways, that when this Code of Discipline was drawn up and discussed the Railway labour was not a party to it. That aspect one should not forget. Though the Railway Ministry as an employing Ministry was consulted, there was no occasion for the Railway employees to consider that Code of Discipline, because they were not invited to the tripartite Labour Conference where this Code of Discipline was drawn up and discussed. Therefore, at some stage it will be necessary for the Railway labour themselves to consider it whether it will be in any way advantageous to them over the existing provisions that they have got for the various matters dealt with by the Code of Discipline.

So far as the official side is concerned, we were invited and we did participate. But, as I have said, so far as the companies and corporations of the Government are concerned the Code of Discipline was made applicable

to them. So far as the undertakings which are run departmentally are concerned, the Government rules and regulations and terms and conditions of service are all applicable to them. There is a difference between the two. All the terms and conditions of service of a Government employee are not applicable to those people who are employed in companies and corporations, whereas they are applicable to the people employed in undertakings run departmentally by Government. That is why this Code of Discipline has been made applicable to companies and corporations run by the Government. Whether it should be made applicable or not to the undertakings run departmentally by the Government is still under consideration.

Then, a question was raised last year and I had given an undertaking that the cases of employees suspended under the national security rules will be examined by me. Nearly 52 cases were pending and pending since long years—since 1948, 1949 and 1950. I have personally gone into all those cases. I think Smt. Parvathi Krishnan was interested in that. As I said, there were 52 cases and all those cases have been finalised. Out of these 52 cases, 27 employees have been reinstated as a result of the examination in which I personally went into the matter.

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These 27 are not going to be affected on that account, but 22 employees have been discharged. When after examination it was found that it is not possible to reinstate them they had to be discharged, and they were discharged under rule 192.

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That is what I am telling you very frankly, that after examination it was found that it was not possible to reinstate 22 people. Now, whether to dismiss them or to terminate their services was the question. I personally felt that it will be advantageous to them if their services are terminated under rule 148.

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If you will examine it you will yourself find that there is a lot of difference between dismissal and termination. Shri Banerjee who is himself a trade union leader knows the difference between termination and dismissal.

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I personally felt that termination will be more advantageous to them than dismissal.

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Recourse has been taken to rule 148, and the services of some people were terminated. I also agree that in such cases recourse should not have been taken to rule 148. But, as I have explained, I was myself responsible for recourse having been taken to rule 148 in these cases so that they may have this benefit of termination of services and not dismissal from service. But I have told the trade union leaders themselves that whenever action will be taken under rule 148, they will go either to the Board or to me, and "I will tell you the reason for taking this action." In a few cases I have informed them and they had been good enough, after the reason was explained to them, to agree to the decision. I offered to them that "if you feel that some injustice has been done on this score, and after satisfying yourself if you will come and ask me, I am always prepared to review their cases". But we are taking action in regard to corruption cases, accidents and cases of grave in discipline involving violence. I do not want to keep it a secret. We are taking action, but that number will be very small. I offered to Shri Peter Alvares that "whenever you feel, and have personally satisfied yourself that the official against whom action has been taken is not corrupt, I am always prepared to review the case".

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I have seen that. I may, at this stage, refer to another point. Quite a number of questions have been raised by hon. members regarding timings of trains, missing of connections, opening of certain train halts, flag stations, providing certain amenities at stations, etc. It will not be possible for me—though I have got the necessary brief—to go into all these details. What I am proposing to do is this. I have already written to the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs about it. The idea is, the Members of Parliament, coming under the jurisdiction of a particular zonal railway will meet together informally with me and I will invite the General Manager of the zonal railway concerned. At that meeting not only these things to which the questions related but other things also concerning the zone and the nearby areas may be considered, so that the time of the House may not be taken up by most of those items which are raised here.

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So, I think that will avoid much of the time taken for discussing those matters of local importance in the House. We can deal with those matters when we meet at the informal gathering. My idea is to have at least one such meeting every year with the Members of Parliament and the General Manager concerned. It may be for half an hour—or three hours. My idea is, if the meeting continues it may continue for even three days.

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If it is necessary, we can have it once in six months. That possibility cannot be ruled out.

Now, I come to the point raised by Shri Awasthi. He mentioned a firm in Kanpur and he has reminded me about it. I will give him the details. There are two firms there—Messers Singh Engineering Works, (Private) Ltd., and M/s. J. and K. Industries, Kanpur,—who were recommended by the Railway Equipment Committee for placing of educational orders on them for the manufacturing and supply of wagons. Educational orders dated 30 January 1957 and 10 July 1957 respectively were placed with them for 250 broad-gauge wagons at a price of Rs. 11,539 per wagon. The total value of each of these orders was Rs. 28,84,750. The terms of payment are: payment of 90 per cent of the billing price for each wagon will be made on the authority of certificates issued by the Deputy Director of Inspection, DGS & D Kanpur. Payment of the balance of 10 per cent of the billing price will be made on certification by the consignee when the wagons have been received in complete condition and good working order. The firm has already furnished a bank guarantee from a recognised bank for ten per cent of the value of the contract valid for twelve months from the date of placing the wagon in service to cover the guarantee, and so on. Now, I will not go into the details, but as I said, these are educational orders. We wanted to create an additional manufacturing capacity in the country, and so orders were placed with 10 or 11 firms. Some have made progress and some have not shown much interest in the matter.

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I will explain. This is an educational order, and capacity that exists in the country, whether in the public sector or in the private sector, is being fully utilized. It was only with a view to create additional capacity that educational orders were placed.

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I say that whatever capacity exists in the country is utilized. If there was enough capacity in the country there was no necessity for creating additional capacity. But the position is this. No payment has been made and no payment is going to be made.

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My friend is not listening to me. I am saying that not much progress has been made by Singh Engineering Company and not much interest has been shown by J.K. Industries. The position is this. As I said, it is an educational order, and additional capacity has to be created in the country. A limitation of time has not been placed. There were a few other firms also. I have not got

the information with me now, but I remember there were a few other firms in Bombay, Calcutta and in Delhi also, with whom orders were placed. But they have not shown much interest in it. So, no money has been paid; no advance is going to be paid. But if they were so interested and if they do the work, the condition that I have already referred to will be applied to them.

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I have said I have no information about the loan the Uttar Pradesh Government is said to have provided for them.

Now, it has become a tendency in certain sections to raise matters unjustifiably and even with the intention of vilifying persons in authority. For instance, it was said that Allahabad station was being constructed because the Prime Minister and the then Railway Minister hailed from that State.

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I think these remarks should not be made. Again, it was said that because I come from Bihar, most of the contracts in U.P. are being given to the people from Bihar, that lowest tenders from U.P. are not accepted and higher tenders from Bihar are accepted.

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To say such things is uncharitable and unfair. If any hon. member has got some instance where the lowest tender of any particular person was not accepted and a higher tender was accepted on provincial consideration, it would be better if those instances are brought to you or to me so that I may look into them.

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In a huge organisation like this, questions have been raised about the creation of new zones, setting up of Railway Public Service Commissions, etc. The railways are playing their own part for the integration of the country and zones have been created on an operational basis. There is a demand for a zone for Andhra because it is served by three Railways. There are only one or two States which are served by one railway; most of the States are served by more than one railway. Andhra is served by three railways, but my State, Bihar, is served by four railways—North-East Frontier Railway, North-Eastern Railway, South-Eastern Railway and the Eastern Railway. So, it is not possible to create zones on considerations of State; it will be absurd to create zones State-wise.

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Similarly, there are demands that in every State, there should be a Railway Service Commission. It will not be possible. Then, so long as our Constitution stands as it is, it will not be possible to restrict recruitment to a particular zone or division from a particular State only. There are grievances from many people that their State is not adequately represented in the railway service; the representation is not commensurate with the population or the length of the railway in that State. Shri Dasappa is prompting me that Bihar is one of them; yes, of course it is. But because I happen to be Railway Minister, I cannot suggest that more recruitment should be made from Bihar.

Similarly, there are thousands and thousands of contracts for vending, catering, tea stalls etc. They also cannot be restricted to the resident of a particular State. The only thing which has to be seen is whether by giving the contract to a particular person there is any loss to the railways and whether it has been given on the usual terms and conditions.

I am speaking generally for all the States. I was saying that whether it is a fruit stall or tea stall, etc., it cannot be restricted to the residents of a particular State. The only thing to be seen is whether undue favour has been shown to anybody which may lead to a loss to the Railways. As I have said, there are thousands and thousands of tenders invited and it is not possible for anybody to know all the details. If anything comes to my notice that in a particular case where tenders were invited, the lowest tender was not accepted and a higher tender was accepted, I will certainly look into that matter. But there are occasions when the lowest tender is not accepted and a higher tender is accepted; we will have to examine that.

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I have covered most of the points. I will say a few words about the recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and Anglo-Indians. Unfortunately, the recruitment of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Anglo-Indians has not been commensurate with the quota fixed for these communities. Not only in superior classes of posts where there is paucity of qualified candidates, but even in class III and class IV staff, I was surprised to find that the recruitment has not been up to the quota fixed for them. So, certain steps have been taken. So far as class III staff are concerned, in case the Railway Service Commission fails to recruit the required number of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Anglo-Indians, I have authorised the General Managers to fill up the vacancies by candidates belonging to these communities. Similarly, for class IV staff, the Divisional Superintendents have been authorised. I was surprised to find that the recruitment of Anglo-Indians also has not been commensurate with the fixed quota. So, I requested my friend, Shri Frank Anthony, to supply a list of qualified

candidates to me. He has forwarded a list of nearly 200 names of Anglo-Indians who are matriculates. I am circulating that to the General Managers, so that the vacancies reserved for the Anglo-Indians may be filled up by Anglo-Indians themselves.

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My hon. friend forgets that there as a Constitutional guarantee that there should be five per cent reservation for Anglo-Indians and that it shall be progressively reduced. I am trying to fulfil that Constitutional obligation.

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I may inform the House that the Board has issued instructions, not fixing the quotas, but from another angle, that is to say, for example, a number of watermen from among the Scheduled Castes may be appointed. So, it is dealt with from the social and psychological angle, not from the employment angle only. Also, it has been suggested that in the tea-stalls and catering establishments certain places may be offered to the members of the Scheduled Castes and also to the Muslims so that it will have some social and psychological effect on the society and fulfil the obligation which has been provided in the Constitution. A circular to that effect has already been issued.

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But it does not mean that every circular is immediately implemented. It takes time.

Then, if there is accommodation and there are seats, our schools are open to outsiders and they are not precluded from taking advantage of the railway schools. As a matter of fact, in many schools up to 10 per cent outsiders are taking advantage of them.

I think I have covered most of the points raised by the hon. Members.

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As I said, I am not here to apportion blame between the two federations. I have scrupulously avoided saying anything in this connection to show which of the two federations was responsible for the failure, because, as I said, I am still an optimist.

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I referred to certain new lines to be constructed in the Third Plan for which advance action will be taken during the Second Plan period. I mentioned the lines already approved in this regard and some other lines under active consideration. I should like to inform the House that a decision has since

been reached regarding the two lines under consideration. The Patharkandi-Dharamkand line will connect Tripura with the rest of the country.

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Another line is from Diva—this is a very important line—from Diva to Uran *via* Panvel. This line will help the economic growth of this under-developed section and tend to decentralise industrial growth from the congested area around Bombay.

The Koyna Project grids in this area will be available to provide the requisite electric power for industries.

The proposal for construction of the Hassan-Mangalore line is still under consideration and when the final decision has been reached, I shall inform the House. I may inform my friends, Shri Dasappa and others, that I am very actively pursuing it. I am still hoping that I may be in a position to announce that line also during the course of this session of the House.

Budgetary provision has not been made in 1959-60 budget, as these lines were under consideration at the time of presentation of the budget. I shall, therefore, come up to the House with supplementary demands during the current session, to cover the anticipated expenditure in 1959-60 on the additional new lines that are approved for construction.

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There have been demands from so many areas. So I just out of curiosity asked my department to have a calculation made and I found all the demands made in this House put together amount to about 1,000 miles.

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That is 1,000 miles. But if we take the demands of the State Governments also, it will come to something like 3,000 miles.

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Personally I feel that in every area we should try to give some new line, especially in the undeveloped areas. I will take up this question with the Planning Commission for the Third Five Year Plan.

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I think I have covered all the points. I will again express my thankfulness to the House for all the cheering words that they have said about the railwaymen. A word of appreciation from the representatives of the people

will encourage the railwaymen very greatly. With all the lapses and weaknesses that we may have on the railways, we have, to the best of our capacity and ability, contributed our mite towards the development of the national economy. Here I may say that there are more than one million railwaymen working in difficult conditions in cities and isolated rural areas, who deserve a word of appreciation from this House. I am again thankful for all the kind words that have been said by the hon. Members about railwaymen.

I will take this opportunity again to express my own thanks to the railwaymen but for whose devoted service it would not have been possible for me to show the performance that the railways have been in a position to do, and I am sure the House will join me in conveying our thanks to more than a million of our railwaymen.

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## ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE\*<sup>‡</sup>

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I beg to move:

“That this House resolves that the period for the continuance in force of the recommendations of the Railway Convention Committee, 1954, governing the arrangements between railway finance and general finance which were approved by this House by a resolution adopted on the 16 December 1954, be extended by one year up to the 31 March 1961.”

As the House is aware, the Railway Finance was separated from General Finance on the basis of a Resolution passed by the then Legislative Assembly in 1924 in the following terms:

“In order to relieve the General Budget from the violent fluctuations caused by the incorporation therein of the Railway estimates and to enable Railways to carry out a continuance Railway policy based on the necessity of making a definite return to General Revenues, on the money expended by the State on Railways.”

In pursuance of this Resolution, the Railway Budget became a separate entity and separate Reserve Funds in the shape of the Depreciation Reserve Fund, the Revenue Reserve Fund and later the Development Fund were created. General principles were also laid down for the allocation of expenditure to Capital, Revenue and these funds. The details of the financial arrangements were, however, reviewed periodically by Convention Committees of Parliament, which examined the position carefully and made recommendations. The approval of Parliament was then obtained based on these recommendations.

The present financial arrangements are based on the recommendations of the Parliamentary Convention Committee appointed in 1954, which were accepted by this House by a Resolution passed on the 16 December 1954, and which are current up to the 31 March 1960. In the ordinary course, I would at this time have approached the House for the setting up of a new Convention Committee, so that, after allowing for the time the Committee would require for its deliberation, its recommendations may become available for

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\* *L.S. Deb.*, 28 April 1959

<sup>‡</sup> Introducing a Resolution *Re. the Recommendations of Railway Convention Committee, 1954* in Lok Sabha as the Minister of Railways.

consideration and decision by the House before the expiry of the current period. As stated in my Budget Speech for 1959-60, it is essential, however, that a Convention Committee set up for this purpose should have reasonably accurate data as regards the burden of additional traffic that would fall on the Railways, the level of investment required to meet that obligation and a good forecast of the earnings and working expenses during the next few years. This, however, is not possible until reasonably firm decisions are taken as regards the magnitude of the Railways' Third Five Year Plan.

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This, however, is not possible until reasonably firm decisions are taken as regards the magnitude of the Railways' Third Five Year Plan. There are two other important factors, the exact financial implications of which are difficult to assess at present. One is the new freight structure which was introduced with effect from 1 October 1958 and the other is the Report of the Pay Commission, which is still awaited.

In these circumstances, I feel that the forecast of the Railways' financial position could only be made on a realistic basis in about a year's time. I have, therefore, come to the conclusion that the period covered by the present Convention might be extended by one year. This would have an added advantage that in future, the period of the Conventions would synchronise with the quinquennium periods of our Five Year Plans.

With these words I commend the Resolution for consideration and adoption by the House.

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The proposition before the House is a very simple one and I do not propose to reply to all the points which have been raised while discussing this simple proposition which seeks nothing more than an extension of the present convention by only one year. As you have stated, when this question touches indirectly upon the whole finance of the railways and their relation to the General Budget, naturally the scope for discussion can be said to be wide enough to cover all aspects of the Railway Administration. The discussion here has, by and large, been as if the subject of the whole Railway Administration was before the House.

My hon. friend, Shri Naushir Bharucha, wanted to know how the Pay Commission or the introduction of the new freight structure or the size of the Third Plan was germane to this proposition. Of course, we can lay down certain principles, and if we have to lay down abstract principles all these data will not be necessary. But I am afraid Shri Naushir Bharucha will not be

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satisfied only with laying down abstract principles to regulate the relation between the General Budget and the Railway Budget. If certain principles have to be laid down, they should be based on some realistic considerations with regard to their enforcement. If we have to lay down certain principles to regulate the relation between general finance and railway finance and also to regulate the working of the railway finances *inter se*, they will have to be based on certain data. Unless we know the size of the Third Five Year Plan and the allocation out of that to the railways for their Third Five Year Plan, it will not be possible to have a realistic approach to the problem that has to be solved by the Convention Committee.

Ch. Ranbir Singh in his own inimitable way—which perhaps very few Members might have marked—said that it was not only the size of the Railways' Third Five Year Plan which was relevant, but this was also dependent upon what was going to be the pattern of the third Five Year Plan as a whole, where the various industries were to be located, how the trade and commerce depending upon diversification or location of industries are going to be generated, and what traffic the Railways will be called upon to move during the Third Five Year Plan. It will not be realistic to lay down certain principles as to what dividend is to be paid by the Railways unless we know what are the reasonable expectations of the Railway earnings dependent upon the traffic, both goods and passenger, which the Railways will be called upon to move.

We can lay down abstract principles that on the capital-at-charge so much percentage will have to be paid. Whether the capital-at-charge is one rupee or Rs. 100 or Rs. 1 crore or Rs. 1,000 crores, the principle holds good. Theoretically, it is quite correct. But, whether in actual practice, the volume of the capital-at-charge makes any difference or not—I think any reasonable person will agree that it does make a difference.

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We will have to base our calculations on the reasonable data that we have before us. He asked, while we are urging the impending decision or recommendation of the Pay Commission, how are we sure that the prices of materials and other things are not going to rise. We must have some reasonable basis to anticipate certain things. Here is the Pay Commission. One can reasonably anticipate its decisions. If we have some data by which we can reasonably anticipate about the prices of goods, equipment etc. that also will have to be taken into consideration. That is why when I say about the Pay Commission I say that because here is a factor about which we can have some reasonable anticipation. What we seek is to extend the period by one year.

Shri Bharucha raised other questions which I will not go into at this stage, because those are the very factors which have to be considered by the Convention Committee itself.

What should be the principle on which allocation to the Depreciation Fund should be determined; whether what has been recommended or decided by the present Convention Committee is quite correct or not; whether it should be modified or it should be based on certain other principles? These are all matters to be considered by the next Convention Committee and decided by them. So, I will not argue what should be the principle. Of course, Shri Bharucha has given various principles on which the diversion of funds to the Depreciation Fund is determined or based. And, Shri Sharma has, in his own way, replied to him. I will leave it at that because these issues are to be decided by the Convention Committee itself.

The same applies to other Funds also. I will say only about the Development Fund. Perhaps, some people feel, because the word 'development' is there, that this Development Fund is meant for the normal developmental work of the Railways such as the construction of new railway lines, as it may be understood in general parlance. That is not the fact. The Development Fund is meant for certain works which have been enumerated in the Convention Committee's Report itself and which cannot be regarded as normal works for which capital can be charged, such as passenger amenities which bear no reasonable return or revenue on the investment on this account.

The Convention Committee itself has said that if, at any stage, it is necessary to supplement this Fund by taking temporary loans from the general revenues, that may be done. Objection has been taken to that. And, one hon. friend argued; How is it that you are making certain contributions to the general revenues and again taking loans from that whereby that contribution has no meaning? It is a very fallacious argument. In a way this Development Fund is meant for passenger amenities and labour welfare. If we are to spend these huge amounts from the accretion to the revenues in a particular year, that also may not be quite proper.

Knowing fully well that it may not be possible in every year to divert so much amount to this Development Fund, as was envisaged in the Second Five Year Plan period, the Convention Committee rightly said that, if occasion arises, a loan from the general revenues may be considered. And, that is what we have done.

The other way of doing that was to reduce the expenditure on those heads and that, perhaps, would not be proper. We have to provide more and more passenger amenities; we have to provide more and more welfare measures for the Railway employees and that we have been doing. If we

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were a purely commercial organisation—about which I will mention a few words—perhaps, the other way of meeting the obligation to some extent without taking loan from the general revenues would have been not to spend as much over these heads as we have been doing.

My hon. friend, Shri Bharucha mentioned something about an *ad hoc* committee. I do not know what he meant by the *ad hoc* committee and what work will be entrusted to that *ad hoc* committee.

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That will not be necessary because what we are proposing in this resolution is that this period is necessary so that reasonable data may be collected to be placed before the Convention Committee—on which they can reach certain conclusions which will be realistic and worthy of implementation, and not mere abstract principles.

It has also been asked whether the Railways are a commercial organisation or a public utility. And, Shri Bharucha has given certain criteria as to how it can become a commercial organisation—if it pays income-tax, if it does not get any preferential treatment and things like that.

In a commercial organisation, the primary motive is the profit motive. That is the guiding principle of a commercial organisation, apart from other criteria which you may lay down. In a public utility, the guiding principle is not the profit motive. You may make profit in the course of your functioning while providing certain utility or service to the community. If you function efficiently, you may make some small profit even if you do not intend to. But, if that service has to be provided to the community and it is essential for the good of the community, that service will have to be provided even at the cost of the community itself. That will be the fundamental difference between a commercial organisation and a public utility organisation. I will say that the Railways function as a public utility-*cum*-commercial organisation, because we have to run certain railways which we know if we are functioning as a purely commercial organisation we will consider whether to continue those railway lines or to discontinue them. But if for the benefit of the community the running of the railway line is required we have to run that, because after all the community will subsidise the loss directly or indirectly. I think, Sir, the House will agree with me that the Railways cannot but function also as a public utility service. But it is our endeavour that whatever money is invested in the Railways gives a reasonable return.

What is a reasonable return is again a subject which is not so easy of determination. Efforts have been made. It all depends on what sort of economy you are functioning on. What is a reasonable return in a capitalist economy

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cannot be regarded as a reasonable return in a socialist economy. If you have a mixed economy, you will have to strike a mean between the two.

Therefore, Sir, I will not go into all these details at this stage, because these are matters, again, to be determined by the Convention Committee itself. Whether the 4 per cent that we are paying at present is a reasonable return or not, or whether it is an excessive return, all these things have to be determined by the Convention Committee. Whether in a commercial organisation, if any capital is invested and there are a number of shareholders, interest is payable on the capital in addition to dividend or not, or where the company does not make any profit any interest can be charged on the capital investment itself, all these are matters which have to be considered even in commercial organisations. Therefore, I will not give any categorical answer to all these questions which have been raised. Whether the 4 per cent is a reasonable return, or it is an excessive return or a very small return, all these factors are to be determined by the Convention Committee itself, and I will leave these things to be determined by the Convention Committee, because the Convention Committee again will have to take into consideration the factors whether the Railways are called upon to construct lines or provide facilities which a purely commercial organisation might not even consider to undertake. All these factors will have to be taken into consideration by the Convention Committee itself.

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I say, Sir, we will have to submit a memorandum to the Convention Committee. I will not anticipate the consideration or deliberations of the Convention Committee. I think, Sir, it will not be fair on my part.

My hon. friend, Shri Mathur, raised the question, again, which was not very germane to the issue before the House, about rail-road competition or the transport policy of the Government. I will assure Shri Mathur that when I think about rail-road co-ordination or when I think about the transport policy of the government, I never think only as the Railway Minister whatever policy we have to determine. I have said on more than one occasion that there is scope in our country, a very wide scope, for the development of all modes of transport. What the policy should be, how the coordination should be, is decided with a spirit to subserve the greatest national interest, not the interest either of the railways or of the roads but with a view to see that it is of the greatest benefit to the nation and how far the given resources of the nation can best be utilised to subserve the national interest. That should be the only criterion to determine the transport policy of the Government, and that should be the only criterion to determine what should be the quantum of coordination between railways, roads or other modes of transport, and

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what limitations and restrictions ought to be placed on one mode of transport or the other. All those things should be determined only by this criterion and this criterion alone. I will not say more than that at this stage.

Questions were raised about staff amenities and passenger amenities. My hon. friend, Shri Tangamani, wanted to know about the class IV Promotion Committee. I may inform him that out of the 33 recommendations made by the class IV Promotion Committee orders have already been issued in respect of about 22 recommendations. Two recommendations are such that we can't implement them at present because they are dependent upon the recommendations of the Pay Commission. Decision has been taken in respect of one more recommendation, and five are pending. I am expecting, Sir, that during the course of this session I will lay a statement on the Table of the House regarding the recommendations of the class IV Promotion Committee and the decision of the Government thereon.

As regards the one-man tribunal, Shri Tangamani is aware of the causes which led to abnormal delay in the finalisation or reference of the issues before the one-man tribunal. Because there was not much love lost between the two factions of the Federation and they themselves wanted postponement, the delay occurred. Last year I expedited it, and a few issues which could not be resolved by negotiation between the Railway Board and the Federation were referred to the tribunal. His decision has been received and is under consideration of the Government. We hope that we will reach a decision thereon very shortly.

He wanted another thing, and that was about some overpayment regarding some earth-work and other things on the South Eastern Railway. I may inform him that three officers have already been suspended on that account and the matter is under investigation.

The question of safe travel and other questions regarding passengers have been raised. It is our earnest endeavour to minimise the chances of such occurrences on the Railways. But in spite of our best efforts, cases wherein some person enters a compartment, a genuine passenger, and when the train starts running indulges in undesirable activities, it will not be so easy to check, whether it is in the female compartment or in the male compartment. The railway officials will only see whether he is a *bona fide* passenger, with a ticket for travel. Instances have occurred where gentlemen, dressed as gentlemen, holding tickets as gentlemen, travelled with gentlemen and when one or two passengers in the compartment fell asleep performed their functions and disappeared.

As regards ladies we have provided that after sunset if a lady in a compartment is alone she can have some of her female attendants in the

compartment. We have also instructions that where they feel so they may request her to move to other compartments. Where the administration is convinced that police escort is necessary on certain trains, police escorts are also provided. Therefore, we are taking certain steps, but I will not say that all these steps will be so fool-proof as to eliminate the evil completely, unless the social consciousness is also aroused among the people and whenever undesirable elements are detected they are dealt with not only under the provisions of law but also by social sanctions. That is what is very necessary to deal with all these undesirable activities whether on the running trains or at the stations and other places.

As I have said, I do not propose to enter into details of the matters to be considered by the Convention Committee itself. Therefore, I am not proposing to answer many of the points which are only germane to the consideration of the question by the Convention Committee itself.

Sir, I move the Resolution.

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## RAILWAY PROCUREMENTS FROM INDIGENOUS SOURCES\*<sup>‡</sup>

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As a matter of fact, I was expecting that some concrete suggestions would be made during this discussion. But the one tangible suggestion that has been made by my hon. friend Shri Vidya Charan Shukla is to increase the price of the indigenous wooden sleepers.

When I took over the Railway Ministry, I was myself under the impression, as most Members of the House are, that the country is more than self-sufficient in regard to its requirements of timber. But when I went into the question I found that the position was not so comfortable as we ordinarily imagined, the reason being that during the war years our forest wealth was highly denuded and depleted.

The exploitation of forests has to be done on certain scientific lines, on the basis of sustained exploitation of the forest wealth. If the available timber is exploited expeditiously during a year or two or three, it will mean depletion of the forest and in the years to come, perhaps, the timber that is anticipated will not be forthcoming.

On the basis of the anticipations worked out by the experts in this line, it is expected that our annual output from the forests, of wooden sleepers will be to the extent of 23 to 25 lakh. If we take up the exploitation of certain very remote and inaccessible areas, perhaps, it may be that we can increase the supply by a lakh or two more. More than that, it will not be possible to exploit the forests. Our requirement during the Second Plan period, as has been indicated is to the extent of 315 lakh of sleepers.

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I have said that 23 to 25 lakh is the maximum. But during the Second Five Year Plan, in the initial stages, as has been pointed out by Shri Vidya Charan Shukla and other Members also, the actual supply was less; in 1957-58 it was only 19 lakh; in 1958-59, our expectation is that the supply will be to the tune of 24 lakh due to the special efforts that have been made.

Questions have been asked as to what steps we are taking to increase the supply of indigenous timber for sleeper purposes. The country has to depend

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\* *L.S. Deb.*, 23 April 1959.

<sup>‡</sup> Replying to the Discussion as the Minister of Railways *re.* Purchase of Railway sleepers from abroad at higher prices.

for its various works requiring timber on our indigenous supplies. Timber is required not only for the railway sleepers, we also need timber for our coach-building works and other purposes. Apart from the Railways, there are other departments of the Government of India and the private sector where also timber is required, and all have to be drawn from the same source of the Indian forests.

Then there are certain species of timber which can be utilised only by the Railways and nobody else, just like the *chir* and other species which can be used only for railway sleepers and which are not useful for any other purpose. Then there are certain species which had not been used in the past as they were regarded as inferior, soft, especially the Kerala variety.

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I am not talking of all the varieties from Kerala. I am mentioning the variety which was especially mentioned in this House. That is the special variety of Kerala, and I think most of the timber that is produced in Kerala is of that variety.

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In recent years, during the last three or four years—I am also to some extent responsible for that—we have added to the number of species which we can utilise for railway sleeper purposes, and, as the hon. Deputy Minister has said, during these two or three years the number of sleepers of these species which are regarded as soft and non-durable varieties, has increased from 2 lakh to 13 lakh. We have got a number of creosoting plants where we are treating, but even after treatment, the life of these sleepers does not compare favourably with the hard wood that we get in our country or which we have imported from other countries.

The life expectancy of indigenous hard wood is 15 to 20 years, whereas in the case of the soft treated wood, that is of good variety, it may go up to 12 years, but if it is of that variety where there is much sap in the wood and fungus growth takes place, after storage for some time the life expectancy may be eight to ten years only, even after treatment.

So, when we compare the price, we must take into consideration the life expectation of the timber, untreated or treated. That is a very important consideration.

I may make another categorical statement. There is perhaps a misapprehension in certain quarters that indigenous timber was available, the Government or the Railways did not accept that timber, and they started importing from foreign countries. That is not a fact. I may say again that

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whatever timber, which can be used for sleeper purposes, is available in the country at the price which has been fixed in consultation with the State Governments will be purchased.

Most of the hon. Members, especially my hon. friend Shri Sharma, said that perhaps there were delays, procedural delays in the payment of the price of the timber, and therefore tenders were not forthcoming.

As a matter of fact, except to a very small extent in the State of Kerala, our dealings for the procurement of sleepers are not with private suppliers but with the State Governments only. We are purchasing from the State Governments; and, except with regard to Madhya Pradesh and Bombay, our procurement programme is with the State Governments themselves. Our timber Supply Officers and the Conservators of Forests of the State Governments come together and negotiate the price and fix the quantity to be supplied by the State Governments during a particular period. All that is done well in advance for the succeeding periods.

In Kerala also the Kerala Government is supplying. And, when this question arose, nobody has narrated the full story though they know the things.

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When we invited the tenders, it is a strange coincidence that all the tenderers, the Kallai merchants, quoted the same price. All the merchants from that area tendered separately but the price quoted by them was the same price. And, the price was higher than the price which we had settled with the Kerala Government. The Kerala Government had undertaken to supply the sleepers to the Railways at a certain price; and legitimately the Railways said that they were not going to pay a higher price to the private suppliers—higher than what had been agreed to with the Kerala Government.

I have realised—after meeting the deputation of certain hon. friends from this House and the other House—that the Railway administration did very wisely in not accepting their tenders.

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The Railways did a very wise thing in not accepting the higher price because ultimately these suppliers came round and said that they were prepared to offer at the same price and at the same place. If we had delayed by some time, it made them supply at the agreed price.

Railways are one of the biggest operators in the timber market. And, as I said more than once to some of the timber dealers, if I stop operation in the

timber market for one year, I am sure the prices of timber will crash. That aspect should not be ignored when the demand is made for an increase in price or when comparison is made with the price offered by small purchasers. That makes a lot of difference. There may be even some Government department itself whose requirements may be a few thousand C.I.F., which can afford to pay Rs. 2 or Rs. 3 more than the price offered by the Railways.

Our requirement is enormous. If as I said, we stop operating in the timber market for one year, I do not know what the position of the timber market would be. But, we have to make every effort to become self-sufficient.

I will say here that if we have to meet our requirements of sleepers only by wooden sleepers it will not be possible to make the country self-sufficient in wooden sleepers in the foreseeable future, whatever steps we may take. Of course, forests cannot grow in one, two or five years.

Shri Sharma suggested something and I have myself asked the Railway Board and the Railway Board have issued a circular that we should undertake the plantation of suitable trees—that variety of which grows in different regions of the country—on both sides of the Railways where space permits, so that we can plant a few lakhs of suitable varieties of trees on the Railways which in course of time, 20, 30 or 50 years, can supply a certain percentage of the railway's requirements.

The whole question is whether there was necessity for import of sleepers or not. Having explored the possibility of the availability of sleepers in this country, whether it is wooden, cast iron or steel, as has been said by the Deputy Minister, the Railways decided that we will have to import steel sleepers from the foreign countries and the foreign exchange set apart for that purpose was Rs. 15.5 crore. Two lakh of steel sleepers were purchased and it was found that if we import wooden sleepers it will be cheaper in comparison to steel sleepers and there was necessity for the import of wooden sleepers. Even if we accepted the timber that is available in Kerala and other parts, taking everything together, we find that our country can give us sleepers much short of our requirements. My friend, Seth Achal Singh has said that if some foundries are started, sleepers will become available. But he conveniently forgot that we require pig iron for this purpose and unless there is pig iron, I do not know if Agra manufacturers can produce sleepers.... Therefore, it becomes necessary to import sleepers and the Railways had to consider whether they were to import steel sleepers or wooden sleepers. Import of steel sleepers was costlier and would have cost us more foreign exchange than the import of wooden sleepers. Iron sleepers would have cost us Rs. 15.5 crore whereas the wooden sleepers have cost us nearly Rs. 4 crore.

Another aspect to be considered is whether we have paid a reasonable price to the imported sleepers or we have paid a higher price. Global tenders

were invited and experts who can determine the quality of the various species and varieties of timber which can be used for the Railways scrutinised those tenders and after scrutinising and comparing the price of those species in our own country, the tenders were accepted. I may inform the House that in no case the F.O.B. price is higher than the price paid in this country, species for species.

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Of course, C.I.F. price will be higher in certain cases. When I say F.O.B. price, naturally the transportation charge will be there. My hon. friend, Shri Supakar wanted to know whether the transportation of the sleepers from ports to the worksite would not cost more money? But even in the case of the other sleepers it is there; it is a common factor whether it is imported sleeper or indigenous sleeper. The transportation of the sleeper from the source of supply or the port to worksite is more or less a common factor. Whether we take the sleeper from Orissa or from Assam, if it is to be transported to the work-site, the transport element is there in both cases.

Then, Sir, my hon. friend, Shri Shukla asked about some offer made about Brazilian sleepers. That is a very interesting story. Some enterprising foreign adventurer made an offer to supply sleepers at inconceivably low prices. The very fact that it was quoted so cheap naturally aroused the curiosity of the officers to go into its details, because they thought that perhaps no party or no country will be in a position to supply it at such a cheap price. In the first place, he did not give details of the species, the names of the species, and even after insistent demands they were not made available. But he came here and made all sorts of allegations against the railway officers. We thought that a thorough investigation should be made by the most reliable agency that the Government of India had possessed. After investigation it was found that these wild offers and these wild allegations were made by some adventurer who left the country before the investigations were completed.

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So, I am personally satisfied and all the experts are satisfied that the price that we have paid for the imported sleepers has been very reasonable, and perhaps no other country has been able to strike such a good bargain. Ours is not the only country which uses imported sleepers. There are other countries which also have to depend on sleepers imported from other countries.

Sir, as far as the capacity for manufacturing cast iron sleepers is concerned, I might tell the House that during the last two years tremendous capacity has

been created in the country, and depending upon the availability of pig iron even at present the capacity for manufacture of cast iron sleepers is to the extent of 40 lakh sleepers annually. If we get more pig iron, as it is expected that we will get, we will be going in more and more for cast iron sleepers, of course, in addition to whatever wooden sleepers are available in the country.

The cost of cast iron sleepers depends upon the cost of pig iron. What we have done at present is this, that for making one tonne of cast iron sleepers we pay making charges including of course soft coke and other materials which are required, of Rs. 146 per tonne this is for conversion of one tonne of pig iron into cast iron sleepers. That is the basis on which we invited tenders and they are manufacturing. My hon. friend Seth Achal Singh quoted one example where we had placed orders on a certain manufacturer of Agra. It was determined that he will supply so many tonnes of cast iron sleepers by such and such a date at such and such a price. He failed to supply by that date. We were lenient to him. When he said that he will manufacture so many sleepers by such and such a date we accepted that. But after the price of pig iron had fallen. And then we said that the price of pig iron plus the making charges would be the cost of the sleepers manufactured after the stipulated period and we would pay at that rate. Government cannot be expected to continue the higher price.

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For the current year, we have been allotted 2.5 lakh tonne of pig iron and 2.5 lakh tonne of pig iron will give us nearly 32 lakh of broad gauge sleepers. But we expect that we might get more pig iron and we can manufacture more. Of course, technical opinion is in favour of wooden sleepers.

Then about the planned development of our forests, as my friend Shri Vidya Charan Shukla or some other hon. Member quoted, my predecessors wrote to the State Governments. I sent the Timber Adviser to all the State Governments. I personally met the Chief Ministers twice in a conference and whenever I visit the States I emphasise the necessity of increasing the supply of sleepers as much as they can possibly do. But there are certain limitations, and it is not the price factor alone. With all the State Governments we have entered into agreements, and they have offered to supply sleepers. I can give the figures for the current year. Andhra Government, 45,000; Assam, 11,10,000; Bihar, 1,35,000; Himachal Pradesh, 50,000; Jammu and Kashmir, 9,00,000, Kerala, 58,000; Madras, 15,000; Mysore, 5,25,000; Orissa, 1,67,000; Punjab, 25,000; Uttar Pradesh, 6,65,000; West Bengal, 31,000.

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Madhya Pradesh and Bombay are the two solitary States where we operate in the private sector and purchase from the tenderers and not from the State Governments. All these commitments are through the State Governments and our agreement with the State Governments is that we will not purchase from private parties in those States. Whatever sleepers are to be purchased is through the State Governments and not from the private parties. What I wanted to emphasise; that we have price agreements with the State Governments.

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If the forests are exploited, we give certain bonus to the State Governments per sleeper, varying from Re. 1 to Rs. 1.80 or some thing like that.

If the State Governments supply more than the quantity stipulated, then in that case also, we give certain increase in the price of the sleepers. So, we have been requesting all the States to increase the supply of sleepers. But, as I have said, it is a matter where we cannot afford to exploit the forests quickly in a year or two or three years so that we may become self-sufficient for three, four or five years or for the Third Plan.

We have to take a long-range view of these things, so that our forests are not depleted and denuded and in years to come we have to depend more and more on other sources. It has been said that concrete sleepers should be used. We are also doing that. As a matter of fact, on the Hindustan Housing Factory, we have placed orders for 50,000 concrete sleepers. We are going to try them in our marshalling yards. If they prove successful, we will try them at other places.

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I may assure the House that every effort will be made to meet our demands from indigenous sources of wooden sleepers, cast iron and concrete sleepers. Whatever orders have been placed have been placed. I have stopped it and said that no further orders should be placed for the import of sleepers from abroad. I am equally anxious that we should as far as possible, meet our demands from the indigenous sources.

We are getting from there also. As a matter of fact, when certain forest areas in Andamans were settled with some private firms, they had some agreement that they will supply certain percentage of timber to Sudan. As a matter of fact, a very little has been supplied to Sudan; that was the agreement. We are taking from there also whatever is available.

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## RAILWAYS—A VITAL TRANSPORT SYSTEM\*<sup>‡</sup>

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Sir, quite a large number of hon. Members of the House has participated in the debate and their words of appreciation and encouragement will naturally hearten me and more than a million of railway employees and I share that feeling as one of the railwaymen.

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The two important questions which practically covered the entire field of railway working had been posed in this House: namely, whether the Railways are working with a degree of efficiency and whether the present financial position of the Railways is sound. With regard to the question of efficiency, it would be unrealistic to suggest that we have reached the optimum limit. In a vast organisation like this, there must always be some scope for improvement, however well-run it may be, and my approach to the problem is not one of complacency, but one of active and energetic endeavour to do better and better. The question, however, is whether we are far removed from the optimum stage, or we are nearing it, or progressively receding from it?

The principal assets which we possess are our coaches, wagons, engines, railway lines and equipment for the maintenance of these assets. So far as our passenger coaches are concerned, these run on trains according to the set time-tables, allowing a reasonable margin at the terminal for their maintenance and there is very limited scope for any improvement in their use. In regard to the punctuality of passenger trains, a persistent endeavour is being made to effect an improvement and although there is scope for improvement particularly in respect of branch line trains, some results are already in evidence which has also been recognised by a number of the hon. Members of this House. We are also watching the punctuality of the trains at intermediate points, not only at the originating station and the destinations, but also at other stations which are junction stations.

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As I said we were watching the punctuality performance of the passenger trains, whether express or mail, at the destination stations. Now, we are watching their performance at the intermediate points and junction stations also and I am sure some improvement will be noticeable shortly.

Now, we have to focus our attention on the usage of wagons, engines, railway lines and workshop equipment. With regard to wagons, the most

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\* *L.S. Deb.*, 11 March 1960.

<sup>‡</sup> Participating in the General Discussion on Railway Budget, 1960-61 as the Minister of Railways.

important composite statistics which brings out their earning potential are the net ton miles per wagon day, that is, the net ton miles output achieved daily on an average from each wagon owned by the Indian Railways. This figure in 1957-58 was 598 on the broad gauge and 225 on the metre gauge and in 1958-59, 573 on the BG and 216 on the MG. The figure in 1958-59 shows some drop, which I have already explained in my Budget speech was due to a lack of traffic on account of which the available rolling stock could not be fully utilised. Now the question which arises is against which yardstick should this output be measured? Our own figures against which we can judge are the results achieved during the war years when things were regimented and the then Government had exerted its utmost to achieve the maximum output. The Estimates Committee had also recognised these results as a guide. The best results then attained were 451 on the BG in 1942-43 and 201 on the MG in 1943-44. Allowing for the increase in the average carrying capacity of the wagons since the war years, the corresponding results for the year 1958-59 work out to 557 on the B.G. and 182 on the M.G.

Although the results of different countries are not strictly comparable because the pattern of traffic, method of traction etc. differed, the corresponding output achieved by some of the advanced countries of the world which publish their statistics does provide some index against which we may judge our results.

The equated net tonne mile per wagon day figures are:—

United Kingdom	74
United States of America	330
Germany	363
France	304
Italy	243
Japan	938
India	573

For this purpose we should base our judgment on the B.G. figures of Indian Railways because nearly 85 per cent of the net ton miles materialise on the B.G. system. The Japanese Railways which show better results than us are admittedly more efficient though an appreciable proportion of the disparity is accountable to the difference in the pattern of traffic and a preponderance of electric traction. A point worthy of note in our case is that there is a variation of about 7 per cent between the busy and the slack months, and it is this which I wish to keep down by inducing more movement during the slack period. Shri B.C. Ghose has suggested that Railways should have their own coal dumps. This we have already done. In regard to the dumps for the public, we have even agreed to recover the freight for coal when it is moved from the dump to its ultimate destination provided the party concerned

gives us a reasonable security. There is, however, no progress in evidence in this direction. We shall further pursue it with the Coal Controller.

On our Metre Gauge the results are not comparable because the areas are essentially agricultural and deficient of industries; therefore, the quantum of freight traffic available in such areas is of a lighter character. Also, the inherent character of our metre gauge construction does not lend itself to a much better output with the axle load limitations. For these reasons, wherever the density of traffic demands we are planning to project a B.G. line if it is feasible to do so. I wish to assure the House that we are paying sufficient attention to the problems of the M.G. sections, but we cannot obviously rectify its inherent drawbacks.

Coming to the question of locomotives, their output may be judged from the figure of net ton miles per engine day. Comparable figures after making allowance for the variation in tractive effort are:—

	Net ton miles per goods locomotive day-steam traction
1941-42	B.G. 18,379
1957-58	20,360
1958-59	20,296

Here too, results comparable with war years have been attained. Results, however, cannot be compared with other countries because there are great variations in the tractive effort of engines and the type of tractive power used.

In regard to the usage of railway lines the comparable figure is net ton miles per running track mile of railways. These results are:—

		Net ton miles per running track mile B.G. Million.
India	1942-43	.98
	1957-58	1.94
	1958-59	1.95
U.K.	1958	.52
U.S.A.	1957	2.36
Germany	1957	1.28
France	1957	.97
Italy	1957	.66
Japan	1957	2.04

Here too, our results are fairly comparable. U.S.A. and Japan show better results. With the new bogie wagons and bigger train loads about which I have mentioned in my budget speech, we hope to catch up with these countries very soon.

As regards the output of our workshops, this has progressively improved, but we cannot say how much leeway we have to make up in our approach to the optimum results. It is for this reason that I have started a Productivity Cell in the Railway Board, whose main job is to determine the norms of output in each phase of working of the various workshops. This examination will take some time, but as soon as it has been done we will introduce the incentive bonus scheme on the Chittaranjan pattern and I hope by this and other means we will make further improvement.

While dealing with workshops, Sir, it will not be out of place to deal with the points raised by my hon. friend, Shri Mathur. As the House is aware, we have achieved self-sufficiency progressively in the matter of railway requirements of equipment. Some we are manufacturing ourselves and some we are farming out to private manufacturers. As and when surplus capacity becomes available in the workshops, that capacity is utilised and framing out of orders is reduced to that extent. But, Sir, we cannot manufacture all our requirements in our own workshops all of a sudden because that will adversely affect the capacity that has been created in the country, in the private sector, and we will have, in order that there is progressive increase in the industrial output in the country as a whole, to see that no capacity which has been created either in the private sector, or in the public sector is not fully utilised. Therefore, though it has been suggested by some hon. friends that all the requirements of the railways should be manufactured by the Railways themselves, I think that is a strange suggestion.

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Nowhere in the world is it done, except, of course, Russia or China.

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Everywhere, railway requirements are manufactured, to a certain extent, by themselves and also by private industries. In India we are doing better than most of the other countries, so far as production of railway requirements by the railway establishment themselves is concerned.

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Perhaps my hon. friend is aware that we have taken certain steps to encourage private industry to undertake manufacture of certain items which we had been upto now been importing from other countries, and the results

in this respect have been rather spectacular. Several industries have been encouraged. We have detailed engineers to advise the private industry, to give them the knowhow. We have even put some officers who are more or less engaged whole time in this job of advising the private industry in the matter of knowhow and also watching the progress in those industries, to see how far they have succeeded in manufacturing the equipments which we had been importing from other countries.

Regarding the question of Railways establishing industrial estates, I do not know how far it will be feasible. Industrial estates are being established by practically all the State Governments at various centres either at the provincial headquarters, or at the district headquarters, and advantage may be taken of that by the Railways, to suggest in which place what items of railway requirements may be manufactured and the duplication of establishing separate industrial estates at convenient centres by the Railways can be avoided.

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I think we have made very satisfactory progress in encouraging small industries to undertake the manufacture of certain railway stores and equipments. I feel that decentralisation is taking place. I have instructed the Railway Board to farm out orders in such a way that centralisation of certain items does not take place at one centre, but these various industries are dispersed throughout the country, so that the railways may not have to undertake unnecessary transport of certain items from one corner of the country to the other.

I will give one example. Take cast iron sleepers. I have asked the Railway Board to see whether we can create some capacity in the south, in the west and other parts of the country so that transportation of cast iron sleepers from more or less the eastern part of the country is avoided. So, we are taking these steps.

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There is further scope for improvement in our workshops and the steps that we have taken have saved us substantially and I am sure that during the course of the next year or so our workshops will achieve spectacular results. I am not talking of Chittaranjan or Perambur. I am talking of the normal workshops of the railways.

Again, I would remind Shri Mathur that we have increased the capacity of several workshops. We have recently rehabilitated them and where we

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found that the railway works so justify, we have increased the capacity of the workshops and we will be continuing to do that wherever it is necessary.

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My hon. friend\* gets some information from one or two persons. I have the complete picture of the workshops.

Several hon. members have commented about the speed of goods trains. This subject has been comprehensively studied by the Efficiency Bureau of the Railway Board and its report has already been placed in the Library of the Lok Sabha. Similar study for the metre gauge section is in progress. The recommendations of the Efficiency Bureau will be followed up.

I, however, feel that I should clarify the position in regard to the results attained in the year 1958-59. The average speed of 'all goods trains' on the Broad Gauge main lines purely under steam traction indicates an improvement, but in the case of Broad Gauge branch lines as also on the metre gauge it has registered a drop. I have since received the corresponding figures for 1959-60 up to December which register a distinct improvement. They are: Broad gauge, for 1958, 8.95; for 1959, 9.54. Metre gauge: for 1958, 7.90 and for 1959, 8.38.

The House may, however, like to know why there has been some drop from year to year. In my budget speech, I have commented upon the effects of extensive developmental work on operation. While these works have been in progress, even the existing facilities get restricted, and yet, from year to year and from month to month, traffic has increased at a rate unprecedented in the history of the Indian Railway and density of traffic or rather the net ton mile per running track mile, which is an index of output and is a measure of strain on our capacity, approaches closely the highest attained in the world. Amidst these environments, even if we completely discount other factors like floods, which of course vary in intensity and effect from year to year, we must concede that there would be some adverse effect on speeds.

The existing position is that most of our trunk routes are being worked to 80 per cent or more of the capacity. The problem of expansion of capacity in a fast developing economy is a continuous one. We are not so rich as to effect all the improvement required in one stride. We have to adopt every conceivable way to do so and move up progressively in consonance with our expanding needs. There is some skill in doing so with the utmost economy. We have to double some sections, improve the signalling on others and adopt the various modern methods available, including electrification and

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\* Shri Rajendra Singh.

dieselisation, consistent naturally with the financial and other resources available. We have to function within these limitations and I cannot visualise any easy or a comfortable position for us when we can just sit back.

Now, I come to the financial outlook. I am afraid I cannot share the apprehensions of some of my hon. friends in this House. I would request that this problem may be viewed objectively in the light of the historical background; what we inherited and what vicissitudes we are going through. It is common knowledge that Rs. 121.77 crore of our railway surpluses were credited to general revenues during the war years. This amount normally would have been credited to our reserves to meet the post-war inflationary element. Other industries during the war boom built up their reserves. The credit to the depreciation fund during the ten years, from 1941-42 to 1949-50, was Rs. 144.77 crore, on an average of Rs. 14.5 crore per year. The total rehabilitation expenditure was restricted to Rs. 84.44 crore during those years. Even during the pre-war period, due to a depressed economy and several railways being under company control, rehabilitation was done sparingly. Added to this was the acquisition of a number of State Railways whose assets largely were of sub-normal condition. Besides intensive usage during the war, the mounting accumulation of rehabilitation work was thus our legacy, and unluckily for us, it coincided with a period of rapid price inflation. In the result, steel which constitutes the most important ingredient in our scheme of rehabilitation cost 3.66 times the pre-war price. The money values have gone down here and every item of asset which is rehabilitated, costs nearly four times the pre-war price. The system of allocation has also undergone a change. We do not simply debit the original cost of the asset replaced to the depreciation fund, but we even debit the inflationary and the improvement elements—a practice that is not in vogue in normal commercial accounts. The total debit to depreciation fund in respect of improvement of assets alone amounts to Rs. 73.17 crore.

During the pre-war years, the contribution to the depreciation fund amounted to 1/60th of the capital assets and this was adequate under stabilised price conditions when rehabilitation signified replacement of an asset by an equivalent at practically the same cost. With the changed conditions and price inflation, we have to spend nearly four times the original cost to replace an asset and the contribution to the depreciation fund has, therefore, to be correspondingly greater. The stress on the depreciation fund, therefore, has operated from two directions: the price inflation and the high incidence of deferred maintenance.

In our endeavour to overtake these heavy arrears, naturally the draft on the depreciation fund has been excessive during the second Five Year Plan and the depreciation fund will run down to the low level of Rs. 18 crore

inspite of an additional contribution of Rs. 10 crore per annum we are making to supplement what the Convention Committee had suggested. I am alive to the need of building up this fund and the views of my Ministry on this subject will be placed before the next Convention Committee for their consideration.

An erroneous impression seems to have been created by certain views voiced by the ex-Financial Commissioner in the *Statesman* dated 24 February 1960, that heavy arrears of rehabilitation of track will still be left after the Third Five Year Plan. This view does not seem to be warranted. On present thinking, it looks that these arrears will be more or less liquidated by the end of the third Plan Period and in the subsequent Plan periods the task will be reduced to the normal figure; and, debits to the depreciation fund are likely to come down by Rs. 70 crore to Rs. 80 crore in a five-year period.

Coming to the question of the development fund, it was constituted as a result of the recommendation of the Convention Committee of 1949. This fund is built out of the revenue surpluses which may be credited to it. The principles of allocation of expenditure under this fund were revised by the Convention of 1954 and the following items were listed for debit to this fund:

- (i) Expenditure on amenities for all users of Railway transport, such as improvement of goods sheds, loading and unloading platforms, waiting sheds for the trading public etc. and the minimum of Rs. 3 crore per annum on this account would continue to be spent.
- (ii) The expenditure on unremunerative operating improvement works costing more than Rs. 3 lakh each.
- (iii) Labour welfare works, including cost of Class III quarters.

The scope for debit to this fund was greatly enlarged with the result that the debits to this fund during the second Plan have been much greater as compared to the first Plan—Rs. 126.48 crore against Rs. 50.53 crore during the First Plan. The labour welfare works alone cost Rs. 37.57 crore during the second Plan against Rs. 8.66 crore during the First Plan. The operating improvements cost Rs. 61.14 crore against Rs. 6.84 crore in the First Plan. Most of these debits are of such a nature, as may even justify their inclusion in the capital cost. I would like to emphasise this aspect. The operating improvements of which the remunerativeness cannot be precisely determined because the benefits are widely dispersed are assets of a productive nature which are being created, but are for convenience debited to the development fund. Likewise, class III quarters built for labour are assets of a potential value. It is also to be noted that bulk of the expenditure debited to this fund is of such character. Therefore, to the extent the revenue surpluses credited to this fund sustain works of a capital nature, we are saved the dividend

liability and for the balance we must borrow. Apparently, the Convention Committee of 1954 had visualised the possibility of revenue surpluses being inadequate to meet such heavy debits as were likely to materialise and to meet this contingency, it had recommended as follows:

“Money should be advanced from General Revenues to the railways for utilisation on those projects or works which are of a development nature. Such advances should be treated as temporary loans to the railways and will not be added to the capital-at-charge on which 4 per cent dividend is payable annually. The railways will pay interest on this loan to General Revenues at the average borrowing rate chargeable to commercial departments. It shall, however, be open to the railways to repay this loan in instalments, if necessary, from accretions to the development fund in more prosperous years and thus liquidate the debt and the interest liability thereon.”

This was the view of the Convention Committee in the context of a planned forecast of a much smaller dimension. It is not surprising, therefore, that for a much bigger plan that was later sanctioned for railways, the need for temporary loans arose. The investment already made is bound to yield results and this should undoubtedly enable the railways to revive their reserves and build them up to an adequate level.

Another factor which must be borne in mind is that the railways throughout have met their increasing dividend obligations to the general exchequer which has risen from Rs. 36.12 crore in 1955-56 to the budgeted estimate of Rs. 57.27 crore in 1960-61 and this with inflationary prices and increasing wages. The additional capital, therefore, has been ploughed into productive channels. In the last year of the Plan, besides paying 4 per cent dividend, there will still be a surplus of Rs. 18 crore and this for a public utility concern, where numerous losing assets to satisfy the social and commercial needs of the people have to be nursed, cannot be considered a mean achievement. There are at present several narrow gauge sections of the line, where parallel road services already exist, which can be dismantled to the financial gain of the railways, but we have not viewed this problem in such a narrow perspective in response to the public demand.

The return from railways, therefore, must be viewed in this broad perspective, in the light of its public utility character and the fund balances should be judged in the context which I have delineated at length. Some of my friends here have accused me of painting a rosy picture. They would probably have liked me to paint a gloomy picture. I have done neither; I have simply shown a healthy picture, which is that it is. I cannot paint a public utility with the brush of a profiteer and only then say that it is healthy. Public

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utilities are a means to an end and not an end in themselves. They are primarily for service.

I feel sure, in view of what I have explained, it will be conceded that there is no cause for pessimism in regard to the railways' financial position. The country is in a rapid stride towards a 'take-off' stage in its economic resurgence, and transport, which is the handmaid of this revolutionary change, must inevitably reap the harvest in the gain which will be shared by millions of our people.

Some hon. members have, on the one hand, expressed their apprehensions about the financial stability of the railways and, on the other, questioned the desirability of the proposals for a five per cent surcharge. It is very difficult to reconcile both these things.

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I have said "some hon. Members". I think that if they think over what they have said they will find that they are contradicting themselves and I am sure that they will feel that this very small levy was called for.

Coming to the rehabilitation of rolling stock, we are utilising old coaches. I myself gave instructions to the Railway Board that no coach which can be serviceable should be condemned. But, then, the engine, coach or wagon has to be kept in a serviceable condition. In the case of over-aged stock special care has to be taken, as in the case of old persons. When it is found that a particular coach is not economical to maintain, then it has to be condemned, rejected and disposed of.

I have asked the Railway Board to prepare the statistics of engines, coaches and wagons on each railway, giving their age. I have asked them to publish a small pamphlet so that it can be supplied to the hon. Members, who can see whether any railway has been treated unfairly or discriminated against, because if persons from every railway zone make the complaint....

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I have dealt with the most important aspects of the budget. Then, quite a number of other points have been raised, and I would like to deal with them also.

Of course, if we have sufficient funds, we can very well say "all right, we will replace all the coaches", because new coaches are more pleasant, more comfortable and good. But we have to choose: whether we go with reconditioned coaches or without coaches. That is also another aspect. Of course, Shrimati Parvathi Krishnan will ask "Why are you thinking of

exports?" Well, we have to build up foreign markets, if we can. And if a situation like that comes, I may appeal to the country "let us put up with some inconvenience so that we can capture foreign markets and increase the export trade". That many countries do, and we will have to do in the best interests of the country. I am sure, I will get the support of the House in that matter.

Shri P.N. Singh stated that our passenger trains do not cover the journey in the same time as they used to do during the pre-war period. Well, in many cases what he has said is correct.

I will not say "in most cases", but what he has said is correct in many cases. We are taking many steps to see whether we can catch up with that. But our present comparison should be with the past few years, and when we compare our position with the past few years, we find that we are achieving some result progressively towards the speeding up of the passenger trains.

Secondly, we should not forget that demands are increasing for opening of new stations, halts, flag stations and other amenities for the travelling public. When a new halt or station is provided, it affects the speed of the trains; it takes time. So, all these factors will have to be taken into consideration. As I said, there is no sense of complacency and every endeavour is being made by the Railway Board to see how far we can speed up the trains and maintain the punctuality of passenger trains.

I now come to accidents. My friend, Shri Vajpayee, is not here. He ridiculed me for the word which was there in my budget speech, fortuitous. I do not know how far he was justified in that. Sometimes it is a way of putting things. Of course, there were no major accidents, fortunately, and the credit must go to the railway workers who have worked efficiently. Since they are blamed when there are accidents, when there is no accident the credit should go to them. There are several factors on account of which accidents do take place. Steps are being taken and railwaymen are alive to their responsibilities; they are alive to the sense of discipline. We have been fortunate that no major accident took place during this year.

While talking of accidents, Shri Bharucha spoke about automatic block signals and automatic signals. I find he is not here. He said that there were quite a number of failures of the automatic block signals round about Bombay in the suburban section which led to accidents and the staff was not to be blamed. I would like to refresh his knowledge about this. One positive thing about automatic signalling is that if it fails the signal is at danger and, therefore, in case of failure there would be no accident, unless the staff deliberately ignore the signal. That is one great advantage of automatic signal—if it fails, the signal is at danger. So, in case of failure there should be no accident.

Then he said that the general rules and the subsidiary rules were drafted hundred years ago and they are still continuing. He was not properly informed. These rules are kept up to-date and the subsidiary rules have been revised and were enforced on various railways from different dates. On the Central Railway they came into force on 1 April 1958, Northern Railway 1 July 1958, North Eastern Railway 1 October 1958, Southern Railway 1 October 1958, Western Railway 1 October 1958 and so on. The Signalling Manual was revised and brought into force from 1 October 1956. Perhaps the House is aware that, after the Mohari accident near Ambala, a committee was set up to revise those rules, and those rules are kept up-to-date. So, to say that some of the rules are very old, out-of-date and, therefore, the staff are not quite alive to their duty will not be correct.

Shri Vajpayee, again, said that most of the staff did not know the rules. Well, if they did not know the rules, they are to blame. If something untoward happens on account of their ignorance, they will have to be punished. If opportunities are not provided to them, they can approach the superior officers with a request to that effect. But no plea can be taken that because they did not know the rules, they should not be punished. That will affect the safe running of railways to a very great extent.

Here, I am not dealing with staff matters, but as it is a connected thing I would like to say a few words about that. Some hon. Members had mentioned that the services of some staff have been terminated without the normal procedure being followed. Some hon. Members have suggested that if discipline has to be enforced and safe running of trains has to be ensured, some powers should be given to the General Managers to deal with the staff guilty of such delinquencies. Such authority or power exists with the General Managers, according to which they can terminate the services of any railway employee. But I may assure the House, as I have done on previous occasions, that this power of the General Managers is exercised very sparingly.

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I know what type of cases are brought to my notice by some of the hon. Members of this House. This authority is to be exercised.....

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There is no question of any insinuations. But there are facts. When some members of the staff approach the hon. members, they, out of sympathy, write to the Minister concerned. In some cases even when they get a reply from the Minister explaining the facts, they again write to him. Maybe, they are pestered by the employee concerned. There is no insinuation. I am stating a fact.

This power of the General Managers to terminate the services of a railway employee is to be exercised in a case where the General Manager is convinced that the employee is corrupt and if there is a case of gross indiscipline involving violence. These are the only two types of cases where this authority of the General Managers has been exercised. The third category, where it has been exercised in a very limited number of cases is in the case of accidents. Apart from that this power of the General Managers to terminate the services of railway employees has not been exercised. They have been exercised very sparingly. But if we are to deal with accidents and if we are to deal with corruption, we have to exercise this power. Wherever action has been taken under this section, salutary effects have been produced on the railway staff as a whole.

I will again assure the hon. members that utmost care is taken to see that no person, who is innocent, is punished under this section. The utmost care is taken. But we have to believe some authority. As Shri Mathur says, we have to rely upon the General Managers. I have to rely upon the General Manager's fairness and sense of justice. If he says that he is satisfied that the action taken is quite justified, I see no reason to interfere in that matter.

I will implore the hon. members of this House not to encourage the tendency on the part of some railway employees to approach them.

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I am referring to those cases. I am not referring to it generally. Generally, of course, hon. members write to me on general questions, or about some principles. I try my best to reply and explain the position to hon. members. Even in these cases, I try to explain it. But once the matter has been explained to them, they should try to convince the employees. What happens is that I send a reply to one hon. Member, then the employee goes to another hon. member. Well, then I have to go on sending the same reply to different hon. members.

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I am talking of the exceptions in the staff. I am not talking of the hon. members. The hon. member is not aware that the man concerned has already approached the Minister through some other hon. member and he has approached me. So, he writes to me. He does not know that he has already exhausted ten hon. members.

So, in this matter, I will again appeal to hon. members of this House to discourage this tendency on the part of Government employees if we want to eradicate complaints of corruption from the general public regarding railway

staff whether it is the staff or officers—I do not discriminate in that matter; if it comes to my notice that some officer is involved, howsoever high-up he might be, I will never be found wanting in taking necessary action against him.....

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Again, I would not have liked to pass certain remarks on the running commentary made by the hon. member. I know what those allegations were and how far they were true.

The hon. Member made certain allegations. He was asked to give them in writing. He never cared to give them in writing. I again assure him that if he gives that in writing, I will take appropriate action in the matter.

About corruption, I do not claim that there is no corruption in the Railways, but as I have said the co-operation of every member of the public will be of help in this matter. We are taking certain action, but as you are aware and as the House knows how difficult it is to deal with this problem, which is a threatening problem in the country at present. But wherever it comes to our notice, action is taken.

Then, connected with the operation of the Railways, the question about coal supply was raised. I mentioned in my speech about the poor quality of the coal supplied to the railways. Some hon. member asked whether the Railways cannot establish their own washeries. Some hon. member asked whether we cannot run our own collieries. Both are not feasible, because it has to be done by the Ministry competent to do that, and we are pursuing the question of establishment of washeries with the appropriate Ministry.

Before I come to the other points raised by various Members, I would like to deal with one important matter, and that is about the recommendations of the Pay Commission and their effect on the railway employees. Some of the Members have suggested that there is great dissatisfaction among the railway employees. I want to make it clear that there is no cause for dissatisfaction among a large section of the railway employees on account of the recommendations of the Pay Commission. As a matter of fact, the vast bulk of the railway employees is going to gain by the recommendations of the Pay Commission, which have been accepted and are going to be implemented.

So far as our contacts with the railway employees are concerned, we have devised a mechanism by which we have periodical meetings at different levels with the representatives of the organised employees on the Railways. At the Railway Board level, we have periodical meetings between the two federations and the Railway Boards. At the zonal railway levels, we have the

negotiating machinery at the railway headquarters and at the district or divisional level, and they have their periodical meetings and the grievances, or complaints are discussed at these meetings. Some of them which the authorities at that level are competent to settle are settled, while others which they are not competent to settle are referred to higher levels, sometimes to the Railway Board, or to the Minister.

There have been some complaints that this machinery is not functioning expeditiously. The matter was recently discussed between the two federations and the Railway Board, and we have agreed to take certain actions by which this machinery functions expeditiously, efficiently and effectively.

Therefore, to say that the complaints of the railway employees are not heard will not be correct. I am talking of the organised labour. So far as individual complaints are concerned, they have their proper channels of first appeal, second appeal and things like that. That avenue is open to them.

On this question of the recommendations of the Pay Commission, I want to repeat that the agitation that is being whipped up has no justification. To say that the railway employees have been adversely affected is without any foundation.

Much was being made out of the passes and P.T.Os. I made it clear while answering questions either in this House or the other, that the *status quo* was being maintained. There has been no reduction in the number of passes or P.T.Os. to which the different categories of railway employees are entitled. If at any stage, the question of revision of the number of passes or P.T.Os. is to be considered, the two federations will be taken into confidence, and consultations will be held with them. Therefore, to whip up agitation on this account, I say, is not disinterested.

Again, to say that on account of working of Saturdays, or reduction in casual leave, or reduction in holidays, the railway employees have been adversely affected is quite incorrect; it indicates lack of either knowledge, or of *bona fides* that agitations are carried on saying that these are going to affect the 11 lakhs of railway employees.

I will dilate somewhat in detail on this. It has been said that some of the recommendations of the Jagannadha Das Pay Commission have the effect of superseding the adjudicator's award, to the disadvantage of the railway staff. The actual position is as follows. The points in dispute adjudicated upon by the late Justice Rajadhyaksha were: (i) Hours of work of railway servants other than those to whom the Factories Act applies, the quantum of periodic rest, provision regarding leave reserve, leave rules and holiday concessions applicable to railway servants who were daily rated and/or in inferior service. The recommendations of the adjudicator on the first of these three items

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were accepted in their entirety and are still in force. The decisions regarding hours of work, period rest and overtime have also since been incorporated in the Indian Railways (Amendment) Act, 1956. As regards the fourth item the Government did not consider it necessary to issue formal enforcement orders as, in the meantime, the recommendations of the Varadachariar Pay Commission in this regard had been accepted and these recommendations more or less met the adjudicator's award. The Jagannadha Das Pay Commission's recommendations regarding hours of work do not alter the existing statutory limitation in respect of railway servants. In fact, one of the recommendations states that a weightage of ten minutes for every hour worked should be given in respect of night duty, which is such as to require continuous application. Such a provision had not been made in the adjudicator's award. This recommendation is, however, yet to be considered by Government.

In respect of office clerks, the Pay Commission's observations are that their hours of work are on the lower side and that an increase would be justified, but that an attempt should be first made to secure better out-turn within the present hours. Government have since decided that there should be a slight increase in the working hours of office staff and this decision has been implemented on the Railways.

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The people who are agitating are referring to this decision which may be construed to be against one of the observations made by the Late Justice Rajadhyaksha.

So, I am myself saying that this is going to affect them, but it applies only to those who are working in the offices of the Railways, as it does apply to other employees working in other offices of the different Ministries of the Government of India.

I was going to say that all this agitation is being put up by the staff in the offices, which have been slightly affected because their hours of work, as compared to other workers on the railways, or in other departments of the Government, had not been disadvantageous to them. What Shri Tangamani has said is correct. In any case, this will affect only the office staff whose number will not exceed about 9 per cent of the total staff of the Railways. More than 90 per cent of the Railway employees will not be affected at all.

As regards periodic rest, no change has been made either by the Jagannadha Das Commission, or by Government's orders.

As regards overtime, one hon. Member, perhaps Shri Radha Mohan Singh, or some other Member, said that the lowest paid staff of the Railways were

going to be adversely affected by the recommendations of the Pay Commission. I do not know who told him so. No sensible person will ever come to this conclusion that the recommendations of the Pay Commission are going to adversely affect the class IV employees. If they have benefited substantially any section of the railway employees, then they have benefited the class IV employees. I am saying this just to point out how this kind of wrong information is carried to Members. When such information is given to them, it will be better if it is checked up.

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I would advise the hon. Member who is quite studious and painstaking to go through the summary of the recommendations of the Pay Commission and the recommendations which have been accepted by Government, and he can himself come to know whether those things are exaggerated or not, whether they have some basis or not. Why does he want my comment on them? He can himself come to some conclusions on those points.

As regards overtime, I may point out that overtime is going to be very advantageous to those who work overtime. I think any railwayman who scrutinises that will come to the same conclusion.

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With regard to hours of work also, it is not going to affect them at all.

The Pay Commission have also recommended certain changes in the reckoning of overtime allowance. As against the present procedure under the Hours of Employment Regulations, of calculating overtime on basic pay plus dearness pay, the Commission have recommended that overtime allowance should in all cases be calculated on the basis of pay and all allowances except house rent allowance. This means that overtime has to be based on pay, plus dearness allowances, plus city compensatory allowance. Apart from the automatic advantage which even under the existing rules, the staff get by the process of the merger of the dearness allowance with the basic pay, this will result in a higher rate of overtime because of the recommendation that it should also be calculated on the dearness allowance and city compensatory allowance.

As regards leave reserves, the Pay Commission has stated that the adequacy and the basis of the calculation of leave reserves should be reviewed to ensure that the leaves to which the staff are entitled, will actually be granted to them. There is, therefore, no question of any modification being made in the award of Justice Rajadhyaksha.

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I now come to the question of holidays. The workshop staff are entitled only to fifteen paid holidays of their choice, but no casual leave. Therefore, the question of the workshop staff being affected by the reduction in the casual leave does not arise. I am just pointing out how many categories are not being adversely affected by the recommendations of the Pay Commission which have been accepted by Government.

As a matter of fact, the workshop staff are going to gain by the recommendations of the Pay Commission. The Pay Commission has not recommended any positive change. As regards casual leave for such staff, however, they have stated that if it is proposed to grant them the privilege of casual leave, the quantum of earned leave should be proportionately reduced, in view of the fact that in the railways, the workshop staff are already getting leave on the same scale as non-workshop staff, which is considerably more than what has been recommended by the Pay Commission for workshop staff in other industrial establishments.

The number of holidays has been reduced from 23 to 18. This decision affects mainly the office staff and some supervisory staff. The number of staff affected is not likely to exceed about 10 per cent of the total strength.

However, line staff who were hitherto not entitled to any holidays—I think Shri Frank Anthony raised the question about the line staff—have been recommended the three national holidays, or compensatory payment of 4-5 days' wages in lieu thereof.

The casual leave has been reduced from 15 to 12 days, but this also is in respect of office staff and some supervisory staff. Other staff who do not get any holidays, or who get a very restricted number of holidays will continue to have fifteen days of casual leave, as at present. This will, therefore, affect about 10 per cent of staff, as in the case of holidays.

It may be mentioned here that office staff and some supervisory staff, who have been affected by the decisions concerning increase in the working hours of reduction in holidays and casual leave, have up to now been better off than the other staff. The rest of the staff do not get any holidays, or get a very restricted number of holidays, and their hours of work are also longer.

Shri Frank Anthony raised a question when I said that we were not going to charge any tuition fees from the children of railway employees in railway primary schools up to the primary stage, having instruction in any of the languages contained in our Constitution. He asked why Anglo-Indian children were being deprived of this privilege, and he argued that according to the Constitution, it might amount to discrimination. Without entering further

into that question, I may assure him that there was no intention to discriminate against the Anglo-Indian children. The only consideration when we decided to make the primary education free was that in primary schools, imparting instruction in the English medium, the cost was much higher, as compared to in primary schools imparting instruction in any of the Indian languages. That was the only consideration. After Shri Frank Anthony spoke, I have given further thought to the matter, and I have decided that in the English-medium schools also, the boys or girls of railway employees, whose mother-tongue is English will be free from the payment of fees in the primary standards.

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Those whose mother-tongue is not English will have to pay the fees in English-medium schools.

Shri C.K. Nair had said that I had done something for the recruitment of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes boys in the Railways. Well, I have done nothing more than what the Home Ministry has done. What I have done is to see that all the orders and circulars issued in this behalf are properly implemented.

Some hon. members want a millennium in a day. Any trend which has been established in society for centuries takes time to change. One has to see whether the change is taking place or not, and whether it is taking place in the right direction or not.

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I am coming to that.

The hon. Member is in possession of the Office Order of the Home Ministry and the Office Order of the Railway Ministry. I sent a copy of each to the hon. Member. The hon. Member is a practising lawyer. I am sure he can read the Office Order of the Home Ministry, as well as that of the Railway Ministry. I am sure he can understand whether that order is applicable to other Ministries or not.

I know a furore has been created in certain sections of Railway employees and in certain sections of the caste Hindus in this country. I want to make it clear that I am not going to be cowed down by this agitation. No flutter was created when the memorandum was issued by the Home Ministry. But when the Railway Ministry just fell in line with that memorandum and saw to it that memorandum was honestly implemented, there are a number of questions and notices! I am surprised at how this caste feeling is deep-rooted in this country, how everything is weighed and measured by the criterion of caste

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and caste alone. No questions were put when the Home Ministry issued that memorandum.

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When after three years, the Railway Ministry issued a Memorandum on the same lines as the Home Ministry memorandum, the caste interests are affected and questions are put and constitutional provisions invoked. Why? Is efficiency going down? How? If there are a hundred efficient persons and one inefficient man comes, does efficiency go down? It is a matter of common sense.

Then the hon. Member asks me whether that circular applies to other Ministries or not. I presume the hon. Member is aware that the Home Ministry is the custodian of all services in the Central Government and any circular issued by that Ministry—I presume he knows that much—is applicable to all government servants, to all Ministries. Therefore, that question should not have been put to me.

If the hon. Member is honest and solicitous about the interests of the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, he might put that question to other Ministries, whether they have implemented that memorandum or not, and not to me.

The whole question comes up because I have implemented it. Questions are put to me, not to those who have not implemented it.

I want other people to be honest about their convictions. If they feel that I have done wrong, they should come directly and tell me—not indirectly. I am prepared to face it here and now.

I know I have done the right thing. I am convinced of it. Therefore, I never mince matters.

I do not know how Kumari M. Vedakumari was briefed by some people—that qualifications have been reduced in the case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This was a mischievous information given to her. Nowhere have the prescribed minimum qualifications been reduced, either for the Scheduled Castes, or for the Scheduled Tribes. And I will be the last person to reduce qualifications, which will in any way affect the efficiency of the services. What I want is nothing more than what the Constitution has provided for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Anglo-Indians.

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I want to be honest and sincere about it. I want to see that the provisions are not flouted. If certain interests are enraged on that account, I cannot help it.

Then she said that perhaps educational qualifications were being reduced. If any qualification is to be reduced or modified, it will be for all, and not only for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

Then again, I do not know how she says.....

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I am giving this information that if any qualification is to be reduced, it will be reduced for all. It cannot be for any one section alone.

Then she says that the same privileges should be given to the Scheduled Tribes. I may assure her and the House that whatever concessions have been granted, have been granted for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes equally. No office memorandum has been issued only for the Scheduled Castes. It is always issued for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes—for both.

It was suggested that there should be joint committees on the Railways. We have formed joint committees and they have started functioning in some of the railways. I think by the next year, I will be in a position to give something about it in the Report on the Railways, for the information of hon. members. It has always been my effort to encourage railway officers and men to have greater personal contacts among themselves, because nothing counts so much for the efficient functioning of any undertaking, as personal contacts among the workers in that undertaking at various levels. I regard all people who are engaged in this national undertaking, as workers for a common cause. Their designations may be different; their salaries may be different. But the objective is the same—how to render efficient transport service for the community. There will be lapses here and there, but I have always been emphasising upon the officers the necessity of taking personal interest in the workers so that the workers may look up to them, not only as officers but as advisers in times of necessity and difficulty. That will take some time. Both sides will have to change.

As regards passenger amenities, doubts have been expressed whether we will be able to spend Rs. 15 crore during the Plan Period. Uptil now, we have spent Rs. 9.87 crore and I am sure by the end of the Plan, we will be able to spend all the Plan allocation on this account.

Smt. Parvathi Krishnan wanted to know the break-up of the Rs. 20 crore, which have been provided to meet the effects of the Pay Commission's

recommendations. For her information I may give it. *Ex gratia* payment for the period 1 July 1959 to 31 October 1959 to be credited to the Employees Provident Fund accounts is Rs. 3.19 crore, cash payments on account of pay and allowances from 1 November 1959 to 31 March 1961, Rs. 13.82 crore; and Government contribution to Provident Fund in respect of (2) above Rs. 3.11 crore; total Rs. 20.12 crore.

Then, questions have been raised about the provision of overbridges without going into individual cases, whether it is at Jabalpur or at Calicut.

Wherever it may be—or at Ahmedabad—the general principle is this. We have to share with the local authority, or the State Government concerned. We in the railways are always prepared to meet our share.

I have got in my brief, the present position regarding Ahmedabad, Calicut or Jabalpur. Either references have been made to the municipalities, or to the local authorities, and, as soon as matters are finalised, they will be undertaken.

What I have done is this. When the Transport Ministry wrote to the State Governments, I also wrote to them to prepare a list of the overbridges that they will require in their respective States and determine the priority in which they would like works to be executed. They would have to provide the necessary funds in their own Budgets, so that the Transport Ministry and the Railway Ministry may provide the balancing provision in their Budgets, so that these works may be taken in hand. I personally feel that this problem in our country is a big problem and will have to be tackled in a planned way on a long-term basis.

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The proportion, in some cases, is half and half about the bridge portion; and, in some cases, the bridge portion is to be done entirely by the railways and the approach portion has to be done by the local, or road authority or the Transport Ministry.

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The Delhi Administration takes the place of the State Government, and they will have to do it.

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Then, there were questions about platforms, waiting halls etc. I have got information about them. But, I am afraid there is no time at my disposal. They are all at various stages and it is our intention to provide the minimum basic amenities at all stations.

We have also made good progress with electrification. But, it will take some time to electrify more than 6,000 stations. We are electrifying stations on a programmed basis where electricity is available in the adjoining town, or city.

We have been providing drinking water facilities; and I have asked the Railway Board to see that even at the smallest station drinking water facilities are provided. If nothing else is possible, at least a hand-pump should be sunk there so that drinking water becomes available. We will see that before the next summer sets in, these programmes are executed. There is much to be desired regarding the cleanliness of the third-class compartments, waiting halls. It requires some social education for the passengers and more sense of responsibility on the railway staff charged to look after cleanliness. It is true that the sweepers took very little care of the third class compartments. I have asked specifically the General Managers to appoint sweepers detailed only for third class compartments in the bigger stations. Staff has been appointed, but still the old tendency is continuing. I will only suggest that passengers should be careful in taking work from them. I have been emphasising upon the railway officers that the scavengers who are meant for third class compartments should see that at the bigger stations they are cleaned and the same broom should not be used for the lavatory and the compartment. As a matter of fact some swabs and dusters are provided for them. I am saying that we have provided the staff with the equipment and accessories. It is not being utilised fully. It should be seen by the passengers themselves that the scavengers do their job.

About sleeping accommodation for the ladies, instructions have been issued to reserve at least one berth for them in the sleeper coach. ...(*Interruptions*) About push buttons it is not only to be introduced in the higher class ladies compartments; it will be introduced in the third class compartments as well.

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We have the three-tier coaches; we have the two tier coaches. The former are not as comfortable as the latter. It is quite obvious. We have decided to maintain two-tier and three-tier coaches. Those who want comfortable accommodation will have to pay and travel by the two-tier coaches and those who cannot afford to pay for that comfort will travel by the three-tier coaches and no additional charge will be levied from them. It will be seen which of these is more popular. If the three-tier coach is more popular, then we will have more of them, but if the two-tier coach is more popular, the three-tier coach may be withdrawn.

No, Sir\*. We have said that no charge will be levied for the three-tier sleeping accommodation.

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The whole intention was to provide the third class passengers travelling long distances, some accommodation where he could stretch himself. Instead of sitting all the time, if I can provide him some accommodation where he can stretch his legs and body without charging anything extra from him, I think it will be an advantage to them. I am providing not a very comfortable accommodation, but there is accommodation where a passenger will be in a position to stretch himself and sleep.

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जो नये डिब्बे बने हैं उनमें मैंने चढ़कर और लेटकर भी देख लिया है। रात भर तो नहीं, लेकिन थोड़ी देर के लिये ट्राई कर के देख लिया है, और देख लेने के बाद ही उनको बनाने का आर्डर दिया है।

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That is a separate question. That is the existing system. I am not talking of that. When the new third class three-tier sleeper coaches are introduced, no extra charges will be levied on the passengers. In some sections these coaches have been introduced and no additional charges are levied.

Sir, I think, I have dealt with the important aspects. There are many small matters which have been raised. It is not possible for me to deal with them although I have briefs here in regard to all those points. I would only assure the hon. Members that all their suggestions will be taken into consideration and we will try to see how far we can implement them.

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I have already given that information, that that line is going up to Kathua. I do not know why hon. Members want me to repeat it. The survey is being conducted and work will start. That work is going to be undertaken.

I am grateful to the hon. Members of this House for the way in which they have received the Railway Budget and for the way in which they have expressed their appreciation for the work performed by the Railways. I will again repeat that this will very much encourage more than a million employees of the Railways.

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\* Replying to Mr. Deputy Speaker who said: If the three-tier coach becomes more popular then he should not begin to levy a charge on that!

## RAIL ACCIDENTS : A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW<sup>\*£</sup>

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Sir, it is with a heavy heart that I rise to make a statement about the three major accidents that have taken place recently near Ghatsila, Mainpuri and Kosgi stations.

On 20 October 1961, while 83 Up Ranchi Express was running between Dalbhumgarh and Ghatsila stations on the Khargpur-Tatanagar Section of the South Eastern Railway, it derailed at about 1.25 hours at Km. 209/4-5. The engine and seven coaches behind derailed and capsized on both sides of the track. The eighth coach was also derailed, while the rear four coaches of the train remained on the track.

It is painful to report that as a result of this accident, 45 persons were killed on the spot and 6 succumbed to their injuries subsequently. Besides, 11 persons suffered grievous injuries. Out of 184 persons who sustained minor injuries, 71 persons were discharged after being rendered first aid on the spot. 92 persons were discharged after treatment in the hospitals. This morning there are 32 persons still in the hospitals.

Local medical assistance available at Ghatsila was rushed to the site by a shuttle train. Medical relief vans were rushed from Tatanagar, Chakradharpur and Khargpur. After giving medical aid to the injured and general assistance to the affected passengers, the injured persons were removed by relief trains and ambulance specials to the Railway hospitals at Tatanagar and Kharagpur, civil hospitals at Sakchi and to the TISCO and Indian Copper Corporation hospitals. Forty-five dead bodies were recovered at the site and sent in batches under the charge of Railway Police officials to Tatanagar, by running shuttle services.

Three badly injured persons were rescued alive by gas-cutting the underframe of a coach and two by jacking the underframe of another. The entrapped passengers in a few coaches were rescued by breaking open the windows and the side pillars.

*Ex-gratia* payment to the injured and relatives of the dead amounting to Rs. 22,100 has been made.

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\* *L.S. Deb.*, 20 November 1961.

£ Making a Statement on three recent major Railway accidents as the Minister of Railways.

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Every possible help in relief operations was rendered by civil authorities and adjoining industries, Indian Copper Corporation and TISCO. The Deputy Commissioner, Singhbhum, himself assisted in rendering effective relief at the site of the accident. A large number of volunteers from different organisations and trade unions also worked very hard.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Calcutta, Ministry of Transport & Communications, held a statutory enquiry into the cause of this accident. He has submitted his preliminary report, according to which the derailment of 83 Up Ranchi Express was caused by tampering with the track by some unknown persons.

The second accident took place on 29 October 1961. No. 2 TF Passenger train derailed at km. 1268/7-9 between Mainpuri and Bhongaon stations on Shikohabad-Farukhabad Branch Line of Northern Railway at about 10.35 hours. The engine and tender capsized and the four following bogies derailed and telescoped. The remaining coaches were undamaged and remained on the rails. As a result of this accident, unfortunately, 18 persons were killed on the spot, 4 died subsequently, 17 persons were grievously injured and 45 sustained simple injuries. It is a matter of deep regret that amongst those involved in the accident were 46 Buddhist pilgrims from Ceylon, who were on their way to Sankisa, a place of Buddhist pilgrimage near Farukhabad. Sixteen of the pilgrims were killed on the spot, 2 died subsequently and the others received injuries.

Medical relief from Mainpuri and Bhongaon was rushed by road to the site of the accident. The injured, after being rendered medical aid, were transferred for further treatment to the civil hospitals at Bhongaon and Mainpuri. Out of 62 injured, 51 were discharged on various dates and eleven were in hospitals till this morning. An *ex-gratia* payment of Rs. 4,107 has been made to the injured and the relatives of the dead. A special chartered plane was flown to Ceylon with the dead bodies of the Ceylonese after embalming them at the Agra Medical College. Such of the injured Buddhist pilgrims who were in a position to undertake air journey were also sent to Ceylon by a chartered plane on 6 November 1961.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Lucknow, held his statutory enquiry into the accident. According to his provisional findings, the accident was caused by high speed, which was in excess of the permissible limit of the section for AWD engines, which is 30 miles per hour. This, coupled with the sudden application of brakes caused distortion of the track, which resulted in the derailment.

*Ad hoc* Claims Commissioners have been appointed to deal with claims for compensation arising out of these accidents.

The third accident occurred on the Southern Railway at about 2.34 hours on 9 November 1961. The train No. 14 Madras-Bombay Janata Express which was being received on the main line at Kosgi station to cross No. 1608 Up Goods, overshot into the *snag* dead-end and the engine alongwith three bogies derailed. The engine capsized and three bogies telescoped. As a result, the driver of the engine and two firemen died on the spot and nine persons including four railway employees sustained minor injuries.

*Ex-gratia* payment of Rs. 200 was made to one injured passenger, whose injuries were at that time, suspected to be grievous.

The Additional Commissioner of Railway Safety, Bangalore, held an enquiry into the accident at Kosgi commencing from 10 November, 1961. His report is awaited.

This statement is rather long. With your permission, I shall lay it on the Table.

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*[The rest of the statement, reproduced below, was laid on the Table.]*

Having given information about the recent accidents, I would also like to recount briefly the efforts made and action taken in recent years, beginning for convenience, from the commencement of the present Lok Sabha, in regard to the very important question of minimising accidents and making railway travel safe. In the first Railway Budget Speech of the present Parliament which, incidentally, was also my first, as Minister incharge of Railways, I had mentioned about the two cases of unfortunate accidents, one near Ariyalur on the Southern Railway and the second near Mahboobnagar on the Central Railway.

In the year 1957-58 which followed, there was a lull for a period but, unfortunately, in the first two months of 1958, three major accidents occurred in quick succession, reference to which was made in my Budget Speech on 17 February 1958, as follows:

“The occurrence of these accidents in quick succession has been a matter of grave concern to all of us. I had, therefore, recently called a special meeting of the General Managers to discuss with them the whole problem of accidents with a view to initiating effective measures for bringing about an improvement. The discussion confirmed that human failure largely accounts for these accidents. Technical improvements, which can help to mitigate the incidence of human element, are being progressively effected, but a significant improvement can only be effected if all those engaged in the running of railways are fully alive to their duty and responsibility.

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The General Managers have been asked to intensify outdoor supervision, to check up on the strict observance of rules for safe working and to impress upon the staff the great responsibility for safety of travel which rests upon them."

In August 1958, I placed before the Parliament 'A Factual Review of Accidents'—up to 1957-58. In this review the incidence of accidents during the past 20 years against the workload which the Railways were required to perform, was analysed year to year. The incidence of accidents and the casualties resulting therefrom were compared with similar figures on some foreign railways. The main causes of the accidents were analysed and the steps which were being taken to minimise train accidents were detailed therein.

In my Budget Speech for the year 1959-60, on 18 February 1959, I shared with the Members of the Parliament my thoughts on the question of railway accidents. I would crave the indulgence of the Members to read out the statement, which I made at that time. "An extensive development of line capacity is under execution on long stretches of trunk routes, upsetting settled conditions of working; at the same time, rapidly increasing volume of traffic has been passing over these sections, which are mostly working to saturation points. Under these abnormal conditions, a state of constant pressure and strain is inevitable, and this at times unfortunately leads to human failures.

We are fully alive to the seriousness of the problem, and the Railway administrations have been directed to initiate certain measures—educative, psychological and punitive—which, it is hoped, will instill great safety-mindness among the staff. Simultaneously, attention has also been paid to the provision of improved technical devices as an aid to the staff; safety organisations and research cells have also been set up on every railway to undertake a critical analysis of accidents, to focus attention on safety aspects in every field of operation, to carry out intensive inspections and to ensure strict observance of the safety rules and regulations by all concerned.

In regard to anti-sabotage measures, various schemes were examined in consultation with the Intelligence Bureau and the Ministry of Home Affairs. As a result of this examination, the State Governments have been addressed to afford assistance through publicity measures amongst inhabitants of the villages in the vicinity of railway lines, through improvement of the arrangements of the Railway Police for the collection of advance intelligence in this regard, through intensification of patrolling of vulnerable areas, through a continuous study of all serious railway accidents by the State C.I.D.s, and through periodical liaison meetings for exchanging information between railway officials and State Police officials, Railway administrations have been directed to be in close contact with the State Governments for this purpose.

Considerable emphasis has also been given to initial training and refresher courses for all categories of staff responsible for train working. I would like to assure the House that constant endeavours would continue to be made to deal with this problem of accidents with the utmost imagination and care. In this effort I solicit the unstinted co-operation of everyone concerned, so that a greater sense of safety-consciousness may be brought about amongst the large number of railwaymen employed for train operation."

A comprehensive review of accidents on Indian Railways during 1958-59 was presented to the Parliament with the Budget Papers for 1960-61. From the analysis made therein it was shown that the total number of accidents on Indian Railways during 1958-59 remained more or less the same as compared with the previous year despite slight increase in certain categories. The review concluded, "Viewed in the context of increasing volume of traffic though these static features may appear quite satisfactory on statistical considerations, it has not given rise to any feeling of complacency on the part of the Railway Ministry. We are frequently focusing the attention of the railway administrations to the supreme importance of keeping a strict watch on the situation. Sustained efforts are being made to instil a higher sense of safety-mindedness amongst all categories of staff with a view to reduce the incidence of accidents still further. It is hoped that with the vigilance exercised by the railway administrations and the preventive measures adopted by them, Indian Railways would be in a position to set up a high standard of safety in rail travel."

Fortunately, there were no major accidents during 1959-60. However, the measures taken to improve the safety on the Railways continued to be pursued vigorously. The House will recall the following observations made by me in my Budget Speech on 17 February, 1960:

"Irrespective of whether this is fortuitous, or is a reflection of sustained human endeavour we can only work and pray for continued absence of any serious mishaps. ... judged in the light of the increasing volume and tempo of traffic, the position seems to be satisfactory, as far as it goes. Without any reservation, I want to assure the House that there is no complacency in this regard. Besides, a strict watch is being kept at all levels and a persistent endeavour is being made to enliven safety-consciousness among the staff."

I ended my observation with an appeal to the railway staff:

"they would continue to discharge their duties with greater care and attention so as to set up a high standard of safety."

A comprehensive review of accidents for the year 1959-60 was also laid on the Table of the House along with Budget papers. From the review it was seen that "despite a significant increase in the train miles run on the Indian Government Railways, there has been a decline in the total number of accidents

during 1959-60 as compared to the previous year. Nevertheless, slight increases in the incidence of certain categories of accidents and static results in some others have been a cause of anxiety to the Government. They have frequently drawn the attention of the Railway administration to the paramount need of exercising a constant vigil and taking adequate preventive steps. The Railway administrations are also fully alive to their responsibilities in the matter and they have launched an all-out drive to reduce the frequency of accidents to the minimum.

In view of the improving trend in the accidents position, the Government hope that in the years to come standard of safety in rail travel on the Indian Railways would become better.

Sustained efforts continued to be made during the year 1960-61 to maintain the previous year's good record. The House may like to recall my observations on the subject in my Budget Speech of February this year "I want to assure the House that there is no sense of complacency in this vital issue. There is constant awareness in the Railway Board of the importance of the problem." The Railway administrations are also fully conscious of their responsibilities in the matter of sustained education and training of staff, so as to instil "safety consciousness" in them. As in the past, many of the accidents in 1959-60 were due to human failure. Having regard to the size of the railways, the present tempo of work and the large number of staff employed, it will be appreciated that there can be no ready solution. With prompt deterrent measures, as well as incentives in the way of rewards, where justified, I hope that railway staff at all levels will put themselves out even more than hitherto, in this important aspect of avoiding accidents to the utmost extent possible.

My purpose in reading lengthy extracts from the recorded observations on accidents during the course of this Parliament was to show that ever since I was entrusted with the responsibility of this Ministry, the problem of accidents has been constantly engaging my attention as also of the Railway Board and the Railway administrations.

This watchfulness, was rewarded by a beneficent providence, as a result of which the number of accidents in relation to the traffic handled decreased. This will be seen from the figures given below:

Year	Total No. of vehicle miles in millions	Total No. of Accidents	Accidents per million vehicle miles
1957-58	6,401	9,011	1.41
1958-59	6,606	9,071	1.37
1959-60	6,979	8,916	1.28
1960-61	7,220	8,808	1.22

The extent of safety achieved is often judged by the number of passenger casualties in train collisions and derailments per billion passenger miles. The figures for the Indian Railways, including the casualties caused by train wrecking and attempted train wrecking (sabotage) were as follows:

Year	Total casualties			No. of passenger casualties in train collisions and derailments per billion (1000 million) passenger miles		
	Killed	Injured	Total	Killed	Injured	Total
1957-58	76	475	551	1.77	11.0	12.77
1958-59	44	357	401	1.04	8.44	9.48
1959-60	3	315	318	0.07	6.83	6.90
1960-61	26	213	239	0.54	4.44	4.98

It is unfortunate that there have been two serious cases of train wrecking this year, first in the month of April in Gulm forest on the N.F. Railway and the second, recently near Ghatsila on the South Eastern Railway, which resulted in a total of 86 killed and 281 injured.

In the end, I would like to assure the House, that to minimise the number of accidents, no effort is being spared and safety measures are being intensified.

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HOMAGES PAID BY SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM

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## HOMAGES PAID BY SHRI JAGJIVAN RAM

### राष्ट्रपति श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद\*

अध्यक्ष जी, दिवंगत राष्ट्रपति श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद भारतीय संस्कृति में जो कुछ सुन्दर है, उसके प्रतीक थे। वे राजनीति के योद्धा तो थे ही साथ ही साथ उनमें मानवीय गुणों का समन्वय भी बहुत ही सुन्दर ढंग से हुआ था। भारत भिन्न-भिन्न धर्मों का देश है। सभी धर्मों का आदर करना भारतीय संस्कृति का एक अविच्छिन्न अंग है। श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद इसमें विश्वास ही नहीं रखते थे, बल्कि यह उनके जीवन का एक अंग भी बन गया था और इसलिए भारत के सभी लोगों के लिए वह प्रिय बन गए थे।

वह एक खिलाड़ी थे। वह राजनीति में भी खेल खेला करते थे और जब कभी मौका आता था इस बात को बतला देते थे कि हार और जीत में प्रसन्न रहना एक खिलाड़ी का अच्छा काम होता है। मंत्रिमंडल में भी वह रहे और जिन लोगों को उनके साथ काम करने का अवसर मिला उन्होंने यह देखा कि कार्य की सफलता के साथ-साथ उनके मातहत काम करने वालों में विश्वास पैदा करना, उनका प्रेम लेना यह भी उनका एक गुण था। उनके चले जाने से भारत का एक महान पुरुष चला गया है और उनके स्थान की पूर्ति होना सम्भव नहीं है। जिन लोगों को उनके साथ राजनीति में काम करने का अवसर मिला उन्होंने यह भी देखा कि राजनीति के अन्दर भी वह उदारता बरता करते थे और उदारता इस बात से चलती थी कि भारतीय संस्कृति में उनका अटूट विश्वास था। वह मानते थे कि भारतीय संस्कृति एक मिश्रित संस्कृति है और सभी लोगों की मिली-जुली संस्कृति है। उनके गुणों को हम स्मरण रखें तो हमारा राष्ट्रीय जीवन सम्पन्न बन सकता है।

उनके प्रति हम जितनी भी संवेदना प्रकट करें थोड़ी होगी। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं उनके प्रति श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ और उनके परिवार वालों के प्रति संवेदना प्रकट करना चाहता हूँ।

### श्री जयप्रकाश नारायण\*\*

दिवंगत आत्माओं के प्रति जो श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित हुई है, मैं उसमें शामिल होता हूँ। जयप्रकाश जी भारत के महानतम पुत्रों में से थे। उनका जीवन समर्पित था। समर्पित था देश की स्वतंत्रता के लिए, समर्पित था-प्रजातंत्र के लिए, समर्पित था-समाजवाद के लिए, समर्पित था-विश्वशान्ति के लिए। जहां-कहीं भी उन्होंने अन्याय देखा, उनकी अकेली आवाज भी उठी, उन्होंने इस बात की परवाह नहीं की कि हमारे साथ और कोई है या नहीं है। चाहे वह नागालैंड का प्रश्न हो, कश्मीर का प्रश्न

\* लोक सभा वाद-विवाद, 26 मार्च 1977 [राष्ट्रपति श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद के निधन पर श्रद्धांजलि]।

\*\*लोक सभा वाद-विवाद, 23 जनवरी, 1980 [श्री जयप्रकाश नारायण के निधन पर श्रद्धांजलि]।

हो, पाकिस्तान के साथ मधुर संबंध बनाने का प्रश्न हो, सभी मामलों में जयप्रकाश जी की आवाज उठती गई और जैसा मैंने अभी कहा—उनका इतना अधिक समर्पित जीवन था कि जीवन के सुखों के प्रति वे बराबर उदासीन रहे और वह समर्पित जीवन देश की सेवा में लगता रहा। आखिरी वक्त में उनकी तुलना भीष्म पितामह से की जाए तो अत्योक्ति नहीं होगी। रुग्ण-शैया पर पड़े हुए भी देश की प्रत्येक गतिविधि की जानकारी रखना और उसमें बौद्धिक योगदान करना उनका काम रहा। देश की युवापीढ़ी को अनुप्राणित करने का काम भी उन्होंने किया। आज अगर उनसे सबक लेकर हम इस युवा शक्ति का इस्तेमाल कर सकें, तो इसमें कोई सन्देह नहीं कि राष्ट्र के कई रचनात्मक कार्यों में युवा पीढ़ी अगली कतार में पाई जायेगी। यदि उनका सही दिशा-निर्देशन नहीं हुआ, तो इसमें भी कोई संदेह नहीं कि ध्वंसक कार्यों में भी वे अगली कतार में पाये जा सकते हैं। आज उनके जीवन से हमको यह आदर्श लेना चाहिए कि देश के हित में, राष्ट्र के हित में, समाज के हित में कोई त्याग बहुत बड़ा त्याग नहीं है।

मैं उनके प्रति अपनी और अपने ग्रुप की ओर से श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ।

### लार्ड माउन्टबेटन\*

लार्ड माउन्टबेटन—हिन्दुस्तान के इतिहास के एक अंश बन गये हैं और हिन्दुस्तान के इतिहास के अध्याय में उनका नाम गौरव के साथ लिया जायेगा। भारत को आजादी देने में उनका हाथ रहा और भारत के साथ उनकी इतनी अधिक एकरूपता हो गई थी कि उनकी अंतिम ख्वाहिश थी कि जब उनकी मृत्यु हो जाये तो उनकी शव-यात्रा में भारतीय सेना का भी प्रतिनिधित्व रहे। मैंने इस बात का उल्लेख इसलिये किया है कि उनकी एकरूपता भारत के साथ बहुत अधिक बन चुकी थी। यह दुखद विषय है कि उन का अन्त ऐसे कारणों से हुआ जो शायद सम्भवतः बहुत से महापुरुषों के जीवन में घटे हैं। वे हिन्दुस्तान के लिए अंतिम वक्त तक अपने प्यार को अक्षुण्ण रखे रहे और जब कभी हिन्दुस्तान के लिए पेचीदा प्रश्न आता था, तो अपने सीधे तरीके से इंग्लैंड में और दूसरे लोगों के साथ भारत के पक्ष की व्याख्या करने में कभी चूकते नहीं थे। उनके प्रति श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करके हम अपना कर्तव्य निभा रहे हैं। यहां और जितने नाम लिये गये हैं, उन सभी के साथ आरम्भ से काम करने का मुझे अवसर रहा है। उन सभी का अंशदान बाहर और भीतर रहा है और उन सभी के चले जाने से, इसमें संदेह नहीं है, देश को क्षति हुई है। मैं उन सभी के प्रति श्रद्धांजलि देने के लिए पूर्व वक्ताओं के साथ शामिल हूँ।

### सरदार हुकुम सिंह\*\*

अध्यक्ष जी, सरदार हुकुम सिंह जिस पीढ़ी के प्रतीक थे उसके लोग एक बाद एक उठते चले जा रहे हैं। उनकी प्रतिभा बहुमुखी थी और उनका कार्य क्षेत्र बहुत विस्तृत था और किस पहलू पर कहा जाए और किस पर न कहा जाए, मैं असमंजस में पड़ जाता हूँ।

\*लोक सभा वाद-विवाद, 23 जनवरी, 1980 [लार्ड माउन्टबेटन के निधन पर श्रद्धांजलि]।

\*\*लोक सभा वाद-विवाद, 25 जुलाई, 1983 [लोक सभा अध्यक्ष, सरदार हुकुम सिंह के निधन पर श्रद्धांजलि]।

जब वे इस पद पर आए थे तो सारा जीवन न्याय दिलाने की अनुभूति को साथ ले कर आए थे। इसलिए यहां भी बैठ करके उन्होंने न्याय दिलाने का प्रयत्न किया और उन्होंने जो कुछ भी रूलिंग्स दी हैं, उनको आज भी देखा जाए, तो मालूम होगा कि सदन के भिन्न-भिन्न हिस्सों को न्याय दिलाने में वे हिचकते नहीं थे। यह एक बड़ी चीज थी। मैंने जैसाकि पहले कहा है कि उनका कार्य क्षेत्र बहुत विस्तृत था। सदन के भीतर और सदन के बाहर चाहे जिस पद पर भी वे रहे हों। इन्सानियत को कभी भी उन्होंने नहीं खोया और यही कारण था कि उनके साथ जिनकी सहमति नहीं होती थी, वे लोग भी उनकी ओर आकृष्ट होते थे और उनकी प्रशंसा करते थे।

सरदार हुकुम सिंह अकाली दल के थे लेकिन मैं कहूंगा कि वे अच्छे और सच्चे सिख थे। वे एक बहुत बड़े भारतीय थे, प्रजातंत्र के बहुत बड़े पोषक थे और यह मानते थे कि प्रजातंत्र को हम जितना सशक्त करेंगे उतना ही देश को शक्तिशाली बनाया जा सकेगा, देश को एकत्रित रखा जा सकेगा।

मैं अधिक समय न लेकर, उनके संबंध में पूर्व वक्ताओं ने जो कुछ कहा है, उससे अपने आपको जोड़ता हूं और उनके प्रति अपनी विनम्र श्रद्धांजलि व्यक्त करता हूं।

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PART-IV  
TRIBUTES PAID TO BABU JAGJIVAN RAM

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## TRIBUTES PAID TO BABU JAGJIVAN RAM IN PARLIAMENT

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### TRIBUTES PAID IN LOK SABHA\*

DR. BALRAM JAKHAR, HON. SPEAKER, LOK SABHA: Hon. Members, the short interval that has elapsed since we last met in the Budget Session has witnessed many a tragic event which included the passing away of Shri Jagjivan Ram who happened to be one of the senior most Members of this House.

Shri Jagjivan Ram was a sitting Member of Lok Sabha representing Sasaram constituency of Bihar. He had been a Member of the Central Legislative Assembly and Constituent Assembly during 1946-50, Provisional Parliament during 1950-52 and continued to be a Member of this House from 1952 till his death without interruption. Earlier, he had been Member of the Bihar Legislative Council and Bihar Legislative Assembly during 1936-40. Thus Shri Jagjivan Ram had the unique distinction of serving as a Member of the Central Legislature uninterruptedly for as long as 40 years.

Shri Jagjivan Ram held various portfolios in the Union Cabinet continuously from 1946 till 1963 when he resigned under the Kamaraj Plan. He was re-inducted in the Union Cabinet in 1966 and held charge of several important Ministries till 1979. He served as Deputy Prime Minister from January to July 1979, and thereafter in the same year as the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha. Whatever portfolio he held, Shri Jagjivan Ram left upon it the imprint of a skilful administrator and a shrewd judge of men and matters.

A veteran freedom fighter, Shri Jagjivan Ram actively participated in the freedom movement. He offered individual satyagraha and suffered imprisonment.

A dedicated political and social worker, he took part in the movement for social reform. His life was devoted to the upliftment of Harijans and other weaker sections of society. As the accredited leader of the Scheduled Castes, he appeared before the Cabinet Mission in April, 1946. He participated alongwith Gandhiji in the anti-untouchability movement started by the latter. Babuji, as he was affectionately called, was a father figure to whom the depressed and the suppressed looked for succour.

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\* *L.S. Deb.*, 17 July 1986.

Keenly sensitive to the plight of agricultural labourers, he formed the Bihar Provincial *Khet Mazdoor Sabha* as early as in 1937. He also showed keen interest in the trade union movement and served as the President of many workers' organisation.

Author of several works, he was conferred Honorary Doctorate Degrees by several Universities. A widely travelled person, Shri Ram was the leader of several Indian Delegations to various International Conferences. He was the Chairman of the Preparatory Asia Regional Conference of the International Labour Organisation held in New Delhi in October-November, 1947, and Leader, Indian delegation, 33<sup>rd</sup> Session of the International Labour Organisation, 1950, when he was also unanimously elected as Chairman of the Conference.

Shri Jagjivan Ram passed away at New Delhi on 6 July 1986 at the age of 78 years. In his death, the country has lost an outstanding Parliamentarian, an eminent statesman, an astute administrator and above all a patriot who devoted his entire life to the service of the people.

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SHRI RAJIV GANDHI, HON. PRIME MINISTER OF INDIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, with the passing away of Babuji, the nation has suffered a loss. He was amongst the tallest in his generation—first as a freedom fighter and then as a builder of modern India. With over 50 years in public life, he has done a tremendous service for our nation. He commanded respect from all sections of our society. He was not limited just to Bihar or to Harijans; he was a leader of India. His personality, his mastery of expression, his formidable political and parliamentary skills, his administrative capability all led to the building and structuring of India, of bringing our societies together, of joining our country and strengthening our country. Through his career, he held many demanding portfolios and he did tremendous work in any area that he was in. This House will remember and miss his vision, his vast experience, his never-failing humour and humanity.

Through you, Mr. Speaker, I would like to convey our condolences to his wife, Smt. Indirani Devi Ram, Smt. Meira Kumar and other members of his family.

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SHRI C. MADHAVA REDDI, MEMBER (Adilabad): Mr. Speaker, I share the sentiments of the Leader of the House, the Prime Minister and, I share the sorrow of millions of our countrymen who today feel bereaved by the passing away of Babu Jagjivan Ram.

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Babu Jagjivan Ram strode the country's political scene for more than 40 years and he left his footprints wherever he worked, whichever Department he handled and he will be remembered for several decades to come, for his efficiency, for his dedicated work, honesty and service to the downtrodden.

The best way to remember a great leader like Babuji is to remember the values he cherished and the services he rendered to the millions of our downtrodden people. Today, when we see the atrocities being committed on weaker sections, we feel ashamed. All of us are going to die. We are not going to die a second time. But I feel Babu Jagjivan Ram will die every day if the atrocities on Harijans and the weaker sections continue in this country. Today is the day when we should dedicate ourselves to the cause of protecting the weaker sections of the society.

I am reminded of the earlier days of the first Parliament of which I was a Member when Babuji was a Minister, a young Minister. We used to observe him, watch his performance. I still remember the days, the way in which he was answering questions, not taking shelter under technicalities, like several other Ministers in those days used to do. He used to give information more than what was asked for. The way he performed, the way he spoke, inspired us all. Once, I remember, the great Shri Syama Prasad Mookerjee, on whose side I was sitting on that seat and when I wanted to interrupt Babuji while he was speaking, he held my shirt and said "Young man, don't interrupt him, because you cannot afford to interrupt that man. You can interrupt even Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru but not him." That was his contribution. I also remember the private conversation once he had with some of us when he said, "If and when this country is going to accept a Harijan Prime Minister, young man, he is the man who is cut out to be the Prime Minister of this country". That is how he described him and his prophecy had almost come true. Even though the country was prepared to accept him as Prime Minister, the people were prepared to accept him but the political exigencies came in the way. I am sure that had he been the Prime Minister of this country, the history of this country would have been quite different.

Sir, on my behalf and on behalf of my party, I pay homage to the memory of this great soul who strode in the political scene like a colossus for 40 years.

SHRI BASUDEB ACHARIA, MEMBER : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the death of Babu Jagjivan Ram marks the end of a generation, a generation to which he belonged, the generation of true Gandhites. Hailing from a very humble social backdrop Babuji played a very active and notable role in the political activity of our country for over half a century. Even during his student life, he took active part in organising movements for the upliftment of the

downtrodden and for the social change. When he was a student of the Banaras Hindu University, he organised the Scheduled Castes to protest against social discrimination. He was also a prominent leader in the freedom struggle. He was imprisoned several times by the British imperialists. He showed concern for the downtrodden and socially discriminated sections of our society. Whenever there was any injustice, he never faltered or hesitated to come out with protest—whether he was in the Government or outside the Government. Throughout his life, Babuji tried to awaken the poor Harijans, weaker sections of our society, from the slumber and to make them aware of their rights. But the irony of fate is still such in our country that social injustice, the untouchability and discrimination exist against which Babuji fought throughout his life. The best way to pay homage to Babu Jagjivan Ram is to fulfil his dream, his dream for a social change, his dream for bringing an end to social injustice and untouchability.

PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE, MEMBER : Mr. Speaker, Sir, with the death of Babuji, the veterans of the freedom struggle, one by one, are disappearing from the country and we are seized with the painful reality that the surviving links with the pre-independence days are almost snapped.

Sir, I had the honour and opportunity to watch the performance of Babuji for an uninterrupted period of 15 years, and his parliamentary performance, administrative ability, clarity of vision and, above all, his warmth for the socially oppressed in the country were something which was remarkable. Those of the Members who had heard Babuji for several years in this House must have seen that, whenever Babuji spoke in this House, he spoke not a word less, not a word more; there was no superfluosity of words. He would be very precise and sharp in his criticism and in his elucidation. Once I had said while participating in a debate that Babuji had the precision of a scientist in his expression and the refinement of an artist whenever he spoke. And his speeches were always heard in this House by Members belonging to both sides with rapt attention because they always felt that he introduced some dimension which was missing in other speeches.

His administrative ability was remarkable. Permit me to share with this House my personal experience. When I entered the Cabinet for the first time, I went and asked Babuji, "Babuji, what is the cardinal principle that every Minister must follow?" He said, "Remember, the relationship between a bureaucrat, an expert official, and the Minister must be properly grasped"; he said, "You must realise that an expert official is there to assist you and guide you; he is not supposed to rule you; and the moment you forget that, you become a rubber-stamp in the Government and the bureaucrats rule; please take care that this does not happen". I think, that was the crux of the problem.

When I remember Babuji, I am reminded of a small book which the former Prime Minister of U.K., Mr. Attlee, had written. Mr. Attlee had said: "Whenever any Minister takes charge of his Ministry, the bureaucrat in the Department, within 24 hours, decides as to what is his attitude to the Minister: if he finds that he is a Minister who rubber stamps every draft that is put before him, in that case that Minister goes down the drain, but if he applies his mind, then he is able to guide the entire Department". That is what Mr. Attlee had said. I think, this particular message contained in Mr. Attlee's writing was personified in the working of Babu Jagjivan Ram. He had a remarkable sharpness in his views. He had a lot of warmth for the socially oppressed.

Everyone said that he was a national leader. But the tragedy of our life is that even the national leaders who are born out of a particular caste and community, particular sections of the population, forget that they are national leaders.

I would like to draw the attention of this House to a very pathetic incident that took place in this very House. I had initiated a discussion on atrocities on Harijan at Pipra. Babuji had participated in that debate. When he was speaking in this House he expressed the anguish and agony of his heart by quoting an incident of his life. He said, "They call me a national leader, they call me a national integrator; but when I went to Varanasi to unveil the statue of my old warm colleague, Shri Sampurnanand, and after I returned from that place, many so called holy Brahmins put the holy water of the Ganges on the statue of Sampurnanand because I was an untouchable and probably the sanctity and dignity might have been destroyed and in order to sanctify that statue they put Ganga Jal." One of the veterans—I don't want to name him—got up and said, "Babuji I share your anguish and agony" and in Hindi he said: "Main aapke paer chhune ke liye taiyaar hun." (I am ready to touch your feet.) In the sharpest repartee he said: "*Maray paer itne saste nahin hein.*" (My feet are not that cheap). People felt humiliated by his remarks. These were the pangs of an anguished heart which had suffered certain things.

He used to make an interesting interpretation of what is called the dynastic rule. He said, "Why do you talk about the so called dynastic rule? We have suffered the agony of the dynastic rule." And he said, "When people are born in a particular caste they have to suffer in silence because they are born in that caste. This is what I call the dynasticism and nobody is worried to destroy this." That was the anguish in his mind. He talked like that on a number of occasions.

During the Bangladesh war, very few had realised that a lot of credit for the strategy that was planned and for the victory of the Bangladesh war and the manner in which he planned the defence strategy goes to Babuji.

Babuji is no more with us today. I think, you can say, his life was a life of missed opportunities and shattered dreams. He almost came to the brink of Prime Ministership. When he was almost producing the majority, it was declared that the Parliament was dissolved and the dream was shattered. Therefore, I say that there was a slip between the cup and the lip and his was a life of lost opportunities and shattered dreams. The dream is shattered. I may say that his life was a life of shattered dreams. Even when he is no more with us, I say, there is a dynamic law of nature and that is that materials get destroyed, matter gets destroyed; but the dreams always survive. I am sure that even when Babuji is no more, the dream for which he lived and died will survive and only when we are able to move on the wings of such sacred dreams, I think we will be able to build an integrated nation.

SHRI P. KOLANDAIVELU, MEMBER: Sir, the nation has lost India's political stalwart and a doughty, champion of the downtrodden. As regards his personality there was quiet confidence, balanced and clear vision. He had a robust sense of reality, an uncommon courage of conviction, sweetness of temper affability combined with firmness of purpose.

Babuji always maintained a very good relationship with Tamil Nadu. We always remember him as Babuji. His name is also synonymous with the downtrodden. Coming under the influence of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Rajendra Prasad early in his public career Babuji imbibed the great quality and characteristic of simplicity and devotion to service. He battled all the social evils. In his demise progressive forces had lost a very great champion. On behalf of my party, Sir, we respectfully pay our homage to his memory and convey our condolences to the bereaved family.

SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA, MEMBER : Hon. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party I share the views expressed by the hon. Prime Minister and also you about the sad demise of Babu Jagjivan Ramji and others. Babu Jagjivan Ramji was a great son and a great leader of India. He was the champion of the rights and self-respect of the weaker sections and the downtrodden.

Sir, Babuji was not only a human being but he was also an institution. He served the country during the grave crisis and severe challenges of history and proved himself to be a successful administrator and a true son. Sir, I pay my deep respect and homage to the departed soul.

SHRI ATAUR RAHMAN, MEMBER : Mr. Speaker, Sir, I join this House on behalf of the A.G.P. in mourning the loss of our revered and great leader, Shri Jagjivan Ram. We had already come to know that he was nearing his end and he was ebbing away into eternity. The news was only a confirmation of what we had heard. This is indeed an irreparable loss which the country will

not be able to stand, particularly those who were closely connected with him—I mean the millions of downtrodden of his tribe. He had a small beginning from the dust of Bihar and he rose to such a height that his calibre, his potentialities were taken not of by people specially when he had gone to Calcutta for studies—in those days, almost everybody in the Eastern region would go to Calcutta for higher studies—and there he was found out by the then leaders of Bengal who said, “Here is a man coming to save India, particularly the downtrodden people”. After that he came back and he climbed the ladders of politics and in doing so he rose so fast and to such height that people became suspicious. It reminds me of the great Iqbal’s poem—

*Khudi ko kar buland itna khe har taqdir se pahle  
Khuda bande se khud puchhe bataa teri raza kya hai*

This is what had happened then. When he became so big that people around him and some of his colleagues became so suspicious as to what he was upto. Whatever has been said about him is indeed something which he deserved. But mere words will not serve his memory, it is action which would serve his memory and he would always be remembered for what he fought for.

In fact, he was not only a national leader, but he was a national monitor for the downtrodden. He not only took interest in what was happening around but he took interest in every aspect of administration also as some of the speakers who preceded me have said. He had a deep insight. Prof. Madhu Dandavate has said about his part in Bangladesh war. Well, I had also seen him for a very short stint in my life when he visited our place. In those days, of course, the Ministers travelled by road. I escorted him from the district boundary to the headquarters of the town and on the way we passed through tea gardens. He asked “what are these small bushes?” I told him that these were the tea gardens. He asked me “Can I go and see them?”. He went unannounced and saw the tea gardens and he also went and saw a great part of the labour quarters and he was horrified and took the Manager of the tea gardens to task. Anyway, that is how he took interest in matters which concerned the Scheduled Castes.

Well, we are indeed in need of such leaders and Mother India needs this kind of leaders as personified in the personality of Shri Jagjivan Ram. But shall we have them? Will all leaders be so outspoken as he was? We are indeed mourning for him and for the other leaders.

SMT. GEETA MUKHERJEE, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party, I share the feelings expressed by the Leader of the House as well as the leaders of various other parties.

Babu Jagjivan Ram was really a very successful character in certain ways. His pretty success in a way establishes this fact that given the will and the opportunity, how self-respect of the downtrodden can be fully established before the world. Therefore, that is one of the contributions that he made through his personal example.

It has already been said that he was not a leader of the downtrodden alone, he was also a national leader. I fully share that idea also.

While paying my homage to the memory of Babuji, I would like to take this vow to continue the fight for liberating the downtrodden and also keeping our country united. These are the two legacies which we shall have to fight for.

SHRI K.P. UNNIKRISHNAN, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party and on my own behalf, I wish to share the sentiments expressed by your good self, Leader of the House and many other hon. Members.

An assessment of a historic personality like Babu Jagjivan Ram will have to be left to the historians because there are many aspects of his life which we seldom understood; there are many contributions which we did not understand. But it could be truly said of him that he was one of the greatest figures of this century that this country has produced, because in a very different way he differed from Mahatma Gandhi, Father of our Nation, under whose inspiration he came into public life, all the other great leaders of this century like Jawaharlal Nehru, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose or Sardar Patel. Here was a man, who did not share the social background, here was a man, who not only fought for the right of under-privileged, but had the privilege of establishing these rights under the statutes of a free and independent India. He consistently fought for the rights of Harijans, whether he was in office or whether he was out of office or whether he was on the treasury benches or in the Opposition. Here was a man to whom we owe a deep debt of gratitude. But for him, I do not know whether many of the social legislations which this House had undertaken would have ever been made possible. He was not one of those who acquired distinction through his office, on the contrary he lent distinction to the offices he held. Sir, for many of us who had the privilege of so being associated with him for nearly two decades or more, have not only lost a sage counsel, but it could be said that he was *Bhishma Pitamaha* of Indian politics and in his loss, not only the under-privileged had lost a great champion but the nation's loss is also immense. This House will miss his measured eloquence to which a reference has been made. He scaled magnificent heights on occasions, whenever occasions demanded and the House will miss the seniormost Member.

Sir, I pay my humble tributes to this great Leader whom we shall all miss in the days to come.

PROF. SAIFUDDIN SOZ, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, today in the morning dak I received a list of those Hon. Members of this august House who have died and the first name in the list is that of Babu Jagjivan Ram. In my humble opinion, Babu Jagjivan Ram was not just an individual but had become an institution in the sojourn of his life. I had an occasion to see him for some time in the Seventh Lok Sabha. He remained Member of this Parliament continuously and in the Eighth Lok Sabha also, he took the oath as an hon. Member of this House. Since that time till his death, the image of his personality cast in my mind has been that he was an institution in himself. I remember that when he used to enter the House through that door, eyes, of all the hon. Members, irrespective of their party affiliations, remained riveted on him till he occupied his seat. Babuji did not attend the session of the Parliament very often, not because he had no interests in the discussions held in the Parliament, but he used to come on special occasions. During the Seventh Lok Sabha, I had an occasion to hear him once or twice. I remember that his speech was like constructing a wall beautifully brick by brick. The record of the House will bear testimony to this. Babu Jagjivan Ram never came across the need to correct any part of his speech. He used to speak after weighing his words well. Whatever he spoke was always aimed at unity and integrity of the country. I feel much grieved on his death.

I fully share from the depth of my heart the feelings expressed and homage paid by the hon. Prime Minister and other hon. Members of the House. I have just said that Babu Jagjivan Ram spoke very less. Whenever he used to sit here, I was reminded of a couplet.

*Khamoshi mani-e-dard kidar-guftan nami aayad*

Its Urdu translation is:

*Khamoshi guftagu hai bezabani hai zaban meri*

That is why his presence here for few moments was an honour to this august House. In the passing away of this institution, I, my party and the people of the country feel much grieved.

While paying my homage to Babu Jagjivan Ram, I did not make a mention of the Backward Classes. I feel that Babu Jagjivan Ram was like a Panchayat or the highest court for Backward Classes. It is a separate thing that cases were not filed in that court but it was a place where one could submit one's grievances.

SHRI PIYUS TIRKEY, MEMBER: I join the House in paying homage to the departed dignitaries. The leaders of various Opposition parties have given their true homage to the departed souls.

Shri Jagjivan Ram was called, with love, as 'Babu'. 'Babu' means father. Actually, he has to be called 'Babu', and his name should remain 'Babu'. This is the respect shown to him by Indian people.

India has lost one of its eminent and truest sons. The poor people, and the downtrodden here have lost their truest friend and guide. His love for the country and its people was unique. He was a statesman. He was the hope and light for the socially and economically backward people of India. So, the socially and economically backward people are now in the dark. They do not know what to do, and to whom to express their anguish, and as to who will guide them, because Indian politics is still based on casteism. He was very much against this casteism, and politics based on caste and communal thinking.

This true son of India is no more. I express my sincere homage to this departed soul, and request you to convey the condolences which I am expressing on behalf of my party and myself, to the bereaved family.

SHRI MOHD. MAHFOOZ ALI KHAN, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, today several Hon. Members have paid their homage to those hon. Members and Shri Jagjivan Ram who have passed away.

There is no doubt in it that Babu Jagjivan Ram had a special place and status. In the freedom struggle, he served the country to the best of his ability. There are no two opinions about it that he did much for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes. We are all aware of this.

He is no more with us. In the last session, I saw Babu Jagjivan Ram standing with trembling hands in the lobby. I went to him and brought him here.

Doubtlessly, Babuji had a special status and much has already been said in this connection. The hon. Prime Minister and other hon. Members have spoken about his qualities. I pay homage to him on my behalf and on behalf of my party.

DR. A.K. PATEL, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my party, I rise to pay tribute to Jagjivanji and other members who passed away during the recent past. Jagjivanji was not only a leader of a particular section but he was a national leader. He was born in Bihar in a poor family, and in spite of adverse atmosphere and condition, he stood out because of his individuality.

He studied in Bihar. He fought for the cause of India's Independence. He was attracted by Gandhiji and Malviyaji. He was called to Banaras Hindu University for education. Thereafter, he finished his education in Calcutta; and instead of joining the government job which his family members wanted him to join, he joined the national cause; he fought for the Quit India Movement and was sent to jail several times. He was in active politics for a period of 50 years.

Real tribute to Jagjivanji will be eradication of atrocities on the Harijans and untouchability from this country, which still prevails today, which is known to everybody.

SHRI EBRAHIM SULEMAN SAIT, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I rise to join you, the Prime Minister and other leaders of the Opposition in expressing grief and sorrow at the very sad demise of Babu Jagjivan Ram and other prominent former Minister and Members of this august House.

As far as Babuji is concerned, he was an illustrious son of India and his passing away is an end of an era. Just now, the Prime Minister rightly pointed out that he was not only a freedom fighter but builder of modern India. This is really the position of Babu Jagjivan Ram. He was a shining star on the political horizon of this country, and he shined for half a century in every field, particularly political and social field. Such personalities are not born always; they are born only once in a century.

*Hazaaron saal nargis apni benami pe roti hai.*

*bari mushkil se hota hai chaman mein didaarwar paida.*

Such was the personality of Babu Jagjivan Ramji. It is really an irreparable loss to the entire nation.

SHRI N.V.N. SOMU, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, on behalf of my D.M.K. party I associate myself with the feelings expressed here. Sir, Shri Jagjivan Ram's service to the nation as a warrior for Independence is highly noteworthy. He was a doyen among Indian Parliamentarians. He was not only a freedom fighter, but also a fore runner who fought to release the Harijans from the clutches of the caste fanatics. As you said, he was a Minister for twenty-three years and Deputy Prime Minister for a short while. He could have become the Prime Minister also, but he did not get that opportunity. India would have been further honoured had a leader of the Harijans adorned the august office of the Prime Minister of India. Dr. Ambedkar gave the Harijans the political vigilance. Babu Jagjivan Ram gave them social progress. Both of them are very great leaders, but they are no more. Now, the Harijans lost a great leader.

On behalf of my DMK party I convey my sympathies to the millions of the depressed classes of the country and to the bereaved members of the family of Babu Jagjivan Ram.

SMT. D.K. BHANDARI, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, I share the feelings and sentiments expressed by the hon. Prime Minister and honourable Members in paying homage to the memory of Shri Jagjivan Ram, who was endearingly called 'Babuji' by the people of this country. No words are enough to describe the qualities of head and heart of this great son of India who is no more now. He was no doubt a champion of the downtrodden and above all a protector of the oppressed and suppressed people, irrespective of caste, creed or religion. It was this quality which endeared him to the people of this land. The passing away of this dominant political figure at this critical juncture is indeed a great and irreparable loss to the country.

I, on behalf of my party, the Sikkim Sangram Parishad, pay my respectful homage to this great and noble soul of this country and offer our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved family members.

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI, MEMBER: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with the homage paid in this House today. Shri Jagjivan Ram was an eminent leader of the country and he had become the centre of hope for Harijans. Hon. Prime Minister and other hon. Members of the House have expressed their feelings of grief and sorrow. Opposition leader Shri C. Madhav Reddy observed that had he become the Prime Minister of India, the history of the country would have been quite different. I would like to submit that if we make a beginning from Andhra, we shall start new history and it would be a good idea. Similarly, I share the feelings expressed by other hon. members and express my condolences and pray to God to bestow courage upon the bereaved families to bear the loss.

#### TRIBUTES PAID IN RAJYA SABHA \*

R. VENKATARAMAN, HON. CHAIRMAN, RAJYA SABHA: Hon. Members, it is my melancholic duty to refer to the passing away of one of our great national leaders, Babu Jagjivan Ram, in New Delhi on 6 July, 1986. I think the House would like to express to their tributes to the great leader and I would, therefore, call upon the Leader of the House to start.

सभा के नेता ( श्री विश्वनाथ प्रताप सिंह ): सभापति जी, बाबू जगजीवन राम जी के विदा होने में जैसे एक युग विदा हो रहा है। लगता है कि युग को भी जिंदा रहने के लिए प्राणियों का सहारा चाहिए। बाबू जी ने जन-जन को एक युग परिवर्तन से जोड़ा था और इसीलिए वे हमारी राष्ट्रीय

\* R.S. Deb., 17 July 1986.

स्मृति के एक अभिन्न अंश बन गए हैं। उनकी स्मृति हमारे इतिहास को जिंदा रखेगी। उनके जीवन के जिस पहलू को भी हम देखें, वह पहलू पूरा और पूर्ण लगता है। जैसे खरादे हुए नग के किसी भी पक्ष को देखें, किसी ओर से देखें उसमें चमक झलकती है। हमारे स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के वे अग्रणी योद्धा थे। राष्ट्र निर्माण के उन्होंने केवल सपने ही नहीं गढ़े बल्कि एक कुशल प्रशासक के रूप में उनको साकार भी किया। इंदिरा जी की काबिना में रहते हुए रक्षा मंत्री के रूप में उन्होंने भारत की सरहद पर देश का सिर ऊंचा किया और शोषित, उत्पीड़ित हरिजन समाज के वे केवल आंसू ही नहीं थे बल्कि उनका आक्रोश और उनकी आशा भी थे। सर्वोपरि, वे इस धरती के पुत्र, राष्ट्र के पौरुष थे। वह पौरुष जिसके सामने विघटनकारी शक्तियां आंख दिखाने की हिम्मत नहीं करती थी। आज इस पौरुष को जागृत करने की आवश्यकता है। बाबू जी को आज भी जिंदा रख सकते हैं अगर उनकी चुनौतियां हम अपनी चुनौतियां मान लें। जो सर्वहारा वर्ग हैं, जो उत्पीड़ित हैं उनके साथ हम संघर्ष करने के लिए तैयार हो जायें। क्योंकि वह इन्सान अन्न विहीन हो सकता है, वह आदर-विहीन हो सकता है, वह आशा-विहीन हो सकता है, लेकिन वह आत्मा-विहीन नहीं और जब भूख की आग आत्मा में लग जाती है, तो वह काल की शिखा बनती है जो युग-युग को भस्म करके नए युग की रचना करती है, इस महायुग यज्ञ में हम अपनी आहुति दे सकें, यही उनके प्रति सब से उत्तम श्रद्धांजलि होगी।

इन्हीं शब्दों के साथ मैं अपनी श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ।

SHRI DIPEN GHOSH, MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I join the leader of the House in paying homage to the departed leader, Babu Jagjivan Ram. Hailing from a very humble background, for over half a century, he played a very important role in the freedom struggle of our country and also in the post-Independence era of our country. He was a very prominent figure in our Independence struggle and also in the post-Independence era of our country. He always sided with the downtrodden and the socially-discriminated sections of the society and his memory will be cherished by all those who are engaged in the battle for the welfare of the downtrodden people.

With these words, on behalf of my colleagues, I pay homage to the departed leader, Shri Jagjivan Ram.

SHRI ALADI ARUNA *alias* V. ARUNACHALAM, MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on behalf of the All-India Anna DMK, I share the sentiments expressed by Hon'ble leader of the House and from the Opposition by Shri Dipen Ghosh, on the demise of Shri Jagjivan Ram. The demise of Shri Jagjivan Ram is the greatest loss not only to the country but also to the weaker sections. Shri Jagjivan Ram was a true disciple of Gandhiji and a good friend of Pandit Nehru and a successful Minister of a democratic country. As a freedom-fighter, his service to the nation was unique and as a Minister holding various portfolios for more than thirty years, his service to the nation was remarkable. Even in Opposition, his role was historic. While he was in

the Congress, whenever, Parliament debated any No-Confidence Motion or any Adjournment Motion, Shri Jagjivan Ram was preferred by the Congress Party to reply to the allegations of the Opposition because of his political sagacity and debating capacity. Sir, on behalf of the All-India Anna DMK I express my heartfelt condolences to the family of the departed leader and the public at large.

SHRI M.S. GURUPADASWAMY, MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, in the passing away of Babu Jagjivan Ram, we have lost a leading pillar of the nation and a leading light of the old guard. Babu Jagjivan Ram symbolised himself four historic periods of our history. He represented pre-Independence, Independence, and post-Independence periods of our national life.

Sir, some of us were very actively associated with him in the past. We remember him, firstly, as a great patriot. As a patriot, he stood for the freedom of this country and fought for it along with other luminaries. Secondly, he was a great leader. As a leader, throughout his life he remained friend of the progressive forces of the country and fought reactionary forces. Certainly, Sir, he was an administrator par excellence. As an administrator he brought efficiency and excellence in all the positions he occupied in the Government and country. I often remember his remark that he should not be called a Harijan leader. He despised it. He was not a leader of the Harijans only, he really worked and played a role of a national leader. He always worked for the emancipation of the downtrodden. He was born in the downtrodden community and worked for their upliftment and progress.

His passing away is a great loss. On behalf of the Janata Party I associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the House and others here and pay my humble homage.

SHRI PARVATHANENI UPENDRA, MEMBER: In the death of Babuji we lost a giant of our freedom movement, an astute politician, a great statesman and an excellent administrator. He played a great role in shaping the destiny of this country for half a century. He was a ray of hope for the poor and the downtrodden sections of the society. Mahatma Gandhi hoped that one day a Harijan and a man from the lowest rungs would occupy the highest office in this country. If there was one who could have fulfilled Gandhi's desire it was Babuji, but unfortunately his desire could not be fulfilled. I do not want to go into the past history but there are many who believe that had he been assigned that great task in March 1977, or in August 1979, perhaps the course of events in this country would have been different.

Sir, on behalf of my party, Telugu Desam, I offer my sincere condolence to the bereaved family and pay my respectful homage to the departed soul.

**श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी, सदस्य:** सभापति जी, मैं सदन के नेता से सहमत हूँ कि बाबूजी के निधन से एक युग का अंत हो गया है। वर्तमान को अतीत से जोड़ने वाली एक कड़ी, राजनीति के वर्तमान को राष्ट्र-नीति के अतीत से जोड़ने वाली अन्तिम कड़ी टूट गई है। स्वतंत्रता संग्राम का एक महारथी हमारे बीच में से उठ गया है। भारतीय गणतंत्र का एक आधार ढह गया है। राजनीति का एक मंजा हुआ खिलाड़ी हमें छोड़ कर चला गया है। स्वतंत्र भारत का योग्यतम प्रशासक हमारे बीच में नहीं है। उस उद्भट संसदज्ञ को खोकर संसद् कुछ सूनी-सूनी नजर आती है।

बिहार के एक छोटे से गांव में एक दलित परिवार में उत्पन्न वह बालक, जिसने दुनिया में आंखें खोलते ही जन्म और जाति से जुड़े हुए अभिशापों और संतापों से जूझने का मानो जीवन-भर का उत्तराधिकार पाया, वह शताब्दियों की विषमताओं, अपमान-जनक परिस्थितियों और भेदभावों से लड़ कर, उन्हें हरा कर राष्ट्रीय रंगमंच के केन्द्र स्थान पर प्रतिष्ठित हो गया और अनेक दशकों तक आकर्षण का केन्द्र बना रहा। यह तथ्य जहां उस व्यक्ति की विराटता का द्योतक है, वहां इस बात का भी परिचायक है कि हमारा समाज गतिशील है, भले ही हमारी गति अपर्याप्त हो, असमाधानकारक हो। बाबू जी जिस पद पर बैठे; उसे अंलकृत किया, जिस सभा में गए; उसे शोभा प्रदान की। उन्होंने जीवन में काफी जहर पिया, लेकिन जब बांटा तो सद्भाव का अमृत बांटा। उनके हृदय में विषमता के विरुद्ध आग जलती थी। कभी-कभी उस आग की चिंगारियां इधर-उधर फूट पड़ती थीं, मगर कुल मिलाकर उन्होंने राष्ट्र की एकता, सामाजिक सद्भाव, सौहार्द को बनाने में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान दिया। देश को अनाज की दृष्टि से आत्मनिर्भर बनाने में, बांग्लादेश की मुक्ति के युद्ध में उनका योगदान हमेशा याद रखा जाएगा। उन्हें खोकर हमारा सार्वजनिक जीवन थोड़ा अकिंचन हो गया है।

सभापति महोदय, मैं बात को उपसंहार की ओर ले जाते हुए कहना चाहता हूँ कि बाबू जी के प्रति हमारी सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि यही होगी कि हम उनके सपनों के एक समतानुक्त भारत के निर्माण के कार्य को गति दें। वे जीवन भर विषमताओं से लड़े, उन्हीं विषमताओं के कारण उन्हें जहां पहुंचना चाहिए था वहां वे नहीं पहुंचे।

सभापति जी, मैं अपनी श्रद्धांजलि को समाप्त करता हूँ और कहना चाहता हूँ कि भेदभाव से मुक्त और सामाजिक समता से युक्त जब तक समाज का निर्माण नहीं होता, हम बाबू जी के प्रति सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करने के अधिकारी नहीं होंगे।

**श्री वीरेन्द्र शर्मा, सदस्य:** आदरणीय चेयरमैन साहब, बाबू जगजीवन राम जी से पिछले 40 वर्षों से मेरा परिचय है, वैसे राजनीतिक क्षितिज पर देश की सेवा में वे पचास साल से लगे हुये थे। स्वतंत्रता संग्राम के वे अग्रणी योद्धा थे। केन्द्रीय सरकार के जो भी विभाग विभिन्न प्रधान मंत्रियों के द्वारा उन्हें सुपुर्द किये गये, उनका अत्यन्त ही कुशलता और सफलता के साथ उन्होंने संचालन किया।

वे राष्ट्रीय एकता और अखंडता के प्रतीक थे। निर्धन, गरीब और पिछड़े वर्ग के उत्थान में उनकी विशेष रुचि थी। आज इस सदन में नेता, सदन ने और विरोधी पक्षों के नेताओं ने जो विचार व्यक्त किये हैं मैं और हमारा लोकदल उन विचारों के साथ अपने आपको संबद्ध करता है। मैं यह समझता हूँ कि बाबू जगजीवन राम जी, जो हमारे बीच नहीं रहे हैं, उनके प्रति सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि यही हो सकती

है कि जो गरीबों, पिछड़े वर्गों और निर्धनों को उठाने के लिये उन्होंने कमर कसी थी, उनकी ओर रुचि और लगन लगाई थी, इस हाउस के दोनों तरफ बैठने वाले माननीय सदस्य उनके प्रति सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि तभी दे सकेंगे जब गरीबों के प्रति उन जैसी सहानुभूति, उन जैसा कार्य उनके उत्थान के लिये उसी प्रकार की शक्ति अपने अन्दर जुटा सकेंगे। इन शब्दों के साथ मैं हृदय से उनके प्रति श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ।

**श्री चतुरानन मिश्र, सदस्य:** सभापति महोदय, जगजीवन बाबू के प्रति सदन के नेता और अन्य माननीय सदस्यों ने जो उद्गार प्रकट किए हैं, मैं उनके साथ हूँ।

जगजीवन बाबू हमारे देश के बहुत ही उच्च कोटि के राष्ट्रीय नेता थे। उनका जीवन के हर एक क्षेत्र में योगदान रहा है। लंबे अरसे तक उन्होंने मंत्रित्व का पद संभाला और जिस विभाग में गए, वहां उन्होंने अपनी छाप छोड़ी। प्रारम्भ में वह श्रम मंत्री बने और मेरा भी उन दिनों श्रम आंदोलन से संबंध था, खासकर कोयला खानों के मजदूरों से। उनके लिए उन्होंने जो कल्याण योजनाएं बनाई या उनके वक्त में जो 'इंडस्ट्रियल डिस्प्यूट्स एक्ट' बना, वह अभी भी श्रम के संबंध में एक आधारभूत कानून के रूप में काम कर रहा है। वह जिस विभाग में गए, वहां उन्हें बड़ी सफलता प्राप्त हुई। भारत का हरिजन समुदाय तो खेतों और खलिहानों में सदा से उच्चकोटि का काम करता रहा है, लेकिन राजनीति में, बौद्धिक क्षेत्र में जगजीवन बाबू के रूप में हरिजन समाज ने दिखला दिया कि वह राष्ट्र को क्या दे सकता है। उनके विचार बहुत ही संतुलित थे, हरिजन समुदाय के लिए वह दूसरे अंबेडकर तो थे ही, लेकिन सारे समाज में, हर हिस्से में तमाम लोगों के बीच में वह लोकप्रिय थे।

मैं अपनी ओर से, अपने दिल की ओर से उनके प्रति हार्दिक श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ और यह इच्छा प्रकट करता हूँ कि उनके परिवार के प्रति संवेदना सदन की ओर से आप भेज देंगे। एक बार फिर मैं जगजीवन बाबू के प्रति अनन्यतम श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ।

SHRI MURASOLI MARAN, MEMBER: The colossus among the contemporary Indian leaders and a statesman is no more. Shri Jagjivan Ram, popularly known as 'Babuji' has endeared himself in hearts and minds of all the Indians right from Kashmir to Kanyakumari. Very few political leaders could rival his distinguished record as the Central Minister with his versatile knowledge and understanding of men and matters. When we made a breakthrough on the food front, he was presiding over the Food and Agriculture Ministry, when we won the great Bangladesh war and made signal history, he was our Defence Minister. Whether it is in the establishment of Food Corporation of India or modernisation of Railways or the conduct of war, Babuji showed a rare farsight and administrative capability. More than anything else, he was a symbol of hope and beacon of light for the depressed and the downtrodden people. He was a champion who stood for social justice and fought against the atrocities and casteism. In fact, he was one of the few leaders on this side of Vindhyas who understood correctly the genesis, growth, relevance and dynamics of the Dravidian Movement and the 'self-respect' movement of Periyar E.V. Ramaswamy and Dr. Anna. In fact, in his demise

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we have lost a great friend, philosopher and guide. With his loss the whole era has come to an end—the era which linked the freedom movement to the contemporary India.

I pay my respectful homage on my own behalf and on behalf of my D.M.K. party to the departed leader.

SHRI GHULAM RASOOL MATTO, MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, I pay my tribute to the great leader who has just departed. Babu Jagjivan Ram was one of the last leaders of the freedom movement and by his passing away we have lost a great personality. He was for the downtrodden whether they lived in Kashmir or Kanyakumari and he worked for their cause. I remember that after the 2 June 1984 episode in Jammu and Kashmir, he called us over cup of tea and exhorted us to have patience and told us that you should not bother about it. After all the truth will prevail.

I also remember that he had a very alert mind in spite of his age. He was a great administrator, there is no doubt about it. Whether he was in the Agriculture Ministry or in the Defence Ministry or wherever he was, he acted as an able administrator.

To my mind, the job started by Jagjivan Babu will remain unaccomplished till every person belonging to the backward classes, minorities and others are brought at par with others in the country. Let us all join together and, besides paying tributes to him, work for the cause that he has espoused.

With these words I again associate myself with the tributes paid by the Leader of the House to the departed soul and hope and pray that God will keep his soul in peace.

SARDAR JAGJIT SINGH AURORA, MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would like to pay my tribute as, a soldier to Babu Jagjivan Ram, the departed, brilliant Defence Minister. It was during 1971 that in the Bangladesh Operation we looked up to him as the Defence Minister. He met our needs. He was full of understanding. He had a very sharp mind and a very quick grasp of the situation. Apart from being a great administrator, he was also a great leader. There is no doubt in my mind that he was one of the ablest administrator we had. There is also no doubt in my mind that he was a person who had the cause of the downtrodden and the minorities at heart. During the long era that he was at the helm of affairs—whether as a Congressman or as a non-Congressman he did his duty to the country selflessly and brilliantly.

I like to pay my homage to him both as a soldier as well as belonging to a minority and Akali Dal. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI CHITTA BASU, MEMBER: Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to join the Leader of the House and other distinguished colleagues of mine in this House to pay my respectful homage to Babu Jagjivan Ram. The very name of "Babuji" by which a countless followers and admirers were very much pleased to call him flashes before our eyes—a life profile of a man who struggled right from the beginning in the face of the defenceless and underprivileged. With him the concept of high and low caste was not derivative of any sectarian or communal or any ill-feelings, but from the inherent social contradiction in the feudal society that India has now even today. This advocacy for the cause of the low caste was the result of this deep understanding of the social realities obtaining in our country. An able administrator, a farsighted statesman, he spent all his energies to create a new India, an India without caste, without class distinction. In the Indian political scene he strode like a colossus. He was an embodiment of Indian ethos and culture. The light has gone out, but it continues to radiate. Let us follow the footsteps which he has set before us. In this way alone, Sir, we can pay our true respect to the great leader who has departed from us. I request you, Sir, to convey the condolences to the members of the bereaved family.

**श्री रामचन्द्र विकल:** सभापति महोदय, नेता सदन और अन्य पार्टियों के नेताओं ने जो अपनी श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित की है उससे अपने को संबद्ध करते हुए मैं भी बाबू जगजीवन राम जी के प्रति अपनी श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करता हूँ। इसमें कोई संदेह नहीं कि बाबू जी महान देशभक्त थे। देश की आजादी से लेकर अपने प्राणों के अन्त तक वे देश की एकता, अखंडता और दृढ़ता के लिए हर प्रकार से प्रयत्न करते रहे। मुझे याद है बाबूजी का वह भाषण, मेरे क्षेत्र बड़ौत में उन्होंने उस समय कहा था कि पाकिस्तान अगर युद्ध की जल्दबाजी करेगा तो युद्ध पाकिस्तान की जमीन में होगा, भारत में नहीं होगा और उनकी यह भविष्यवाणी बंगलादेश के युद्ध में सही साबित हुई। जब वे कृषि मंत्री हुए तो उस समय इस देश में अन्न का अभाव था। यों तो उसका श्रेय देश के किसानों को भी जाता है, सेना को भी जाता है, मगर जो सबसे बड़ा हेड होता है उसको उसका श्रेय जरूर जाता है। उनके मंत्रित्वकाल में अन्न के भंडार बढ़ गए। देश की जनता उनको बहुत भाग्यशाली और अच्छा प्रशासक मानती थी। उनके अंदर गरीब और अमीर का भेद नहीं था। वह इस देश को एक प्रगतिशील देश के रूप में देखना चाहते थे। जब हाल ही में उनका अंतिम जन्म दिन मना रहे थे, उस समय भी उन्होंने एक बात कही थी जिससे हम सबको सबक लेना चाहिए। उन्होंने इस अवसर पर साफ कहा था कि मैंने राजनीति को राष्ट्र से ऊपर कभी नहीं समझा, राष्ट्र सर्वोपरि है और मेरा अन्तिम जीवन भी राष्ट्र को समर्पित है, राष्ट्रीय एकता और अखंडता के लिए मेरा जीवन समर्पित है। उनकी ऐसी भावनायें युग-युगों तक इस देश की आने वाली पीढ़ियों को प्रेरणा देती रहेंगी। मैं बाबूजी को अपनी सच्ची श्रद्धांजलि अर्पित करते हुए यह आशा करता हूँ कि भगवान हमारे देश की जनता को, हम सब को उनके विचारों पर चलने के लिए प्रेरित करें और देश की एकता और अखंडता के लिए उनके बताए हुए, अन्तिम क्षणों में बताए हुए मार्ग पर चलने के लिए देशवासियों को प्रेरणा दें।

SHRI R. VENKATARAMAN, HON. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, I rise to associate myself with the sentiments expressed by the Leader of the House and Leaders of various groups in the House on the passing away of a great national leader Babu Jagjivan Ram. In his death the country has lost one of its surviving links with the veterans of the pre-Independence era. In his public life, that spanned more than five decades, Babuji was a key participant in most of the changes and developments that took place in modern India. Babuji was a champion of the down-trodden and Harijans, an able administrator, a successful parliamentarian and an astute politician.

Born at village Chandwa in Bhojpur District of Bihar in April 1908, Babuji passed his matriculation examination in 1926 and that year, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya who happened to visit Arrah town was much impressed by the nationalistic zeal and invited him to join the Banaras Hindu University for higher studies. He graduated from the Calcutta University. Born in a poor family and having suffered the pangs of poverty and untouchability, the plight of the Harijans and downtrodden deeply moved him and he took up their cause to get them a rightful place in the society. Babuji played a very active role in the freedom struggle and was detained in December, 1940 for a year for offering Satyagraha and again for more than a year during the 'Quit India Movement' in August, 1942. In 1946, he was invited by the British Cabinet Mission to present before it the views of the Scheduled Castes. He was inducted into the Interim Government in 1946 as a Minister of Labour and thereafter he was a Member of the Union Cabinet for nearly 33 years. During this period he ably presided over the affairs of such important Ministries as Labour and Employment, Communications, Railways, Food and Agriculture and Defence. Shri Jagjivan Ram's stint in the Labour Ministry was, in many ways, his golden hour. Particularly notable was his trend-setting role in the unionization of plantation workers who had, until then, been regarded as outside the scope of organized labour. His piloting the Minimum Wages Bill and Employees State Insurance Bill will also be greatly remembered. He was also elected the President of General Assembly of the International Labour Organization. Under his stewardship the working in Railways improved perceptibly. Air Transport was nationalised, the country achieved self-sufficiency in food production. Under Smt. Indira Gandhi's dynamic leadership during Indo-Pakistan war in 1971, Babu Jagjivan Ram as Defence Minister provided quiet guidance to the Armed Forces. To his ministerial responsibilities Babuji brought his inborn shrewdness and infinite capacity for work and professional competence of high order.

Babuji was one of the seniormost parliamentarians in India, starting his career in 1937 as a member of the Bihar Legislative Assembly and thereafter of the Constituent Assembly, the Provisional Parliament and all the eight Lok Sabha till his passing away. A gem among parliamentarians, Babuji, with

his debating skills, tactful handling of Parliament, down-to-earth approach to problems and high sense of humour could disarm many a strong opponent during the debates. Babuji was respected and loved by all and his views and counsel on many a crucial matter were always sought, whether he was inside the Government or outside it. There is no doubt that Babu Jagjivan Ram's services will find a place of pride in the annals of modern India.

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