

**Speech of Shri Lalu Prasad
Introducing the Railway Budget,
for 2004-05, on 6th July, 2004**

Mr. Speaker Sir,

I rise to present the Budget Estimates for 2004-05 for the Indian Railways. The previous Government had presented an interim budget on 30th January, 2004 when approval for 'Vote-on-Account' for the first four months of this financial year for railways' expenditure was obtained.

2. Sir, this is the first Railway Budget of the United Progressive Alliance Government, which assumed office on 22nd May, 2004. Within the short time available to me, I have made an attempt to identify the challenges and difficulties faced by the Railways and outline measures to overcome the same apart from taking note of thrust areas of the Common Minimum Programme. In this regard I look forward to the valuable inputs of the Hon'ble members of this august House. In fact, to start with, I have already written to all the members of this and the Upper House indicating the on going projects and important works in their respective areas and inviting their suggestions for further improvement in the facilities. Special attention will be given to these suggestions and appropriate decision will be taken on the proposals relating to projects after carrying out surveys wherever necessary, giving primacy to the more neglected areas.

3. Indian Railways, the prime movers of the nation, have the distinction of being one of the largest railway systems in the world under a single management. Its contribution to the nation's progress is immeasurable and it has a dual role to play as a commercial organization as well as a vehicle for fulfillment of aspirations of the society at large. It is an important catalyst to growth of trade, industry and the economy as a whole, with immense potential for providing indirect employment. Considering this, the United Progressive Alliance Government attaches the highest priority to the development and expansion of railway infrastructure as mentioned in the Common Minimum Programme. The travails suffered by the Railways in the last few years, particularly on the safety front, need to be overcome. President's address to the joint session of Parliament emphasizes the Government's intention to modernize the railway network keeping both the economic and social dimension in mind.

4. Railways have initiated many policy changes to meet the requirements of its customers, be it freight or passenger services. While continuing the process of reforms, the modernization of the Railways, replacement and renewal of assets, particularly, the track renewal and safety of passengers will be the thrust areas for the Railways. Other priority areas will be cleanliness of coaches and railway premises, particularly the stations and improvement in passenger amenities. Yet another thrust area will be control over expenditure and stepping up of measures to prevent leakage of revenue.

5. There has been a shortage of resources for investment on Railways, which needs to be enhanced substantially to take care of the priority areas, viz., safety, development and expansion of the system. Railways will continue to strive to effect improvements wherever needed. I have had deliberations with the Hon'ble Prime Minister and Hon'ble Finance Minister who have been kind enough to assure that requisite funds will be made available in the course of this year for Railway safety.

6. Indian Railways is committed to improve its internal resources. For this, we will strictly implement a two-pronged strategy with full sincerity. On the one hand, aggressive marketing efforts will be launched to enhance the earnings and leakage of revenue will be arrested at all identified points, e.g., ticket less travel and other malpractices, etc. On the other hand, operating expenses will in no way be allowed to exceed the barest minimum requirement. Optimum utilization of human resources and cost-effective use of other assets will be ensured. Utmost economy will be maintained in general expenditure.

Review of Performance in 2003-04.

7. I am glad to report that in the financial year 2003-04 that has just ended, the Railways have moved 557.39 million tonnes of originating revenue earning traffic, against the target of 550 million tonnes and 38.65 million tonnes higher than the previous year's loading. This is the second successive year when Indian Railways have registered around 20 million tonnes or more of incremental revenue loading. Passenger traffic registered a growth of about 3% during the year. There has been an increase of Rs. 240 crore over the earnings projected in the Revised Estimates and a savings of Rs. 491 crore in the Ordinary Working Expenses. The Operating Ratio of the Railways as per approximate actuals is likely to improve to 92.1 percent as against 94.1 percent budgeted for the year. The final accounts for the year are under compilation and indications through approximate figures are that there may be only a marginal variation.

Plan expenditure is expected to be around Rs. 13,311 crore. Despite the improved performance of the Railways I would not like to remain contented. Rather I would be striving to improve upon this performance further. With a commercial orientation, aggressive marketing and economy measures, the Railways would be continuously working towards further improving their financial performance.

Safety

8. Sir, the biggest challenge that Indian Railways face today is ensuring safe transit of passengers. I would like to assure the Hon'ble Members that safety in rail operations would be accorded the highest priority.

9. As a result of various safety measures and sustained efforts, the number of consequential train accidents has come down from 473 in 2000-01 to 414 in 2001-02, 351 in 2002-03 and further 325 in 2003-04. This has been the lowest number of accidents ever, reflecting a considerable reduction in the year 2003-04 over 2000-01. The number of consequential train accidents per million train kilometres has also come down to 0.39 against the figure of 0.44 during the preceding year. The effort will be to bring this down even further.

10. Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF) of Rs. 17,000 crore was created w.e.f. 1.10.2001 to wipe out arrears in renewal of overaged assets viz., track, bridges, rolling stock & signalling gears besides safety enhancement works over a six-year period. Considerable progress has been made in the execution of works sanctioned under this fund. 8938 kilometres of track have been renewed up to 31.3.2004 out of the total target of 16,538 kilometres to be covered up to 31.3.2007. The work of replacement of over-aged signalling systems with modern systems has been completed at 441 stations. The work is in progress at 1053 other stations. Interlocking at level crossings with signals has been completed at 387 gates during 2003-04, bringing the total of inter-locked level crossings to 7095 out of 16549 manned level crossings. With a view to reducing accidents at level crossings, provision of Train Actuated Warning Device (TAWD) has been undertaken at selected 90 level crossings. The device will warn road users and gatemen of the approaching train by emitting a siren and through flashing lights. Under SRSF, track circuiting works are in progress at about 5300 locations. Work has so far been completed at about 1700 locations.

11. Railways have given very high priority to the work of rehabilitation and strengthening of old bridges. Of the 2700 bridges to be rehabilitated or rebuilt through Special Railway Safety Fund, 1306 bridges have been completed upto 31-3-2004. In the current year, 411 bridges are to be rehabilitated.

12. Indian Railways have finalized a rational criteria for manning of unmanned level crossings based on the volume and nature of road and rail traffic at the level crossing and visibility conditions. It is planned to man over 1280 unmanned level crossings over a period of time, with the more vulnerable level crossings being given priority.

New Measures for Safety

Block Proving by Axle Counters, Train Protection and Warning System and Anti-Collision Device.

13. Fresh initiative has been taken to introduce a system of 'electronic verification' of complete arrival of train at stations by means of 'Block Proving' by Axle Counters along with a major thrust for development of indigenous Digital Axle Counters for the first time in the country. The latter has been developed under a joint research project of the Ministry of Railways and Department of Science and Technology. Railways have taken the initiative for provision of Train Protection and Warning System (TPWS) for providing an aid to driver to prevent him from passing signals at danger as a safety measure. The system provides a warning to the driver of approaching a signal at danger and if the driver fails to react the system will apply brakes automatically. This proven and failsafe system is being provided on Southern & North Central Railways on approximately 280 Track Kilometres. Provision of Anti-Collision Devices (ACDs) on about 1700 Route Kms. of Northeast Frontier Railway has been taken in hand and is likely to be completed during 2004-05.

Safety on long welded rails

14. Indian Railways have a substantial length of long and continuous welded rails. With a view to ascertain actual forces in them, it is proposed to develop field methods to measure actual forces occurring in rails so that necessary remedial action may be taken before unsafe conditions develop.

Transportation of Explosives and inflammable materials in the trains

15. Incidents of fire in the coaches and luggage vans of passenger carrying trains during the recent

past have caused serious concern. Prohibition on carriage of any type of explosives and inflammable materials including LPG cylinders, kerosene stoves, etc., other than those required for security purposes or by the armed forces, by any passenger carrying train will be strictly enforced.

Institute of Rescue and Medical Relief

16. Disaster Management has been recognized as a priority area on the Indian Railways. To strengthen the system, a number of initiatives are being taken. These include setting up of an "Institute of Rescue and Medical Relief" at Bangalore. It is proposed to set up a project at a cost of Rs. 10 crores to give a fillip to the training activities. This institute shall act as a repository for all modern extrication and medical relief techniques to ensure quicker rescue and provide prompt medical relief, comparable to international standards.

Security

17. Consequent upon the recent amendments to the Railways Act, 1989 & RPF Act, 1957, Railway Protection Force (RPF) has been entrusted with additional responsibilities for escorting passenger trains in vulnerable areas and to have control on access and regulation and general security at platforms to supplement the efforts of state police/GRP for enhanced security of the passengers. Both the amended Acts have come into force with effect from 1st July, 2004. To start with, manpower has been withdrawn from certain less important activities so that passenger security takes precedence over protection of property. Accordingly, escorting of trains will be shared with GRP in the initial stages. Zonal General Managers have been directed to chalk out the plans in this regard.

18. To address the problem of shortage of personnel in the Force to carry out the new duties, and to speed up the process of filling up of vacancies, it has been decided to restore the earlier procedure of direct recruitment by the Security department itself instead of through Railway Recruitment Boards. This will expedite the availability of manpower and strengthen the Force.

19. Skills of the existing personnel of R.P.F. have been upgraded by giving them intensive re-orientation training at zonal training schools and RPF Academy. This training capsule is comprehensive and consists of legal provisions regarding arrest, seizure, personal attendance, summons, warrants, handling of prisoners, human rights violations, custodial care, gender justice, juvenile offenders, etc.

20. Concern has been expressed about the cases of drugging of unwary passengers on the trains and robbing them of their belongings. Railways have taken certain measures to combat this menace by educating the public. In this connection I have instructed the RPF that they should try to identify the criminal gangs engaged in the crime of drugging and hand them over to the GRP.

Modernisation

Research Projects in Bridge Engineering

21. Indian Railways are interacting with various Indian Institutes of Technology and premier research institutes in India and abroad and Advanced Railway Systems in the field of Bridge Engineering. It is proposed to take up research and development projects in areas of protection from earthquake and rehabilitation of bridges, residual life analysis for concrete and masonry bridges, high performance concrete and corrosion protection systems for bridges.

Rehabilitation of Arch Bridges

22. There are a large number of arch bridges on Indian Railways. A number of bridge improvement and rehabilitation measures have already been undertaken in the recent past. In addition, it is proposed to extend the useful life of a large number of arch bridges by about 25 years by adopting techniques in collaboration with International Union of Railways (UIC).

Corrosion Resistant Wagons

23. Corrosion in conventional wagons affects their availability and productivity and reduces their life. In order to overcome this problem, field trials of stainless wagons are in progress. In addition, it has been proposed to introduce aluminium body wagons and conduct field trials. This would result in reduced tare weight and higher payload per wagon as compared to the conventional wagons.

Crew Friendly Driver's Cab and Brake Van

24. Fatigue enhances vulnerability of Drivers and Guards to cause accidents. Improvement in the working conditions of such staff with a view to reduce their fatigue level on run is, therefore, a priority area for Indian Railways. A number of improvements have been standardized and are being incorporated in a phased manner in driver's cab and guard's brake van to make the working environment of crew better and improving efficiency. The new diesel locos and guards' brake vans will be provided with these features.

Modernisation of EMUs & Electric Locos

25. Three phase electric traction system based on most advanced Insulated Gate Bipolar Transistor (IGBT) Technology is proposed to be introduced for EMU trains in Mumbai suburban section. This system provides higher reliability and improved energy efficiency. Progressively this technology is also proposed to be developed for high horse power three phase electric locomotives.

Strategic Management Institute

26. There is a need to prepare Railway Managers to meet the future challenges in rail operations. This necessitates pooling of training resources available world over. It is, therefore, proposed to set up an International Railway Strategic Management Institute under the aegis of International Union of Railways (UIC).

Computer based Centralised Traffic Control

27. Under a project funded by German Development Bank (KfW) modern computer based Centralised Traffic Control (CTC) System is planned to be introduced for the first time on Ghaziabad-Kanpur high speed, high density route to improve safety and operation.

Material Management Information System (MMIS)

28. A pilot project on Material Management Information System (MMIS) incorporating the on line exchange of information on material management has been successfully developed and implemented by Central Railway. Now this system is proposed to be extended to all other Zonal Railways for effective material management, which will improve material availability and turn over ratio.

29. Introduction of Information Technology for Permanent Way Materials Management System has been done on 21 divisions so far. Setting up of infrastructure on balance 46 divisions is in advanced stages and is targeted for completion during the year. The system provides for proper and concurrent accountal of materials and facilitates accurate verification of physical stock including released material. Thus, the system improves efficiency and arrests leakage of revenue through theft, pilferage etc.

E-procurement

30. Railways are working towards adoption of E-procurement. A pilot project on Northern Railway envisages putting all purchase activities on the internet, wherein issue of tenders, receipt of bids, issue of contracts etc. would be done online. The introduction of this system will bring transparency and improve efficiency by way of reduced procurement time cycle and expeditious payment to suppliers. After successful completion of the pilot project on Northern Railway, E-procurement will be extended to other zonal Railways.

Improvements to Claims Management

31. Railways have embarked on a programme of computerization of 'Claim Offices' so as to provide on line information to claimants about the status of claims. This will help the customers to find unconnected consignments and will also be a powerful tool in reducing the duplication of claims. Computerized registration of claims in Zonal Railway Headquarters has already been started from April 2004 and it is expected that full computerization of claim offices will be completed during the current financial year.

32. In order to help the rail users, the rules & procedures in connection with compensation claims in respect of both "accident" and "loss/damage of goods" have been incorporated in the Indian Railways website.

Simplification of Refund Procedure

33. Under the normal rules, refund of unused tickets is admissible upto a maximum of 12 hours after departure of the train. In order to facilitate refund thereafter directly from the PRS terminals, a Computerised Coaching Refund System has been started. Under the revised rules, refund shall be admissible on unused reserved and RAC tickets upto five days from the scheduled departure of the train from its originating station. Some zonal railways have started granting refund under this scheme. The project will be fully implemented during the current year.

Unreserved Ticketing System

34. About 92 percent of the railway passengers travel without reservation in unreserved coaches in trains in the country. To help these railway passengers, Indian Railways have developed Unreserved Ticketing System (UTS). This system facilitates a passenger to buy a traveling ticket for any station from any of the selected railway stations three days in advance of the required date of journey. This system is proposed to be extended progressively on all zonal railways. I am very happy to share with this august House the news that the UTS has also won a prestigious award from a reputed international forum for using information technology to take great strides towards remarkable social achievement in transportation.

Passenger Reservation System

35. Expansion of the Passenger Reservation System (PRS) available at nearly 1100 locations in the country will also be continued to help the passengers traveling by reserved compartments. Another 74 locations will be added this year.

Parcel Services

36. In order to improve the management of the Parcel traffic, which generates earnings of about Rs. 500 crore annually, it is necessary to computerize the working of the entire parcel system. To start with, a pilot project is being proposed this year at an estimated cost of Rs. 2.00 crores, linking Howrah and Delhi area in the major parcel traffic corridor of New Delhi – Howrah –Guwahati. This will result in better planning, expeditious clearance, easy tracing of parcels and thereby result in reduced over carriage and claims. Computerised parcel way bills and accurate calculation of charges will also be possible from the system.

Freight Operations Information System

37. Enthused by the success of the phase-I (Rake Management System) of the Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) which has helped in better operation and wagon availability, it is proposed to cover commercial aspects of freight business this year by computerizing the working of about 300 goods sheds and sidings. In this, the Railways' receipts will be computerised which will benefit merchants and industry in a big way as individual wagon tracking and electronic payments etc. will become possible.

Coaching Operations Information System

38. To improve the passenger traffic operations, the Coaching Stock Management module (covering passenger coaches and parcel vans) of Coaching Operation Information System (COIS) is proposed to be implemented this year. Punctuality module for better train monitoring and analysis of delay has already been implemented last year.

Catering

39. Railways are making all out efforts to improve the catering services by serving cleaner, healthier and tastier food to the passengers both at stations and on trains. Railways will also endeavour to make available wholesome milk and milk products at all catering outlets towards which a beginning has been made by serving "mattha" and "lassi". With a view to provide pure and wholesome products to the passengers and to give employment opportunities to dairy producers, as far as possible, these will be purchased from dairy units of co-operative sector. As far as other eatables are concerned, with a view to increase the earnings from the catering contracts, complete transparency and competitiveness will be ensured in the award of contracts.

Improving Cleanliness

40. To improve cleanliness at stations and in trains, General Managers of all the zonal railways have been directed to take special steps. A nationwide cleanliness drive has also been launched. In order

to infuse a spirit of excellence, it has been decided to hold inter-divisional competition in which all the railway divisions will be evaluated by the Headquarters' Committees comprising of senior officers of concerned departments. The best divisions will be given the Cleanliness Efficiency Shield. Best stations will also be selected and awarded. Where the cleanliness level is found to be unsatisfactory, responsibility will be fixed on the concerned officers and employees.

41. As an environment friendly measure, Railways are discouraging the use of plastics. To this end all the Catering Units have been directed to make available disposable "Kulhars" in place of plastic and thermocol cups. Apart from being more hygienic, this measure will also improve employment in the rural sector.

Environment Friendly Toilet system

42. As per policy announced by the Ministry of Rural Development, which envisages total sanitation by the year 2012 and elimination of open defecation all over the country, Indian Railways have taken up a project of development of an environment friendly coach toilet discharge system, as a part of RDSO's Technology Mission on Railway Safety.

43. According to Mahatma Gandhi, Khadi is the symbol of India's unity, economic independence and equality. In the poetic language of Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru this ultimately is the uniform of the Indian independence. Giving this due regard, I have instructed that henceforth upholstery and linen exclusively of handloom/khadi variety should be procured.

44. A new Bookstall Policy for Indian Railways has been formulated. In this policy a 25% reservation for allotment of bookstalls for SC/ST/OBC, minorities, war widows, those below the poverty line, physically challenged individuals, Railway employees' widows has been introduced on 'B', 'C' and 'D' class stations. Unemployed graduates and their associations and philanthropic organizations only can get allotment on 'B', 'C' and 'D' class stations. At 'A' class stations, a two packet tender system has been introduced. The new policy does away with the system of the sole selling rights and provides for a uniform tenure of five years.

45. In order to arrest the declining trend of ground water availability, instructions have been issued to railways for strictly following the methods of water conservation through roof-top rain water harvesting.

Better Availability of Rakes to the Customers

46. Railway wagons are largely procured from wagon manufacturing units in the private as well as the public sector. Railways' have only a meagre capacity for manufacturing wagons in their workshops. In the last year, due to various reasons, there has been a considerable shortfall in supply of wagons, with private sector units complying with only two-thirds of the orders placed and public sector units only one-third. Against our requirement of 19050 four wheeler units of traffic wagons only 13,471 were manufactured in 2003-04.

47. With the anticipated incremental loading, Railways have to take all steps to augment the wagon supply. I myself had a dialogue with the wagon manufacturers and impressed upon them the necessity to expedite supplies. Further, with the available infrastructure and manpower, Railway workshops can manufacture wagons with marginal inputs. To meet the demand, apart from pursuing existing wagon manufacturers, wagon production will also be started at Jamalpur workshop, which at present has the in-house capability to even manufacture 140 tonne crane.

48. Nevertheless, Railways have surpassed their loading target with several measures to increase the availability of rakes. These measures include improvement in the handling capacity of freight terminals, control over the number of ineffective wagons, better management of terminals through the intensive use of Freight Operations Information System (FOIS) and impressing upon the customers to reduce detention of rakes at the terminals. We now propose to encourage rail users to adopt round the clock loading and unloading of rakes at terminals.

Thrust on Export/Import traffic through Port connectivity

49. The Railway is giving a thrust on export/import traffic by speedy evacuation of incoming traffic from the ports and making available additional wagons and containers for outgoing export cargo. The Railway is also investing through the Rail Vikas Nigam Limited to provide hinterland rail connectivity to both existing as well as new ports under development, to further give a boost to such traffic.

Roll on Roll off Scheme (RoRo)

50. Konkan Railway runs a Roll on Roll off (RoRo) scheme whereby trucks are loaded on a train at the rate of one truck per wagon, at a point and transported to their destination. This provides a door to door multimodal service with greater customer satisfaction besides being more fuel efficient and eco-friendly than through movement by trucks. Railways have initiated the process to develop special wagons, which will enable more than one truck to be carried in each wagon to optimize utilization of assets. The Railways will consider introduction of this service once the wagon design is finalized.

Transportation of Milk, Vegetables and Fruits

51. Railways will encourage a higher level of movement of milk by tankers from the various regions of the country. As milk is a perishable commodity, these tankers will be attached to suitable trains. To provide better services for transportation of fruits, vegetables and other perishable commodities, more refrigerated parcel vans will progressively be introduced on the railways.

Concessions**Concession to widows of Defence personnel killed in action against terrorists/extremists**

52. The widows of policemen and para military personnel killed in action against terrorists/extremists are eligible for 75 percent concession in second and sleeper classes. However, the widows of Defence personnel in the similar circumstances, are not eligible for the same. With a view to recognizing the sacrifices by the Defence personnel who get killed in action against terrorists/extremists, it is proposed to grant the same concession to the widows of Defence personnel as granted to widows of policemen and para military personnel.

Concession to Deaf/Dumb persons.

53. A deaf and dumb person is allowed 50 percent concession in First, Second and Sleeper classes as well as in season tickets. However, there is no provision of rail concession for an escort accompanying the deaf and dumb person. Considering the need for an escort with a person who is both deaf and dumb, it is proposed to grant the same concession to the escort as allowed to a deaf and dumb person.

Concession to Haemophilia patients

54. It is proposed to grant rail concession to persons suffering with severe or moderate haemophilia disease when they travel for treatment/check up in the recognized hospitals. The element of concession will be 75 per cent in the second/sleeper/first/AC chair car and AC 3-tier classes. Escort, if any, traveling with the patient will also be eligible for the same concession.

Free Travel Facility to Unemployed Youths

55. In the Budget Speech of 1998-99, it was announced that unemployed youth attending interviews for selection to Central Government jobs will be given full concession in second class on production of a certified copy of call letter and application. Due to unavoidable reasons, this could not be implemented. It is now proposed to implement the proposal of giving full concession, as was announced earlier.

Projects

56. During the year 2003-04, 1222 kms of BG lines were added to the Railway system. I am happy to inform the House that the long pending project of Jammu-Udhampur has been completed. This will go a long way in the overall development of the Jammu & Kashmir State. The progress of the new line project Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla has also been expedited and the stretches between Udhampur-Katra and Qazigund-Baramulla are likely to be completed during 2005-06.

57. So far as the targets for completion of projects for the current year is concerned, equal importance is being given to all the regions of the country. Accordingly, the work of new line from Jiribam to Imphal (Tupul) which was sanctioned in the course of last year is being taken up. The conversion of Lumding-Silchar MG line and work of new line from Kumarghat to Agartala will also be expedited and a programme will be made out for their time bound completion.

58. I would also like to make a special mention that the needs of the southern states of Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and other states, like, Orissa, Punjab, West Bengal, where there

has been a perceived sense of neglect about railway development works, will be adequately taken care of and adequate funds will be made available for satisfactory progress of the ongoing works in the current year.

59. For the year 2004-05, a target of addition of nearly 1650 kms of BG lines has been set.

New Lines

60. I am happy to state that New Lines Panvel-Karjat, Sasaram-Nokha, Jagdishpur-Tilaiya, Kakdwip-Namkhana and Una-Chururu-Takrala have been completed. In 2004-05, Railways propose to complete 273 kms of New Lines including following sections:-

- i) Amravati-Chandurbazar of Amravati-Narkher
- ii) Rajgir-Natesar of Rajgir-Tilaiya
- iii) Nokha-Sanjauli of Ara-Sasaram
- iv) Banka-Barahat of Deogarh-Sultanganj
- v) Chandigarh-Morinda of Chandigarh-Ludhiana
- vi) Kakinada-Kotipalli
- vii) Kanthi-Digha of Tamluk-Digha
- viii) Mahendralalnagar-Amta of Howrah-Amta
- ix) Hassan-Shravanabelagola and Bangalore-Neelamangala of Bangalore-Hassan

61. On completion of the last segment of Tamluk-Digha new line project, the famous tourist resort of Digha will have rail connectivity. The completion of Chandigarh-Morinda section of the Chandigarh-Ludhiana project would provide a shorter, direct link between Chandigarh and Anandpursahib. The famous Jain pilgrimage center of Shravanabelagola would also get connected with the rail network. The pending projects of Kakinada-Kotapalli restoration and Howrah-Amta are also getting completed.

Gauge Conversion

62. During 2003-04, gauge conversions of New Jalpaiguri-Samukhtala Road, Bandikui-Bharatpur, Jasai - Munabao, Kabakaputtur - Subramanya Road, Villupuram - Pondicherry, Rajpalaiyam - Tenkasi, Vadalur - Cuddalore, Thanjavur -Kumbakonam, Junagarh - Veraval and Dhola - Bhavnagar have been completed.

63. During the year 2004-05, a target of completion of 1000 kms of gauge conversion has been proposed which include the following sections:

- i) Mansi-Saharsa
- ii) Bharatpur-Agra Fort of Agra Fort-Bandikui
- iii) Udaipur-Chittaurgarh of Ajmer - Udaipur
- iv) Samukhtala Road-New Bongaigaon of New Jalpaiguri-New Bongaigaon
- v) Manoharabad-Nizamabad of Secunderabad-Mudkhed
- vi) Adilabad-Kinwat of Mudkhed-Adilabad
- vii) Gondia-Balaghat of Jabalpur-Gondia
- viii) Ranchi-Lohardaga
- ix) Rupsa-Baripada of Rupsa-Bangriposi
- x) Bankura-Sonamukhi of Bankura Damodar River railway line
- xi) Madurai-Manamadurai of Madurai-Rameswaram
- xii) Thanjavur-Thiruvarur of Trichy-Nagore-Karaikal
- xiii) Subramanya-Sakleshpur of Hassan-Mangalore
- xiv) Bijapur-Bagalkot of Solapur-Gadag
- xv) Sihor-Palitana of Surendranagar-Pipavav
- xvi) Viramgam-Mehsana of Bhildi-Viramgam
- xvii) Barsoi-Radhikapur of Katihar-Jogbani and Katihar-Radhikapur

64. With the completion of above works, the gauge conversion projects of Hassan-Mangalore and Agra Fort-Bandikui are getting completed. The famous lake city of Udaipur would get connected with the broad gauge rail network thereby facilitating the tourist traffic in this area especially that moving by Palace on Wheels. The completion of gauge conversion of Samukhtala-New Bongaigaon section would provide two

BG lines between New Jalpaiguri and Guwahati thereby meeting the demands of traffic moving to and from Northeastern Region. The completion of Secunderabad-Mudkhed project will provide an alternative shorter direct route to Mumbai.

Doubling

65. During 2003-04 doublings of 206 kms have been completed, while for the year 2004-05, a target of 381 kms have been proposed. In Kerala, the impetus for progressing with the doubling of Mangalore-Shoranur is being maintained and 30 kms in Calicut-Shoranur portion will be doubled in the current year. In Punjab, doubling of Suchipind-Bhogpur, Madhopur-Bharoli and Mukerian-Mirthal of Jalandhar-Jammu Tawi project are slated for completion during the year. With the completion of Ahmedpur-Sainthia, the entire Khana-Sainthia route in West Bengal will get doubled. The doubling of Hospet-Tornagallu-Bellary and Hagari-Guntakal will augment capacity on Hospet-Guntakal section, falling in Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh boosting iron ore movement. Doublings of Amroha-Moradabad, Manikpur-Kataidandi in Uttar Pradesh and Barauni-Tilrath, Seemapur-Katihar and Mansi-Maheshkunt in Bihar would add to the line capacity on certain congested routes. Besides these, some other sections are also targeted for doubling adding up to a total of 381 Km.

66. Hon'ble Members will be happy to know that doublings of Pandabeswar-Chinpain, Jaipur-Phulera, Bilaspur-Salka Road, Chhapra-Ekma and Gonda-Mankapur have been included in the budget. The completion of these works is expected to ease the traffic flow and generate additional capacity on some of the saturated routes.

Surveys

67. I had written to the Hon'ble Members about the Rail Projects and other rail facility works in progress in their state. There have been demands from the Hon'ble Members for expansion of rail network in various parts of the country. Based on these demands, following surveys are proposed for inclusion in the budget:

I. New surveys for the following New Lines are being taken up:-

- i) Machlipattnam-Repalli
- ii) Jaggiyapet-Vishnupuram
- iii) Rayadurg-Tumkur via Kalyandurg
- iv) Tindivanam-Nagari via Vandivash, Cheyyar, Arani, Arcot, Ranipet, Walajahpet, Sholinghur, R.K. Pet, Podatur, Pallipattu
- v) Bariarpur and Mananpur via Kharagpur-Laxmipur-Barhat
- vi) Sultanganj and Katoria via Asarganj, Tarapore, Belhar
- vii) Ara-Bhabua Road
- viii) Chhapra-Muzaffarpur via Garkha, Maker and Rewaghat
- ix) Hathua-Deoria via Line Bazar, Salarkhurd, Phulwaria, Bathua Bazar, Pandeuri, Bhagipatti, Samhour, Katea
- x) Parwanoo to Darlaghat
- xi) Kandra to Namkom
- xii) Buramara -Chakulia
- xiii) Chennai-Sriperumbudur via Poonamalli
- xiv) Budge Budge-Pujali
- xv) Chowrigacha to Kandi
- xvi) Balurghat-Hilli
- xvii) Samsi-Chanchal-Harishchandrapur
- xviii) Tirur-Angadipuram

II. Surveys for the following New Lines are being updated:-

- i) Ongole-Donakonda

- ii) Nadikudi-Sri Kalahasti
- iii) Bhadrachallam-Kovvur
- iv) Cuddapah to Bangalore via Madanapalli
- v) Bihariganj-Kursela via Rupauli, Dhamdaha
- vi) Bihariganj-Simribakhtiarpur
- vii) Motihari to Sitamarhi via Shivhar
- viii) Madhepura-Singheshwarasthan-Karjayen-Bhimnagar
- ix) Bhanupalli-Bilaspur
- x) Chatra-Gaya
- xi) Gotegaon to Ramtek via Seoni
- xii) Phalodi-Nagaur
- xiii) Ratlam-Banswara via Dungarpur
- xiv) Bilara-Bar
- xv) Pushkar-Merta Road
- xvi) Ujjain-Jhalawar/ Ramganjmandi
- xvii) Jolarpettai-Hosur via Dharmapuri
- xviii) Agartala-Sabroom
- xix) Rishikesh-Doiwala
- xx) Jhargram-Purulia
- xxi) Golagokaran Nath- Shahjanpur via Mohammadi
- xxii) Galgalia-Supaul via Araria

III. New Surveys for conversion of the following lines to broad gauge are being taken up:-

- i) Baraigram-Kumarghat
- ii) Ankleswar-Rajpipla
- iii) Katwa-Ahmedpur
- iv) Aluabari-Siliguri via Galgalia

IV. Surveys for gauge **conversion** of the following lines are being updated:-

- i) Miyagam-Dabhoi-Samlaya
- ii) Samni-Jambusar-Veshwamatri and Jambusar-Kavi
- iii) Kolar-Chickballapur
- iv) Dindigul-Pollachi - Coimbatore and Pollachi-Palghat
- v) Ratlam-Mhow via Indore
- vi) Dholpur-Sirmuttra with extension upto Gangapur City
- vii) Loharu-Sikar-Churu-Ringus-Jaipur & Suratpura-Hanumangarh
- viii) Bhojipura-Pilibhit-Tanakpur
- ix) Lucknow-Bareilly via Sitapur-Lakhimpur-Pilibhit
- x) Krishnanagar-Nabadwipghat
- xi) Katwa-Barddhaman
- xii) Pratapnagar-Chotaudepur
- xiii) Sadulpur-Ratangarh-Bikaner & Ratangarh-Degana

V. New Surveys for doubling of the following lines are being taken up:-

- i) Salem-Bangalore

- ii) Trivandrum-Kanniyakumari
- iii) Chengalpattu-Tuticorin
- iv) Composite survey for Ghaziabad-Mugalsarai 3rd line
- v) Santipur-Kalinarayanpur
- vi) Rajgoda-Durga Chak
- vii) Doubling and electrification of Vijaywada – Gudivada –Bhimavaram - Narasapur and Gudivada - Machlipatnam

VI. Surveys for doubling of the following lines are being updated:

- i) Kiul-Nawadah-Gaya
- ii) Virar-Ahmedabad 3rd line
- iii) Pune-Miraj-Kolhapur
- iv) Meerut-Saharanpur
- v) Kharagpur-Midnapore via Girimaidan
- vi) Bandel-Katwa
- vii) Krishnanagar-Lalgola
- viii) Ramanagram-Mysore

Electrification

68. During the year 2003-04, 504 route kilometres have been electrified, which include Phagwara-Amritsar, Lakkadkot-Dhekquad, Ballapalle- Nandalur, Balasore-Ranital and Jahanabad-Patna. With this, the electrification of Patna-Gaya, Udhna-Jalgaon, Chengalpattu-Villupuram and Ludhiana-Amritsar rail lines has been completed and train services on electric traction have been introduced on these sections during the last year. For 2004-05, electrification of 375 route kilometres has been targeted. This will cover the following sections falling in the states of Kerala (160 Route Kilometres), Orissa (153 RKM), Uttaranchal (34 RKM) and Uttar Pradesh (28 RKM):

- (i) Chenganasheri - Kayankulam
- (ii) Shertalai - Kayankulam
- (iii) Kayankulam - Paravur
- (iv) Kapilas Road - Cuttack
- (v) Ranital - Bhadrak & Bhadrak Yard
- (vi) Kenduapada - Kapilas Road
- (vii) Khurda Road - Puri
- (viii) Roorkee - Najibabad.

Suburban Transport Projects

69. Phase I of Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) and the extension of Kolkata Metro Railway from Tolleyganj to Garia are progressing satisfactorily. The extension of Kolkata circular Railway from Princepghat to Majerhat as well as Dum Dum to Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose Airport is expected to be completed during the year. The entire section of MRTS (Phase II) from Tirumalai to Velachery shall be made operational fully by April 2005. The conversion of MG lines of the suburban system between Chennai (Egmore) and Tambaram to broad gauge are expected to be completed by March 2005.

Throughput Enhancement Works

70. In order to carry the targeted freight traffic and meet the demands of the core sectors of the economy during the remaining period of Tenth Plan, Ministry of Railways have decided to complete 62 identified throughput enhancement works. The accelerated completion of these works would result in augmentation of the sectional capacity, de-bottlenecking of saturated sections and terminals, improve operational flexibility, better utilization of rolling stock and ensure safety of operations.

71. The works urgently required for this purpose have been identified. It has been decided that all such sanctioned works will be completed by the end of 10 th plan for which appropriate allocation of funds will be made in the remaining three years of the current plan, including current year.

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited

72. The Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) was set up in January 2003 to undertake the bankable projects of the Golden Quadrilateral & Port Connectivity segments under the National Rail Vikas Yojana. Works for 56 projects under the Yojana (both sanctioned as well as unsanctioned) have been handed over to RVNL. In addition to project execution, RVNL will also undertake resource mobilization from the domestic market or through public private partnerships, BOT schemes, etc.

Development of alternative routes

73. The Golden Quadrilateral and diagonals of the railway system are heavily congested routes and strengthening of these routes have been taken up as part of National Rail Vikas Yojana. Surveys and construction of gauge conversion and new lines have been undertaken with a view to provide alternate routes to decongest the heavily utilized ones. These include gauge conversion of Kanpur-Kasganj-Mathura, Agra-Bandikui, Ajmer-Chittaurgarh, Neemuch-Ratlam, Bijapur-Gadag, Dharmavaram-Pakala, Chhindwara-Nagpur, Mudkhed-Adilabad, Nizamabad-Secunderabad and Jabalpur-Gondia and new lines Ramaganjmandi-Bhopal, Dallirajhara-Jagdarpur, Solapur-Tuljapur-Osmanabad, Gaya-Chhatra-Tori and Bhind-Ētawah.

New Production Unit for Wheel Manufacture

74. Presently rail wheels are being produced by Rail Wheel Factory, Bangalore and Durgapur Steel Plant, Durgapur. However, there exists a shortage of wheel manufacturing capacity in the country, which is met through imports. It is estimated that the capacity shortfall would be around 60 - 70 thousand wheels by the year 2009-10. To reduce our dependence on imports, through which supplies are not only uncertain but costlier, besides involving outgo of foreign exchange, it is proposed to set up a new wheel manufacturing plant at Chhapra, for which a detailed project report will be prepared. Major raw material is scrap steel, which is abundantly available with Indian Railways. With this we will move a step closer to self-sufficiency.

Production Units

75. I am glad to inform the Hon'ble members that the performance of all the railway production units was satisfactory during the last year. Apart from meeting the requirements of Railways, we have also exported diesel locomotives and spare parts worth Rs. 44.75 crore to Tanzania, Malaysia, West Africa and Bangladesh.

Scrap Disposal

76. Indian Railways sell approximately 10 lakh tonnes of metallic scrap every year. Hon'ble members have, from time to time, expressed concern about malpractices in such scrap sales. I have now decided to explore the possibility of in-house utilization of this scrap by recycling it, instead of selling it to outside parties, subject to a detailed examination of the logistics, cost benefit analysis etc.

Vigilance

77. In keeping with the determination of the Government to root out corruption from public life, the Vigilance Organization on the Railways have identified traffic undercharges, scrap disposal and irregularities in staff payments as thrust areas for intensive vigilance scrutiny in order to prevent possible leakage of revenue. Installation of electronic weighbridges, computerization of stores accounts, etc., are some of the measures being taken in this connection. The Vigilance continued its drive in mass contact areas such as passenger reservation, luggage and parcel bookings, trains, catering and settlement of claims which has resulted in realization of earnings to the tune of Rs. 4.20 crores approximately in 2003-04.

Industrial Relations

78. Indian Railways have continuous dialogue with Staff Federations through the Permanent Negotiating Machinery (PNM). There is also a regular dialogue with officers as well as staff federations through the forum 'Participation of Railway Employees in Management' (PREM). We have been getting the full cooperation and participation of these federations in achieving the targets and laying down the future road map.

79. Railways are undertaking various welfare schemes for the betterment of Railway employees

which are constantly reviewed with an eye on improvement. For encouraging the welfare and empowerment of the women employees, a new activity has been provided for under the Staff Benefit Fund. Based on the per capita contribution of fifty paise, a sum of about Rs. 7 lakh has been set aside. This would be utilized exclusively for the welfare and empowerment activities for women employees.

Facilities for Licensed Porters

80. In order to further improve the lot of the licensed porters, Railways have provided shelters at stations where they can take rest. It is proposed that these shelters will be improved by providing funds to the extent of Rs. 5 crore.

81. Even though the porters (coolies) working on the railway stations are not railway servants, the facility of one set of privilege pass for the licensed porter for self only is permitted from the station of working to any station on Indian Railways and back in second/sleeper class. I now propose to extend this facility to the spouse of the porter also.

Social Security Scheme for Unorganized Sector

82. Sir, In the Common Minimum Programme we are committed to enhancing the welfare and well-being of workers particularly in the unorganized sector and assure a secure future for their families in every respect. As far as the Railways are concerned, we have always been a model employer. As the House is aware, a social security scheme for unorganized sector workers is being implemented in 50 districts on a pilot basis. Under this scheme there is a provision for Health Insurance through Universal Insurance Scheme, a personal accident insurance cover of Rs. 1 lakh and minimum old age pension of Rs. 500 per month on attaining the age of 60 years. I propose to cover workers in the unorganized sector coming into contact with the Railways such as licensed porters (coolies), vendors, hawkers, people working in stalls, cycle stand, construction workers, etc., in this scheme. As a measure of good will, I propose to make a grant to the 'Unorganised Workers Social Security Fund' so that the licensed porters, who are self-employed, may also be covered by this scheme. An awareness and education campaign will also be launched to enable these licensed porters who are self employed to join the scheme by making appropriate contribution. So far as other unorganized sector workers associated with Railways who are employed by contractors/licensees are concerned, appropriate provisions will be incorporated in the terms of the contract in consultation with the Labour and Law Ministries, to enable the contractors/licensees to implement the provisions of this social security scheme. I sincerely hope that this will become a milestone in bringing a large number of unorganized workers under social security net.

Reservation

83. I am glad to inform this august House that the prescribed percentage of representation for Scheduled Castes has been achieved in all groups of railway services. However, the representation of Scheduled Tribes in all the groups of services except Group 'A' is slightly less than the prescribed percentage of 7.5 percent, due to non-availability of eligible candidates. I have directed to launch a special drive for clearing the backlog in respect of reserved vacancies for Scheduled Tribes.

84. As far as the representation of Other Backward Classes (OBCs) is concerned, I would like to inform the House that since the introduction of reservation for them (year 1993) every effort is being made to recruit OBCs in direct recruitment categories as per the prescribed percentage quota. Although not much shortfall is found in Group 'A' categories, there is a shortfall in filling up such direct recruitment quota posts at Group 'C' & 'D' levels on account of non-availability of suitable candidates and candidates not joining after being selected. I have directed to launch a special drive for clearing the backlog in respect of reserved vacancies for Other Backward Classes.

Sports

85. In the field of sports, the performance of Indian Railways during the year 2003-04 has been outstanding both at National and International levels. It is a matter of great pride that Railway sportspersons have given a splendid performance in the Afro Asian Games – 2003 held at Hyderabad. Besides Indian Railways volleyball, basketball and golf teams won first ever Gold, Silver and Bronze medals respectively in World Railway Championships of 2003-04.

86. At the National level, Railway athletes won 16 National titles in different games and stood runners-up in 12 disciplines. Seven sportspersons have been honoured with prestigious Arjuna Award and one each with Dhyan Chand and Dronacharya Awards. I would like to make a special mention regarding Miss K.M. Beenamol, a Railway athlete, who has been honoured with the Padmashri and Rajiv Gandhi Khel

Ratna Awards during the year. This is the first ever time 10 Railway sportspersons have been honoured with such awards in a year.

Public Sector Undertakings

87. The performance of public sector undertakings has been consistently satisfactory during the year 2002-03 also. IRCON International Limited had a turnover of Rs. 800 crore and earned a net profit of Rs. 87 crore. It paid a dividend of Rs. 18.81 crore for the year 2002-03. RITES Limited has achieved its highest ever total income of Rs. 321.5 crore recording a net profit of Rs. 54.4 crore for the year 2002-03. It paid a dividend of Rs. 5 crore. The Container Corporation of India Limited (CONCOR) had a total income of Rs. 1,534 crore, earning a profit of Rs. 272.8 crore and paid Rs. 71.5 crore as dividend. The Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Limited (IRCTC) had a turnover of Rs. 73.6 crore and earned a net profit of Rs. 5.5 crore. It paid a dividend of Rs. 1.2 crore for the year 2002-03. The Corporation started the service of internet ticket booking which was extended to more than 100 cities in India.

88. Indian Railway Finance Corporation mobilized Rs. 2,775 crore during 2002-03 from domestic and overseas markets and has financed the acquisition of 68 electric locomotives, 92 diesel locomotives, 1653 coaches and 4731 wagons which have been leased to the Railways. During the year IRFC achieved a net profit of Rs. 334.5 crore and paid a dividend of Rs. 101 crore.

Konkan Railway Corporation

89. The Konkan Railway Corporation has consistently been improving its performance in the last three years of its operations. However, as nearly 70 percent of the capital cost has been met through market borrowings, the Corporation has a heavy interest burden of about Rs. 300 cr per annum due to heavy debt servicing involved. This is apart from the redemption of bonds, which are already due. The Railways have been giving continued financial support to this Corporation. I propose to take up the financial problems faced by the Corporation with the participating State Governments of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa and Maharashtra to find a solution.

Passenger Amenities

90. There are more than 8000 stations on Indian Railways, which are used, by millions of passengers everyday. I have decided to pay special attention towards maintenance and improvement to the passenger amenities at the stations. While an amount of Rs. 178 crore, Rs. 175 crore and Rs. 169 crore was spent in the previous three years respectively, a sum of Rs. 215 crore is being provided for improvement to passenger amenities this year to give a thrust to this area.

91. This budgeted outlay of Rs. 215 crore shall be spent on specially identified passenger amenity works such as provision of safe and good quality drinking water disinfected by using modern techniques, provision of washable aprons, clean toilets, adequate booking windows, extension of platforms to accommodate full length trains, raising of platform levels, provision and widening of foot over bridges and sub-ways.

92. This will go a long way in ensuring higher standards of cleanliness and hygiene, safe and convenient movement of passengers at the stations, easing of congestion and better passenger dispersal. Such works shall be in progress at approximately 1100 stations.

93. The deficiencies in the Minimum Essential Passenger Amenities at all the stations shall be made good by the end of March 2005.

94. Special emphasis shall also be given to passenger amenities friendly to physically challenged persons. Railways are endeavouring to provide facilities such as exclusive parking, ramp to main station building, low level toilets and low level drinking water taps, non-slippery pathways and 'May I Help You' booths, on all 225 'A' class stations by March 2005. These facilities will be extended to all 283 'B' class stations in the next three years i.e., by March 2007.

95. To improve the amenities available for passengers traveling in sleeper class, it has been decided to provide additional facilities, such as snack tables in each bay, magazine holder, bottle and tumbler holders and a mirror in each bay of the compartment (for 8 passengers), in GSCN type of coaches. I am glad to inform the House that all new coaches are being manufactured with crash worthiness features.

Special Measures for Women commuters

96. Deployment of Lady Ticket Checking Squads on some sections of zonal Railways has proved helpful in infusing a sense of security among the female passengers traveling by trains. Encouraged by the results of this experimental step taken by Indian Railways, we have decided to extend the deployment of such lady squads over all the zonal Railways wherever it is required.

97. In order to ease the problem faced by women commuters, it has been decided that unauthorized vendors will not be allowed to enter the women's compartment in suburban trains. Stickers indicating the phone numbers of the security helpline will be affixed prominently in the compartments.

Other Measures

98. The House had also been informed that in order to prevent coaches from climbing over each other in case of an accident tightlock center buffer couplers would progressively be introduced. In this respect, apart from the new coaches of German design, which have this feature, ICF design coaches are also fitted with such couplers, and it is planned that the following long distance 24-coach trains shall also be fitted with these couplers:

- i. Tamil Nadu Express from Chennai to New Delhi
- ii. Andhra Pradesh Express from Hyderabad to New Delhi
- iii. Godavari Express from Hyderabad to Visakhapatnam
- iv. Charminar Express from Hyderabad to Chennai

99. Railway Administration will, as far as possible, try to ensure to increase the number of unreserved ordinary class coaches in the heavily crowded long distance passenger trains.

“Village-on-Wheels” – Tourist train for Common Man

100. Indian Railways have been running trains for upper-end tourists like Palace on Wheels, Royal Orient, etc. No such facility exists for common people particularly from small towns and villages. It is proposed to run tourist special trains of ordinary sleeper class coaches which will run to a pre-determined schedule. These trains will collect the tourists from a region and take them to important places of religious and historical importance at affordable cost. Apart from promoting tourism this will enable the common man to travel around the country easily.

New Services

101. In the Interim Rail Budget for 2004-05, 18 pairs of Sampark Kranti Express trains were proposed. Of these Karnataka Sampark Kranti Express has already been introduced as a tri-weekly service in February 2004.

102. To cater to the needs of New Delhi – Darbhanga sector, it is proposed to extend the already announced New Delhi – Samastipur Bihar Sampark Kranti Express to Darbhanga.

103. With this, the new services proposed for the year 2004-05 are as follows:-

(A) Introduction

Sampark Kranti Express

- (1) Poorvottar Sampark Kranti Express from New Delhi to Guwahati
- (2) Andhra Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Secunderabad
- (3) Bihar Sampark Kranti Express from New Delhi to Darbhanga
- (4) Chattisgarh Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Durg
- (5) Gujarat Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Ahmedabad
- (6) Jharkand Sampark Kranti Express from New Delhi to Ranchi
- (7) Kerala Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Trivandrum (Kochuveli)
- (8) Maharashtra Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Mumbai (Bandra)
- (9) Madhya Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Jabalpur
- (10) Orissa Sampark Kranti Express from New Delhi to Bhubaneshwar
- (11) Rajasthan Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi to Jodhpur
- (12) Tamil Nadu Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Madurai

- (13) Uttar Pradesh Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Chitrakoot
- (14) Uttaranchal Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi to Kathgodam
- (15) West Bengal Sampark Kranti Express from New Delhi to Kolkata (Sealdah)
- (16) Goa Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi (Nizamuddin) to Madgaon
- (17) Uttar Sampark Kranti Express from Delhi to Udampur, to cater for Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Haryana.

Frequency of these Sampark Kranti trains will be decided depending upon their patronage.

Other new trains:

- (18) Muzaffarpur-Ahmedabad Jansadharan Express (weekly)
- (19) Chennai Central-Nagercoil Express (weekly)
- (20) Muzaffarpur-Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT) Jansadharan Express (weekly)
- (21) Ramnagar-Moradabad Passenger (daily)
- (22) Bangalore City-Bangarapet Express (daily)
- (23) Saharasa-Mansi Passenger (daily)
- (24) Chararu Takrala-Ambala Cantt DMU service (daily)
- (25) Chennai Egmore-Kumbakonam Express (daily)
- (26) Mysore-Dharwar Express (daily)
- (27) Chennai Central-Hubli Express (weekly)
- (28) Chennai Egmore-Tenkasi-Sengottai Express (after gauge conversion)
- (29) Jaipur-Agra Fort Express (after gauge conversion)
- (30) Delhi-Faizabad Express
- (31) Indore-Patna Express via Faizabad (weekly)
- (32) Guwahati-Jha Jha Express via Jasidih (weekly)

B. Extension

- (1) 8411/8412 Bhubaneswar-Srikakulam Express upto Vishakhapatnam.
- (2) 8303/8304 Sambhalpur-Bhubaneswar Express upto Puri.
- (3) 1 BSL/339 Bikaner-Bathinda Passenger upto Abohar.
- (4) 199/200 Jaipur-Bikaner Passenger upto Suratgarh.
- (5) 7029/7030 Hyderabad-Ernakulam Sabri Express upto Kochuveli.
- (6) 2069/2070 Raigarh-Dongargarh Janshatabdi upto Gondia.
- (7) 5711/5712 New Jalpaiguri-Asansol Express upto Alipurduar on one hand and Ranchi on the other.
- (8) 9049/9050 Rajendra Nagar-Valsad Express upto Bandra Terminus.
- (9) Two pairs of Mankapur-Katra Passengers to Faizabad.

C. Increase in Frequency

- (1) 1067/1068 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus –Faizabad Saket Express from weekly to bi-weekly.
- (2) 2313/2314 New Delhi-Sealdah Rajdhani Express from 5 days to daily.
- (3) 6507/6508 Jodhpur-Bangalore Express from weekly to bi-weekly.
- (4) 1017/1018 Bangalore-Mumbai Chalukya Express from tri-weekly to six days a week by cancelling 1049/1050 Dadar-Yashwantpur Express (bi-weekly).
- (5) 3149/3150 Sealdah-Alipurduar Kanchankanya Express from tri-weekly to 4 days a week.
- (6) 2141/2142 Lokmanya Tilak Terminus-Rajendra Nagar Express from 6 days a week to daily.
- (7) 2957/2958 New Delhi-Ahmedabad Rajdhani Express from tri-weekly to 6 days a week.
- (8) 9319/9320 Indore-Bhind Express from weekly to tri-weekly by extending 9307/9308 Indore-Gwalior Express (bi-weekly) upto Bhind.
- (9) 2317/2318 Sealdah-Amritsar Akal Takhat Express from weekly to bi-weekly by extending 2319/2320 Amritsar-Asansol Express (weekly) upto Sealdah.
- (10) 2129/2130 Pune-Howrah Azad Hind Express from 5 days a week to daily by extending 2131/2132 Pune-Nagpur Express (bi-weekly) upto Howrah.
- (11) 6309/6310 Patna-Ernakulam Express from weekly to bi-weekly.
- (12) 2649/2650 Yeshwantpur-Nizamuddin Karnataka Sampark Kranti Express from tri-weekly to daily.

104. I earnestly hope that collectively, these 54 pairs of additional services will go a long way in reinforcing the resolve of Indian Railways to meet the rising aspirations of the travelling public from all parts

of the country.

Annual Plan 2004-2005

105. Sir, I would now like to present the Annual Plan 2004-2005. The Plan outlay for 2004-2005 has been kept at Rs. 11,265 crore. Taking into account the outlay of Rs. 2,933 crore on safety related works through the Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF), the total outlay comes to Rs. 14,198 crore. This is Rs. 773 crore more than the outlay of the Interim Budget. For the year 2004-2005, the total funds received from General Exchequer are the same as provided in Interim Budget i.e. Rs. 7,020 crore, which includes Rs. 2,075 crore as contribution towards the SRSF and Rs. 401 crore from the Central Road Fund. The corresponding figure for last year's Budget Estimates was Rs. 6577.34 crore, including Rs. 1,600 crore for the SRSF and Rs. 433 crore from the Central Road Fund. For the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla National Project a separate allotment of Rs. 300 crore has been received, due to which Railways' total plan outlay becomes Rs. 14,498 crore.

106. In addition to the budgetary support, I propose to provide Rs. 2,870 crore for plan expenditure through internal resource generation, which is higher than what was budgeted for last year by Rs. 240 crore. As in previous years, extra-budgetary resources, mainly through market borrowing from Indian Railways Finance Corporation will provide the balance requirement of the Plan. This includes Rs. 3,400 crore as market borrowing and Rs. 50 crore as investment through a "BOT" project in the Viramgam-Mehsana Gauge Conversion work. For the Special Railway Safety Fund, the contribution of the Central Government would be supplemented by Railways' own contribution, which is expected to be Rs. 858 crore, taking the total outlay under SRSF to Rs. 2,933 crore.

107. Sir, the thrust of the Annual Plan is development and safety. The total outlay under Capital on the five major plan project heads this year has been kept at Rs. 2,696 crore with Rs. 947 crore on New Lines which, after taking into account Rs. 300 crore received specifically for Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla New Line, comes to Rs. 1,247 crore. Besides New Lines, Rs. 760 crore on Gauge Conversion, Rs. 479 crore for Doubling and Rs. 125 crore for Electrification. The outlay on metropolitan transport projects has been kept at Rs. 385 crore. Apart from this, Rs. 717 crore are being allotted to several works in the planheads New Lines, Doubling, Gauge Conversion and Railway Electrification, which are to be executed by the Rail Vikas Nigam. The outlay on safety related planheads, inclusive of outlay given under the Special Railway Safety Fund, is Rs. 2,570 crore for Track Renewals, Rs. 528 crore for the Bridges and Rs. 813 crore for Signalling & Telecommunications.

Budget Estimates, 2004-05

108. Mr. Speaker Sir, I shall now deal with the Budget Estimates for 2004-05. The estimates presented to this august House through the Interim Budget 2004-05 were based on the Revised Estimates fixed for 2003-04. In the light of the approximate financial results for 2003-04, which are now available, the Interim Budget estimates have been reviewed and updated.

109. The Interim Budget anticipated a growth rate of 5.49 percent in passenger earnings for the year 2004-05. However, in the light of actual growth rate achieved during 2003-04, the passenger earnings are now proposed to be revised downward from Rs. 14,200 crore of Interim Budget to Rs.13,940 crore.

110. Freight earnings, which were brought down at the Revised Estimates stage last year, based on the trend at that time, showed remarkable recovery during the remaining part of the last year due to general buoyancy, as a result of which the revised target was surpassed. Enthused by this trend, it is proposed to revise the freight earnings for the current year, duly enhancing the loading target by 10 million tonnes and fixing the same at 580 million tonnes. Accordingly, the freight earnings have been placed at Rs. 28,745 crore, which is Rs. 645 crore higher than the Interim Budget level.

111. Other Coaching earnings in the Interim Budget were assessed at Rs. 990 crore assuming a growth of around 6.5 percent over the Revised Estimates, 2003-04. These are now assessed at Rs. 1040 crore taking into account the proposed re-classification of parcel rates, which is estimated to fetch additional revenue of Rs. 50 crore. I will come to the details of this re-classification in the later part of my speech. Taking note of the shortfall in Sundry Other Earnings in 2003-04, the target for the current fiscal is being set at Rs. 1,072 crore, which is Rs. 40 crore lower than the Interim Budget.

112. With an additional clearance of Rs. 25 crores of traffic suspense, the gross traffic receipts for the current financial year are now estimated at Rs. 44,902 crore, which are Rs. 420 crore higher than the Interim Budget.

113. The requirement of funds for Ordinary Working Expenses for 2004-05, which were placed at Rs. 32,960 crore in the Interim Budget, have been recast in view of the savings achieved in the previous year. There have, however, been post interim budget factors such as merger of 50 percent of DA with the basic pay and increase in the price of diesel that were naturally not provided in the Interim Budget. Due to stringent measures taken by the Railways for expenditure control and zero base budgeting, the Railways are hopeful of not only absorbing the impact of these factors within the interim budget but also reducing the Ordinary Working Expenses by Rs. 100 crore. Accordingly, these are being kept at Rs. 32,860 crore in BE 2004-05.

114. Appropriation to Depreciation Reserve Fund, which was kept at Rs. 1900 crore in the Interim Budget, is being stepped up to Rs.2267 crore. Taking note of present and future replacement requirements there is a conscious decision to enhance the funding of the Depreciation Reserve Fund.

115. In view of a slight reduction anticipated in the pension liability, the appropriation to Pension Fund from revenue is being reduced by Rs. 100 crore over the Interim Budget level of Rs. 6,390 crore.

116. Thus the total working expenses now work out to Rs. 41,417 crore and the net traffic receipts come to Rs. 3,485 crore as against Rs. 3,232 cr of Interim Budget. With a sum of Rs. 993 crore coming from net miscellaneous receipts, the net railway revenue now works out to Rs. 4,478 crore as against Rs. 4,225 crore of the Interim Budget. After payment of current dividend of Rs. 3,305 crore and Rs. 300 crore towards the deferred dividend liability, Railways are left with a 'surplus' of Rs.873 crore. With the increased emphasis on safety, it is proposed to deploy Rs. 158 crore of this surplus through Special Railway Safety Fund and the remaining through Development Fund for modernization and development activities.

117. My effort will be to ensure that the results of greater efficiency and better capacity utilisation are made truly meaningful in the national context. The benefits of better performance of the railways should be passed on to the common man and the national economy, to contribute to growth and price stability. It will be my endeavour to lessen the burden on the economically weaker sections of the society who are dependent upon the railways for providing them a relatively inexpensive mode of transport from one end of the country to the other

118. With a view to sustain and improve market share, I do not propose any increase in the freight rates for the year 2004-05. However, a fresh look at our policies to develop a long-term relationship with our freight customers, by offering them suitable incentives for their investment in the transport infrastructure of Indian Railways is necessary. In this direction, I intend to initiate a few steps.

119. In the last year, the Railways have made a major break through in part clearance of their long outstanding dues from the Badarpur Thermal Power Station (BTPS). Continued clearance and arrest of further accretion are expected through the introduction of the facility of electronic payment of freight in a major way, thereby affording our customers a clean, quick and transparent facility to render freight payment at the station of their convenience and in the process also expedite realization of railway freight earnings. A pilot project for setting up Electronic Payment Gateway has been proposed under which the BTPS will be informed of freight payable at the destination station and electronic transfer of funds to the Railway's account will take place. This facility, once established, will be expanded to cover all freight customers who opt for the same. This will ensure speedy and secure transfer of funds apart from eliminating cumbersome and time-consuming paper work.

120. A new scheme, called "Engine-on-Load" (EOL) scheme, wherein the train engine will wait during loading or unloading operation is being introduced to ensure faster release and better availability of wagons. Under this scheme, the free time for loading or unloading will be lower than the existing norms. The EOL customers will be exempted from payment of engine hire charges, siding charges, shunting charges and the cost of all the railway staff posted in the sidings. A system of debit/credit hours, for computation of demurrage will be introduced.

121. In order to encourage rail movement of heavy machinery consignments for Thermal Power Stations and other industries, a freight rebate of 10 percent is proposed to be granted for all such movements undertaken in special type of wagons, owned by the customers. Further, the technical staff of the customers and the railway staff, escorting the consignment, will also be permitted free of charge. Such movement of heavy consignments by rail will help in reducing the damage to the roads besides being an eco-friendly mode of transportation.

122. In order to remove anomalies in the method of arriving at the chargeable distance for fare and freight by different zonal railways, the total distance will be rounded off to the next higher kilometer only once

at the end, instead of multiple rounding off at intermediate stages. This rationalization will bring uniformity in charging of fare and freight.

Passenger Services

123. I do not propose any increase in the Passenger fares for any Class of travel for the year 2004-05.

Parcel Services

124. In the parcel segment, a new concept of uniform rates for all commodities, including luggage, based on the type of service was introduced instead of commodity-based rate structure. During this rationalization the rates for booking of parcels became generally lower. It is proposed to increase the rates for booking of parcels by Rajdhani Express trains, under Scale-R, by around 7.1 per cent and fix the rates under Scale-P at around 53 per cent of the rates under Scale-R, as against around 43 per cent at present.

125. Further, the lowest Scale-E is proposed to be merged with the Standard Scale-S, reducing the total number of rate scales from existing 4 Scales to 3 Scales. The ratio between the highest and the lowest rates will reduce from 6.2 to 3.0. The rates under Scale-S will remain unchanged. However, the Newspapers & Magazines will be booked at concessional rates uniformly at 45 per cent of the Scale-S rates by all trains.

126. It is also proposed that all types of special Parcel trains, including Millennium Parcel Trains, shall be charged at Scale-P instead of Scale-S.

127. The above adjustments in parcel rates are expected to generate additional revenue of Rs. 50 crore during the remaining period of the current year.

128. Sir, despite there being no additional resource mobilization measures by increasing passenger fares or freight rates and post interim budget factors of 50 per cent DA merger and increase in diesel price, the Operating Ratio shows improvement, and is now budgeted at 92.6 per cent against 93 per cent in the Interim Budget.

Conclusion

129. Sir, I consider it a privilege and also a unique opportunity to lead the Railways and will make every effort to further improve its performance so that it will continue to play a pivotal role in the economic prosperity of this great country and its people. I acknowledge the enthusiasm and unstinted support of railwaymen without whose dedicated efforts the creditable achievements of the Railways would not have been possible. Our thanks are due to passengers and users of the Railway whose co-operation we have always been getting and I expect that this co-operation will be forthcoming in future too.

130. Sir, over the last many years Railways have been neglected to a certain extent. The investment in its infrastructure has, in real terms, not been sufficient to keep pace with the growth of the economy and meet the aspirations of the people as endorsed by the elected representatives all over the country. I have discussed this issue with the Hon'ble Prime Minister and he has been kind enough to express whole-hearted support consistent with the key role Indian Railways play in the development of the nation and has also stressed the United Progressive Alliance Government's commitment to ensure that this system becomes one of the best Railway systems in the world, be it technological development, management techniques or provision of facilities to its users, for which funds would be forthcoming without any hindrance. While placing on record my gratitude for this generous gesture, it will be my endeavour to fulfil the expectations of the nation, for which apart from implementing the measures announced, a comprehensive plan will be drawn up.

131. With these words, Sir, I commend the Railway Budget 2004-2005 to the House.
