

For Favour of Publicity

22nd February, 2013

A Press Statement circulated by Shri Ram Naik, BJP Leader and former Railway Minister of State (Independent Charge) in a Press Conference held in Mumbai on 22nd February, 2013

Give Justice to Mumbai Suburban Commuters in Railway Budget: Ram Naik

Mumbai, Friday: As promised while increasing the railway passenger fares in January by Railway Minister Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal, there should be no fare increase in the ensuing Railway Budget for 2013-2014. A memorandum demanding provision of Rs.1,000 crore for Mumbai Suburban Railway, direct suburban service from Churchgate to Dahanu, etc. has been submitted to Railway Minister Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal by Shri Ram Naik, BJP Leader and former Railway Minister of State (Independent Charge). This information was given by Shri Ram Naik in a press conference held today in Mumbai.

Elaborating about the demands Shri Ram Naik said, " We discussed several issues about the Mumbai Suburban Services with the Railway Minister in Delhi on 9th December. We also requested him to visit Mumbai and have dialogue with the suburban railway commuters' organizations about their problems. He had agreed to visit Mumbai but did not do so. I requested the Railway Minister last week to spare sometime atleast in Delhi for discussing the budget proposals. However, there has been no response from him. We have therefore sent a memorandum which includes 8 demands. The first demand is not to increase the railway fare as promised by him while increasing the fares in January under any pretext."

The other seven demands enumerated by Shri Ram Naik are : **1)** The Budget allocation for major projects under MUTPI & II for 2013-14 be increased to Rs. 1,000 crore against Rs. 500 crore in 2012-13 and efforts be made to complete all on-going projects. **2)** White Paper on Mumbai Suburban Railway System indicating the position of each and every project and also the improvement in station amenities and buildings be published. **3)** Introduction of Churchgate - Dahanu locals to cater to the growing number of commuters from Virar to Dahanu. Though the Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation (MRVC) has completed the project for widening of tracks between Virar - Dahanu before two years and the conversion of DC (Direct Current) traction to AC (Alternate Current) traction has been completed, the Western Railway administration has been giving lame excuses for not introducing these trains. The commuters' wrath may explode at any time due to this delay. **4)** Need for a new time

table on the Western Railway. As a result of conversion from DC to AC traction, the local trains can now run at 100 kms per hour instead of the present speed limit of 80 kms, increase by 25%. The present local time table is formulated on the basis of 80 kms speed. The signal system has been also modernized. Hence there is no technical difficulty in running the trains at 100 kms per hour. It is therefore necessary to prepare a new time table taking into consideration this extra 25% additional rake time available. The revised time table should be finalized after taking into confidence the commuters' organizations. 5) Conversion to 12 & 15 coach rakes. The only short term measure to reduce over - crowding of trains is to convert all existing 9 coach rakes to 12 coach rakes and subsequently to 15 coach rakes. 6) Construction of Escalators. The Budget Speech for 2012-13 had stated that 50 escalators would be commissioned to facilitate easy movement of passengers but not even one escalator has been commissioned so far. Provision should be made for funds to complete the construction in 2013-14. 7) Elevated Railway System. Many news appeared in the media about the Elevated Railway System on Western as well as Central Railway. However no specific and authoritative information has come from The Railway Board. The decision about Elevated Railway System should not be taken in hurry; there has to be a full debate on its usefulness, economics, finance and other relevant issues.

"During the debate on Railway Budget in Lok Sabha last year, 216 MPs participated. However, out of the 6 MPs from Mumbai, presuming that Shri Milind Deora did not speak as he was the Minister, the other four Congress MPs S/S Sanjay Nirupam, Gurudas Kamat, Eknath Gaikwad and Smt. Priya Dutt became 'Mouni' MPs and the 6th NCP MP Shri Sanjay Patil submitted his views in writing. Mumbai commuters do expect this time that the 'Mouni' MPs become vocal and give voice to the demands of 72 lakh Mumbai Commuters", stated Shri Ram Naik at the end.

(Office Secretary)

RAM NAIK
Former Petroleum Minister
National Convener
BJP MPs - MLAs Development Cell



**By Courier
Very Urgent**

9 Shivsmriti, 51 Jaiprakash Nagar
Goregaon East, Mumbai 400 063.
Tel.: 022-2686 33 39, Fax : 022-2686 11 33
email : info@ramnaik.com
website : www.ramnaik.com

**Ref: 128
19th February 2013**

**Shri Pawan Kumar Bansal
Minister of Railways
Rail Bhavan
Rafi Marg
New Delhi 110 001.**

**Railway Budget 2013-2014 - Provisions for
Mumbai Suburban Railway System**

Dear Shri Bansal jee,

Kindly refer to my letter dated 4th December, 2012 and the personal discussion I had with you on 9th December, 2012 when I raised some important issues and problems of Mumbai Suburban Commuters. I enclose a zerox copy of the letter for your ready reference.

Though I had requested to you to visit Mumbai to have dialogue with the commuter organizations to understand the problems of the commuters and you had promised to visit Mumbai, the visit has not materialized so far. You would be now busy in formulating Budget Proposals for 2013-2014. I thought it advisable to draw your attention to the vexed problems of Mumbai Suburban Commuters and place before you the various suggestions.

After our discussion on 9th December, 2012, you announced the increase in railway passenger fares on 9th January, 2013 which was made applicable from 21st January, 2013. It is my considered opinion that such an increase should have been announced in the Parliament and made applicable only after approval of the Parliament. Your decision has belittled the supremacy of the Parliament. You had also assured that you would not increase the railway fares in your Budget for 2013-2014. Meanwhile the Petroleum Minister has introduced dual pricing system for diesel and has increased the diesel rate by Rs. 11.30 per litre for bulk consumers like railways, state transport organizations, etc. I wonder how you will honour your words in these circumstances.

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BJP Central Office : 11 Ashoka Road, New Delhi 110 001 • Tel.: 011-2300 57 00 • Fax: 011-2300 57 87

Resi.: B-503, Lakshachandi Apartment, Off Gen.Arunkumar Vaidya Marg, Krishnavatika Road, Gokuldham, Goregaon East, Mumbai 400 063 • Tel.: 022-2841 33 99, Fax : 022-2842 33 99

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Moreover there have been frequent breakdowns in the last 2 months which have been disorganizing the Suburban Railway System. Hardly a day passes when there is no dislocation at one place or the other. It is desirable that a serious note is taken of these disruptions and a sufficient provision is made for repairs and maintenance of the Suburban Railway System.

In view of the above I enclose a note which should be taken cognizance while finalizing the Budget Proposals for 2013-2014.

I do hope that your Budget Proposals will meet the expectation of the Mumbai Suburban Railway commuters.
With regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Ram Naik)

(former Minister of State for Railways
- Independent Charge)

Encl: as above

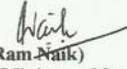
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**Important Suggestions for Mumbai Suburban Railway System for
Budget Proposals for the year 2013-2014**

- 1) There should be **no increase in fare** as assured by the Railway Minister on 9th January 2013 while increasing the fares for railway passengers.
- 2) **The Budget allocation** for major projects under MUTPI & II for 2013-14 should be **increased to Rs. 1,000 crore** against Rs. 500 crore in 2012-13 and efforts should be made to complete all on-going projects.
- 3) **White Paper on Mumbai Suburban Railway System** indicating the position of each and every project and also the improvement in station amenities and buildings should be **published**.
- 4) **Introduction of Churchgate - Dahanu locals** to cater to the growing number of commuters from Virar to Dahanu. This area was included in Mumbai Suburban Section in 1991. When the Mumbai Rail Vikas Corporation (MRVC) was incorporated, a project for widening of tracks between Virar - Dahanu was taken up under MUTP-I. It has been now completed. The DC (Direct Current) traction has also been converted into AC (Alternate Current). Hence **it is the need of the hour to introduce direct Churchgate - Dahanu locals**. There is no genuine reason for not introducing them. Western Railway administration has been giving lame excuses for not introducing these trains. The commuters' wrath may explode at any time due to this delay.
- 5) **Need for a new time table on the Western Railway:** As a result of conversion from DC to AC traction, the local trains can now run at 100 kms per hour instead of the present speed limit of 80 kms, increase by 25 %. The present local time table is formulated on the basis of 80 kms speed. The signal system has been also modernized. Hence there is no technical difficulty in running the trains at 100 kms per hour. **It is therefore necessary to prepare a new time table taking into consideration this extra 25% additional rake time available.** The revised time table should be finalized after taking into confidence the commuters' organizations.
- 6) **Conversion to 12 & 15 Coach Rakes :** The only short term measure to reduce over - crowding of trains is **to convert all existing 9 coach rakes to 12 coach rakes and subsequently to 15 coach rakes.**
- 7) **Construction of Escalators:** The Budget Speech for 2012-13 [Para 81 (i)] had stated that 50 escalators would be commissioned to facilitate easy movement of passengers during 2012 - 13. The Pink Book, had entries of 33 nos. escalators for the Central Railway at the cost of Rs. 20.79 crore and 18 nos. on the Western Railway for Rs. 11.34 crore. **However not even one escalator has been commissioned so far. Provide funds to complete them in 2013-14.**
- 8) **Elevated Railway System :** Many news appeared in the media about the Elevated Railway System on Western as well as Central Railway. However no specific and authoritative information has come from The Railway Board. **The decision about Elevated Railway System should not be taken in hurry; there has to be a full debate on its usefulness, economics, finance and other relevant issues.**


(Ram Naik)

(former Minister of State
for Railways - Independent Charge)

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