

Press Information Bureau Release ID: 72441

Safety of Passengers to be the Highest Priority – Mukul Roy

Need to Focus on Internal Resource Generation – Muniyappa

Need for Better Passenger Amenities for Senior Citizens, Physically Challenged & Women – Solanki

The new Minister of State for Railways Shri Mukul Roy said that safety of the passengers should be the highest on Railways priority list. Addressing the conference of General Managers of all Zonal Railways and Production Units, here today, Shri Roy said that though the number of consequential accidents has been showing a downward trend and the trend has continued on the first two months of this fiscal, there is a need to further reduce these accidents. He said maintenance of Railways' assets, be it rolling stock or fixed assets, should get due attention as equipment failures, coupled with human failure could lead to disastrous consequences. Technological solutions would also have to be explored to ensure incident free movement, he said. Regarding passenger services, Shri Roy said that existing quality of our services would need substantial improvement and Railways should take all possible measures to ensure that train journeys are pleasant, punctual, comfortable and clean.

Shri Roy appealed the General Managers that the staff welfare measures announced in the Budget speech for 2011-12 receive the desired attention. He pointed out that the railwaymen are the backbone of our system and Railways need to continue harmonious industrial relations as being done in the past. The Minister emphasized that the Railways will continue to carry forward the practice of participative management.

Addressing the Conference, the Minister of State for Railways Shri K.H.Muniyappa said that Indian Railways are one of the pillars of India's infrastructure and play a very important role in the country's industry and economy. Shri Muniyappa said that Indian Railways have recently framed Vision 2020 which provides a definite roadmap, both short-term and long-term, for the future. This document projects that both freight and passenger traffic on Indian Railways are likely to double by 2020. Thus there is a need to create additional infrastructure and increase the rolling stock to meet these targets, he said.

Shri Muniyappa further said that present financial position of Railways demands an increase in the internal resource generation for financing the infrastructure requirement. He said that to achieve the estimated gross traffic receipts of Rs. 1,06,239 crore for the year 2011-12, there is a need for austerity and economy in expenditure so that sufficient surplus is generated. All out efforts must be made to increase the earnings through scrap disposal, publicity and commercial utilization of land. Shri Muniyappa called upon the General Managers of all the Zonal Railways to ensure the timely completion of target of 1075 kms new lines, 1017 kms of gauge conversion and 867 kms of doubling, fixed for the year 2011-12.

Speaking on the occasion the Minister of State for Railway Shri Bharatsinh Solanki said that security of the passengers should be a prime concern of Railways. The perceived security threats in Railways premises demand that the works sanctioned for providing Integrated Security System (to strengthen surveillance mechanism over sensitive and vulnerable stations), are completed on priority basis, he added. Railways should take necessary steps to improve the security for women travelers also.

Shri Solanki also said that Railways have to be more sensitive to the needs of the aged and the physically challenged persons who are availing our services. For this purpose, facilities like lifts and escalators, earmarked parking lots, standard ramps etc, should be provided at the stations in a phased manner, he added. In view of the year of 'Green Energy', the Minister said that Railways should also concentrate on renewable sources like solar, wind etc. wherever possible to meet energy requirement.

Chairman, Railway Board, Shri Vivek Sahai in the beginning of the General Managers Conference outlined the detailed agenda of the conference. He reviewed zone wise performance on each sector. He emphasized that it is necessary to meet the targets, to maintain close monitoring at the General Managers' level and to work towards improving earnings. The Railway Boards Members, Shri A. P. Mishra (Member Engineering), Shri Sanjiv Handa (Member Mechanical), Shri V. N. Tripathi (Member Staff), Shri Sudesh Kumar (Member Electrical) were also present on the occasion and addressed the conference on their respective sphere of activities.

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(Release ID :72441)