

A statement released by Shri Ram Naik, BJP leader & former Minister of State for Railways (Independent Charge) in a press conference held on 23rd June, 2009 in Mumbai

Mumbai, Tuesday: A charter of eleven demands requesting provision for Mumbai suburban commuters in the ensuing Railway Budget was presented to the Railway Minister Smt. Mamata Banerjee on behalf of Bharatiya Janata Party, Mumbai on 22nd June in New Delhi. The demands include provision for Rs.1,374 crore for Mumbai Urban Transport Project (MUTP) - I and Rs. 1,700 crore for MUTP - II. The charter is signed by Shri Ram Naik, BJP leader & former Minister of State for Railways (Independent Charge), Shri Gopal Shetty, President, BJP - Mumbai & M.L.A., Prof. Bal Apte, M.P., Smt. Jaywantiben Mehta, former Union Minister, Shri Kirit Somaiyya, former M.P. and Shri Ramesh Medhekar, Vice President, BJP - Mumbai.

In the absence of the Railway Minister; the delegation which included Sarvashri Ram Naik, Gopal Shetty, Bal Apte and Ramesh Medhekar discussed the charter of demands with Shri Shriprakash, Member (Traffic), Railway Board and Shri Gautam Sanyal, Officer on Special Duty with the Railway Minister.

The charter of demands includes:

- 1. MUTP-I :** During the Vajpayee Government, Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation (MRVC) was incorporated. Several projects amounting to Rs. 4,174.40 crore which were sanctioned under Mumbai Urban Transport Project - I (MUTP-I) were to be completed by 2006. The cumulative total expenditure upto 31st March 2009 is around Rs.2,800 crore. Provide Rs.1,374 crore and ensure that these projects are completed in 2009-10.
- 2. MUTP-II :** This has been also approved with a total outlay of Rs.5,300 crore in the year 2008-09. However, a meagre amount of Rs.10 crore is spent upto 31st March 2009. Provide minimum Rs.1,700 crore for 2009-10 and also ensure that the entire project is completed in 3 years.
- 3. Widening of Virar-Dahanu Road track :** A project of Rs.50 crore for widening Virar-Dahanu Road track needs top most priority. This project will enable local trains to run from Churchgate to Dahanu Road. As per the revised schedule, it was to be completed by June 2009. However, it has been again delayed. It must be completed on war-footing.

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4. **Procurement of new rakes** : The extended date for procurement of 129 twelve coach rakes worth Rs.1,751 crore is December 2009. However, only 51 rakes are received leaving a big number of 78. Some of the rakes which are supplied are also found defective. Special attention should be paid to monitor delivery of these rakes.
5. **Harbour Line** : Harbour Line of Central Railway needs to be upgraded. Proper provision should be made so that 12 coach rakes and also fast trains can run on this line.
6. **Vasai-Panvel shuttles** : Frequency of Vasai-Diva-Panvel shuttles should be increased and the service should be introduced from Virar instead of Vasai so that commuters coming from Dahanu Road are not required to change the trains twice at Virar and Vasai.
7. **Ladies' Special Trains** : One of the ladies' special train on Western Railway was cancelled under a false pretext that there was no response to the service. Two more ladies' specials, one on Western Railway and one on Central Railway should be started in peak hours in the morning and the evening.
8. **Konkan Railway** : To cater to the increased population in Western Railway areas from Borivli to Dahanu Road, new trains starting from Borivli and going via Vasai to Konkan, Goa and Karnatak, should be introduced.
9. **Railway Fare** : In the previous two Budgets, railway fare of second class was reduced. However, suburban commuters of Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai who constitute (95 Lakh) 78% of the daily 1.20 crore passengers were ignored. This step-motherly treatment should be stopped and they should also get benefit of fare reduction.
10. **Dialogue with commuters** : Commuters' organisations have to give more detailed suggestions. Therefore, the Minister should come to Mumbai and have dialogue with commuters' organisations.
11. **Janata Darbar for Bomb-blast victims** : In 2006, there were series of bomb-blasts in running trains on Western Railway, when many persons died or injured. While relief has been given, there are few cases still not attended. Therefore, the Minister should hold a Janata Darbar in Mumbai for those affected by bomb blasts.

Shri Naik expressed hope that the Railway Minister Smt. Mamata Banerjee would extend relief to the suburban commuters of Mumbai .

(Office Secretary)