

LOK SABHA DEBATES

(English Version)

Eleventh Session
(Thirteenth Lok Sabha)



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LOK SABHA DEBATES

LOK SABHA

*Thursday, December 19, 2002/Agrahayana 28, 1924
(Saka)*

(The Lok Sabha met at Eleven of the Clock)

[MR. SPEAKER in the Chair]

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: The name of the Member will now be called by the Secretary-General for the purpose of taking oath or making and subscribing the affirmation.

11.00 hrs.

MEMBER SWORN

[English]

Shri Thakor Punjaji Sadaji (Mehsana)

11.03 hrs.

OBITUARY REFERENCE

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Members, I have to inform the House of the sad demise of one of our former colleagues, Shri N. Soundarajan.

Shri N. Soundarajan was a Member of Seventh and Eighth Lok Sabha from 1980 to 1989 representing Sivakasi Parliamentary Constituency of Tamil Nadu.

Shri Soundarajan was a member of Committee on Petitions during 1980-81 and Committee on Environment and Forests and Committee on Estimates during 1989. He was also a member of Consultative Committee constituted under the Punjab State Legislature (Delegation of Powers) Act, 1984 during 1985 and National Children's Board from 1986 to 1989.

Shri Soundarajan was an agriculturist and advocate by profession. He worked relentlessly for uplift of the poor and was instrumental in the formation of a number of cooperative societies. He was the Honorary President, Chinnakkampathi Small Match Producers' Cooperative

Society, Sattur. He was also the President of Milk Producers' Cooperative Society, Uppathur.

He was a member of Indian Parliamentary Delegation to Seventy-Sixth Inter-Parliamentary Conference at Buenos Aires, Argentina, in October, 1986.

Shri Soundarajan passed away on 20 November, 2002 at Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu at the young age of 54, after a brief illness.

We deeply mourn the loss of this friend and I am sure the House would join me in conveying our condolences to the bereaved family.

The House may now stand in silence for a short while as a mark of respect to the memory of the departed soul.

11.04 hrs.

(The Members then stood in silence for a short while.)

11.05 hrs.

RE: TEHELKA ENQUIRY COMMISSION

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, we have given a notice to suspend the Question Hour. What will be the fate of the Tehelka Inquiry Commission?...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: You can take up this issue after the Question Hour. What is the difficulty?

...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE (Bolpur): Sir, the issue is so important. This Session is coming to an end tomorrow. We feel that it is our bounden duty to raise this matter in this House because the Government is keeping totally silent about it. We have no information. As usual, in most of the important matters in the country, the Government keeps itself away from the House. The Opposition is treated with a total callousness. By that approach, they are trying to keep many important matters and scams under the carpet. But we have a duty also to perform. Sir, I seek your kind indulgence on a matter like Tehelka regarding which the Government felt that it was desirable and necessary to have a Commission appointed,

and that Commission has not completed its job. Why it did not and could not—I am not going into it. The country knows. But the issue is, what will happen now? We have seen today that the hon. Chief Justice of India has declined to appoint any new judge. Then, can it die a natural death?

This is an issue which has created tremendous concern amongst the right-thinking members of this society because it relates to Defence matters. How Defence purchases are made are directly involved in this.

Sir, important heads have rolled already. This is a serious matter as to how the media has also been treated in this country. When some people in the media take up the courage of exposing such type of corruption at the highest level, they are being hounded any they are almost being decimated. Today, Tehelka have almost closed down. Cases one after another have been filed against them. Their financiers are put under arrest. I am not going into the rightness or the wrongness of this arrest but the point is that some decision has to be taken. Who will take this decision?

Sir, when we had earlier demanded JPC, the Government's response was, "No, we shall appoint a Commission of Inquiry under the Act." Now, it has entered into a fiasco. Therefore, we demand that a Joint Parliamentary Committee should be appointed immediately to go into this. Let them take it up on the basis of the material that has already come in. Otherwise, we will take it that the Government does not want this scam to be exposed and the guilty person to be punished and they want to protect this person. We cannot be a party to this.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, Shri Jaipal Reddy. We are only discussing a limited issue as to why the Question Hour be suspended any why this particular issue be given a priority. I would not be happy to permit you to make a long speech on this. You can just put your point.

...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES OF THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): Sir, they can raise it in the 'Zero Hour'...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: That is what I am saying.

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY (Miryalguda): Mr. Speaker, Sir, I associate myself with every proposition that Shri

Somnath Chatterjee has propounded. Today, this investigation is up in the air. Shri Somnath Chatterjee has referred to the report that the Chief Justice of India has refused to nominate a judge. This is a report that has appeared in the Press. Should the House know about it or not? Should the Government keep the House in the dark? That is the question. The attitude of the Government clearly discloses that it is not interested in pursuing the investigation at all.

I may recall that we, from the beginning, thought that this particular Tehelka expose could be investigated only by JPC and no other body. It is never too late. JPC can be appointed even now and JPC can take up the thread from where they have been left by the Venkataswami Commission with a view to expediting the process. Therefore, there is a need for the Government to make a statement. Now that the House is adjourning *sine die* tomorrow, there is an imperative necessity for the Government to clarify its position. I do not think the Government can be allowed to drag its feet. I do not think the Government can be allowed to hide its face like an ostrich in the sand of shame.

[Translation]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA (South Delhi): Mr. Speaker, Sir, the issue of suspending Question Hour has been raised here. I feel that there is no need to do so. I would like to clarify the situation. A mention has been made regarding Supreme Court. It has been published in newspapers that as no judge is ready to head the commission that's why no Judge could be appointed. The persons who are responsible for it, are raising the question...(Interruptions)

[English]

The entire opposition is responsible...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: We are not discussing the matter. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Is he replying on behalf of the Government.

[Translation]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: We have listened to them patiently. Now they should also listen to our views patiently...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: How can he say that the Opposition is responsible?

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Is he replying on behalf of the Government?

MR. SPEAKER: No. He is not replying on behalf of the Government.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: Chief Justice of Supreme Court had nominated a judge and that judge was appointed as head of the Commission. Later on aspersions were cast on his integrity. It was stated that he has been influenced. Aspersions were cast on Chief Justice of Supreme Court as well as the judge appointed for this commission. In such circumstances how a sincere judge can put himself in such difficulties...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI S. JAIPAL REDDY: We have not cast any aspersion on any retired judge or otherwise. We would like to categorically clarify that. We have said that repeatedly...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: I blame the opposition for this situation. Opposition do not want to get this issue decided. They want to keep this issue pending for two years...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: What is the problem for them to refer the matter to J.P.C.(Interruptions)

[Translation]

DR. VIJAY KUMAR MALHOTRA: I will take only two minutes. They want to keep levelling wrong allegations for two years...(Interruptions) They do not recognize the Minister of Defence. It is not a democratic way. They blamed the judge under certain conspiracy due to which later on that judge resigned...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: There is a conspiracy. We have not levelled any charges...(Interruptions) He is distorting the facts...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Please let him put his views.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. Malhotraji you should also take your seat.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Why then the Government is not ready to constitute a JPC...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. You have not given notice on this issue. I am on my legs. Please maintain discipline.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER. Hon. Members are aware that the Tehelka issue was discussed in the House.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Raghuvanshji, Please take your seat. You are in Panel at Chairmen.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have understood the anxiety of the Opposition Parties. It is because of the news, that appeared in the Press, they want to know whether a new judge will be appointed or that a Parliamentary Committee on this issue will be appointed. You have raised the issue, I have heard you carefully. I am going to permit you to speak on the issue again in the 'Zero Hour'. In the meantime, I will ask the Government that some responsible Minister should come on this particular issue and make a Statement during the 'Zero Hour', not now. Let me go to the Question Hour, now. During the 'Zero Hour', you can go ahead with the query that you want to raise. Please sit down.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Please also allow us to speak...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: You will also be given opportunity to speak.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajganj, Bihar): Please listen to my point...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I will listen to your views at that time. I can understand your sentiments on this issue. I request you all that several members have given notices for Question Hour, so after Question Hour the concerned Minister will reply to the queries on this subject. It will be better and more useful if you raise your points before the Minister. Now you please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question relates to Leader of Samata Party, the Minister of Defence Shri George Fernandes...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: That is why, I am going to allow you to speak on this issue.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to say one thing, we accept their demand of constituting JPC but along with that...*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: This, I am not taking on record.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: I am removing it from the record.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: See, I have not taken it on record, why do you want to unnecessarily speak?

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: I would not take it on record. I have removed from record whatever you said.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Nothing is going on record. Why are you worried.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have disallowed all the notices. During the 'Zero Hour' you will be allowed to speak. Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

11.17 hrs.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

[English]

Creation of Fund for Clear Statutory Dues

*423. SHRI⁺ NARESH PUGLIA:
SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to float a dedicated fund to ensure clearance of statutory dues of crores of rupees payable by sick public sector undertakings (PSUs);

(b) if so, the details of the schemes through which the funds would be generated;

(c) the extent to which these sick PSUs would be benefited;

(d) whether guidelines have also been issued to introduce a system of accountability in sick public sector units; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the table of the House.

* Not recorded.

Statement

(a) to (c) There is no proposal at present to float a dedicated fund at national level for clearance of statutory dues payable by sick public sector undertakings.

(d) and (e) Sick Central Public Sector Undertakings are referred to Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) under provisions of Sick Industrial Companies Act, 1985. Schemes for revival/rehabilitation of sick CPSUs are drawn up under the supervision and direction of the BIFR who are authorized to monitor the implementation of such schemes as per specific provisions and procedure under SICA. Further, the administrative Ministries also undertake periodic review of the performance of sick CPSUs.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister that in spite of recommendation by the Ministry, the officials of CCI have not taken any action on the eco-friendly proposal of PTPS, a unit of NTPC, during the last one year and they are bent upon its closure. I would also like to know that whether it is not a fact that investment of CCI is on decline for the last few months whereas expenditure being incurred on officials has increased. Officials have flouted instructions issued by the Government and have spent huge money likely blue-chip company and the Government have not imposed any restrictions on them. Whether it is a fact...(*Interruptions*)

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: This Question does not relate to the main question...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

If the hon. Member wants to ask the question he can give a separate notice.

MR. SPEAKER: You can ask your supplementary, now.

[*Translation*]

SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I would like to know whether wrong decision by the Government and some higher officials of CCI is the main reason behind the downfall of CCI for which the employees of the company are suffering. Employees have not received salary for last six months whereas officials are spending millions of rupees for their luxuries. Whether the Government have taken any action in this regard? Whether any attention has been paid for

protecting interests of the employees? What measures are being taken by the Government in this regard?...(*Interruptions*)

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Members want to know about CCI. I would like to say that CCI is under disinvestment process at present, our two units have also been included therein. Salary is being given to employees of CCI but due to financial constraints, PSUs of CCI are unable to give salary to their employees they are suppose to give salary from their internal resources. Thus, we often pay salary from budgetary support...(*Interruptions*)

MR. SPEAKER: Not always, but sometimes. You are not aware of it but I know.

...(*Interruptions*)

DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA: Sometimes we pay, we had to pay two three times...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Sir, through you, I would like to submit that around 76 Public Sector Undertakings of the Central Government are on the verge of closure in the entire country and the question of livelihood of thousands of labourers is involved in it. Keeping in view the situation of our country during the last four-five years, it seems that the Union Government is not serious about it, and Mr. Speaker, Sir, you are well aware of it since you have also headed that ministry. After repeatedly raising this issue in the House, the hon. Prime Minister constituted a committee under the Chairmanship of Shri K.C. Pant comprising the hon. Minister of Finance, the hon. Minister of Industries and the hon. Labour Minister. These 73 public sector undertakings owe an amount of Rs. 2 thousand 70 crore payable to their labourers under the Voluntary Retirement Schemes and as salaries. Keeping all these things in view, the hon. Minister, in his reply, has said—

[*English*]

There is no proposal at present to float a dedicated fund at national level for clearance of statutory dues payable by sick public sector undertakings.

[*Translation*]

He has given a completely negative reply. Labourers are working in these public sector undertakings for the last many years and corruption is rampant there due to the wrong policies of the Union Government. Labourers are not getting their wages and the amount of VRS as the Government is not serious in this regard. I would like to ask the hon. Minister as to when this outstanding

amount of rupees 2 thousand 70 crore of the labourers in these public sector undertakings would be paid to them. Moreover, the Government have collected millions of rupees by way of its disinvestment policy. Are they contemplating to pay VRS money and workers wages out of this fund? Second part of my question is—whether the Government would constitute a Joint Parliamentary Committee to probe and find a solution to the sickness of the Public Sector Undertakings.

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): Sir, he is very right in saying that there is lack of Specific dedication. But he is not right in saying that the Government is not serious. There are 71 such PSUs whose amount of Statutory Reduce, i.e., rupees 1627 crore stands outstanding. It is because of the serious approach of the Government that they have been given a budgetary support of Rs. 4827 crore during the last five years and also have been given rupees 107.57 crore for statutory reduce. Second thing that I wish to say, Sir, is that you have also been Minister of this Ministry. We have received the status report of 68 companies through the BIFR, and according to them—

[English]

Under Enquiry 9, draft scheme circulated 4, revival scheme sanctioned 17, failed and re-opened 1, winding up notices issued 12, winding up recommended 18, dismissed as non-maintainable 5, declared no longer sick 2.

[Translation]

We are trying and have given revival package.

Third thing is that he has talked about the non-serious attitude of the Government. I want to say that GOM was constituted in the year 2000. A meeting of the Secretaries was held when you were the hon. Minister in this department. Officers should take action by attaching property. And as per this, the total number of units is 232. The total amount after taking action comes to rupees 478 crore and the amount recovered is rupees 125.99 crore. BIFR has 106 units and the amount recovered is rupees 265.65 crore. The amount in 9 court cases is rupees 18 crore.

In 117 units, the realisable arrears received from 117 units are Rs. 194.74 crore. Total number of Members i.e. employees is around 2 lakh 50,000 but in all the statutory dues, those of the Indian Airlines being less are calculated at Rs. 2 lakh 35 thousand. Action has been taken against 23 persons under section 8, three persons are being prosecuted. 45 accounts have been sealed under section

8(F) and action has been taken against 45 persons for misappropriation under section 406-409. Action has also been taken for misappropriation against another 10 persons. Now details of the cases for which permission for prosecution has been sought—In HMT these are five suits against whom permission has been sought, then there is instrumentation, permission has also been sought for prosecution in 5 cases in Hindustan Copper Limited. There are four cases of C.P. 25 issued and 12 cases of CP. 1 issued. The Government, besides attaching property, is also taking action against them for prosecution. We want that the labourers should be protected without any hindrance. You are very well aware of the statutory dues as you are yourself a trade union leader. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you were also a leader in that capacity and are still continuing to be so. Outstanding amount of any person is paid back with interest. It is right that the amount of payment required to be made was not made immediately, but the Government is making efforts for a budgetary support. Sir, whenever a case is filed in BIFR, it continues for years together, as the disposal of the case becomes difficult without it...(Interruptions)

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Sir, I have not received a reply to 'Part B' of my question. I have asked whether the Government would appoint a Joint Parliamentary Committee keeping in mind all these facts.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: A Committee has been appointed comprising a group of Ministers. It has been revised, and a final recommendation would be made within one or one and a half month...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, the question of the payments of statutory dues to the employees and workers of Central Public Sector Undertakings has been raised in this House a number of times.

Sir, today the total amount is more than Rs. 2,000 crore that includes the payment of VRS, the gratuity and other statutory dues. The statutory dues includes gratuity, Provident Fund and also the salaries.

Sir, yesterday we raised the issue of workers of NJMC committing suicide. We also raised the issue of workers belonging to the Burn Standard committing suicide.

When will the Group of Ministers going to examine this issue, and take expeditious action in regard to payment of statutory dues? The Group of Ministers was constituted in the month of August.

I would like to know whether any direction has been given to the Administrative Ministry to clear the statutory dues of the workers who have been retired and who have taken VRS, without further delay. What action, the Administrative Ministry, particularly the Ministry of Heavy Industries has taken in regard to early clearance of statutory dues of the retired as well as serving Public Sector employees and workers?

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, there can be some difference in figures, but otherwise, Rs. 1627 crore are outstanding. We can give the VRS amount immediately, there is no problem in that so far as statutory dues are concerned, I have just now said that the final meeting of the group of Ministers is being held and the entire decision would be taken in that only. As on date, all the administrative ministries are paying their statutory dues by selling their assets or properties. Cases have been referred to the BIFR also...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Why the cases regarding the payment of gratuity and Provident Fund are being referred to BIFR? What BIFR will do in regard to payment of gratuity and Provident Fund?

[*Translation*]

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the hon. Member knows that all such things are included in the revival package, and that is why the difference is there. Efforts are being made to pay money by selling properties and assets where revival package is required...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: It would be done after they die...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI A.C. JOS: Sir, the hon. Minister has conveniently placed the statement on the Table saying that all the sick industries are referred to the BIFR. The BIFR is a sort of funeral place for all the sick industries because they have been pending there for five or six years. In many industries, the salaries are not paid to the workers. You are talking about rehabilitation package and other things. But what about the salaries of the workers? The salaries of the workers are equally the statutory obligation of the management. The workers cannot wait till the rehabilitation package comes. Just like Provident Fund and other statutory obligations, the

salary can be paid to the workers pending BIFR and the rehabilitation package. Sir, through you, I put this question to the hon. Minister. Will the Government be ready to pay the salary of the workers pending the rehabilitation package?

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Mr. Speaker, Sir, normally salary is paid under the resources. Salary of two-three companies is yet to be paid for the last six months, but payment to others is being made. We wish that the workers should get maximum salary. If he has any specific case, he may tell me, I will take due care of it.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: The hon. Minister has said that if there is any specific case, it should be brought to his knowledge. An HMT company and its sister concern companies are located in my constituency which manufacture watches, tractors and also make milk products. The disinvestment of the HMT Unit in my constituency was taking place, which we stopped through agitation. This company has also earned profits. It is located on a 25 acres land. If tractors are manufactured in the other unit of HMT, it would also earn profits and in this way, the HMT corporation can revive. I would like to ask whether the Government have any such scheme in mind?

Secondly, hon. Minister has said about BIFR that it takes 10 years in deciding the case. Whether your Ministry would submit any proposal to Finance Ministry seeking to fix the time limit for BIFR to take decision within one or two years. Will you give any suggestion in this regard?

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: Sir, there is no proposal to close down Aurangabad unit. I have myself visited it and we are trying to improve its functioning. Efforts are also being made to bring out this PSU of BIFR ambit. The issue related to tribunal is involved in the competition law passed in Lok Sabha. Hence, it won't be taken in BIFR.

SHRI CHANDRAKANT KHAIRE: There should be a time limit for judgement.

SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL: It would be fixed while framing the new law.

[*English*]

Capacity Utilisation of Refineries in North East

*424. SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the refineries in North-East have been running below their installed capacity;

(b) if so, whether the Government have a proposal to increase exploration of North East Oil fields so that the refineries may run to their full capacity for their survival and economic viability; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps Government propose to take for full utilisation of the installed capacity of these refineries?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the post administered pricing regime, viability of North East refineries has been adversely affected on account of their sub-economic size, non-availability of crude oil for full capacity utilization and low demand of products in the region.

The following measures have been taken to expeditiously explore oil and gas and increase oil and gas production in the North East region:—

- (i) To accelerate exploration through New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP), which provides attractive fiscal package and contract terms to the investors.
- (ii) To undertake Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) and Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) Projects to increase recovery factor and arrest decline of crude oil production from the producing fields.
- (iii) To increase workover operations to improve production.
- (iv) To improve Reservoir Management to optimize production from existing fields.
- (v) To address environmental and other operational issues to increase exploration and production efforts.

To improve the viability of North East refineries, the Government have given 50% excise duty concession on the production of these refineries. Further, sourcing of low sulphur crude oil from outside the region for processing in these refineries is under consideration.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Sir, the hon. Minister in his reply has admitted that because of various

reasons like the sub-economic size, the viability of the refineries of the North-Eastern region has been adversely affected.

I personally feel that indigenous crude oil would be the best solution to the problem in the North-Eastern region. In the North-Eastern region, there is a great potential for getting crude oil. There are oil resources in the yet-to-be-explored fields of the North-Eastern region, which are logistically difficult areas, with a very deep horizon reach at a level of 5,500 metres and of a smaller size.

The identification of such deep-seated reservoirs through seismic survey and testing of such deep-seated reservoirs by exploratory drilling would require both high technology and cost intensive input. The cost of drilling would increase because of the complex and difficult geological setting and depth of the well. For that reason, the Oil India Limited and the ONGC are not very much interested in the intensification of the exploration activities in the frontier's logistically difficult areas.

The IOR and EOR activities in the oil fields would help the saving of foreign exchange as well as the flow of royalty to the State Government, which is one of the major income sources. In view of the increasing import bill, which is more than Rs. 45,000 crore, I would like to know whether the Government would consider some more incentives to the Oil India Limited and the ONGC to explore in these difficult and deep horizon areas in the North-Eastern region. I would also like to know by which time the hon. Minister would make available the Ravva crude oil to the North-Eastern refineries.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, let me first correct the wrong impression the hon. Member has given. Our imports are not of Rs. 45,000 crore, but our imports last year were Rs. 78,000 crore. So far as the proposal to increase exploration and production is concerned, we have evolved a new exploration licensing policy. Under that policy, in the second round, we have given one block; and under the third round, we have given four blocks. so, five more blocks are given for exploration.

So far as the additional amount to be provided to the North-East is concerned, let me give only two figures. In the Ninth Five Year Plan, the total outlay for refineries in the North-East and other areas was Rs. 4,500 crore. Against that, we are proposing in the Tenth Five Year Plan—which would be passed, I hope, tomorrow by the NDC—Rs. 6,688 crore. This means an additional outlay of Rs. 2,200 crore or 50 per cent. If I have to compare this with the last 40 years, the total amount spent was

Rs. 12,367 crore and this allocation of Rs. 6,688 crore would mean it is above 50 per cent of whatever has been spent over the last 40 or 45 years. We are trying our best.

So far as the reference, which the hon. Member has made about the Ravva crude oil, at present, in the North-East, the production is not sufficient. The installed capacity is more. It is 7 million metric tonnes. So, we have to bring some crude from outside. We are examining this proposal. If we bring Ravva crude oil, to that extent, more crude oil would be available for processing. This issue is under consideration.

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: The hon. Minister of Petroleum has personally visited the North-Eastern region and has taken a keen interest in mitigating the difficulties of the small refineries in the North-Eastern region.

In the reply, the Hon. Minister has mentioned about the 50 per cent excise relief to the North-Eastern region. We are thankful for that but one injustice has been done. The excise relief for the Numaligarh refinery was made applicable as part of the new industrial policy, consequent upon the declaration of the hon. Prime Minister in the presence of all the Governors and Chief Ministers of the North-Eastern States on the 21st and 22nd January, where the hon. Minister of Petroleum, the hon. Minister of Finance, the hon. Minister of Defence and the Deputy-Chairman of the Planning Commission were present.

Sir, the Numaligarh Refinery has got 100 per cent excise duty relief for one year. That was declared for ten years. But, all of a sudden, the hon. Minister of Finance has reduced the excise duty relief from 100 per cent to 50 per cent. This is giving a very wrong message to the people of the North-East region.

MR. SPEAKER: Will you please ask your question?

SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: I want to know whether the Government will consider immediately to restore the 100 per cent excise duty relief to the Numaligarh Refinery as declared by the hon. Prime Minister.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, let me assure the hon. Member that it is not that the Government will consider; but the Government is presently considering as to how to ensure that this 100 per cent excise duty rebate will be given. The issue is under consideration and I hope the issue will be resolved satisfactorily.

SHRI P.H. PANDIAN: Thank you, Sir. The ONGC is a plum public sector undertaking functioning well. Thousands of employees sought the VRS scheme to be implemented. I want to know whether there is any proposal with the Government to implement the VRS scheme for the officers who opt for this VRS scheme or not.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, this issue hardly comes out of the main Question. But we are examining the ONGC's proposal about VRS. What has happened in ONGC is that for one officer there are two junior persons. So, the percentage of officers is becoming very high. That is why this proposal of ONGC for VRS is being considered by the Government.

SHRI K.A. SANGTAM: Sir, just now the hon. Minister of Petroleum has stated that due to shortage of crude oil, they are likely to import crude oil from outside. I would like to contradict this that the Oil and Natural Gas Commission has found a huge reserve of crude oil on the foothills of Nagaland, bordering Assam. I want to also remind the hon. Minister that the private land owners who have these reserves in their land have agreed to the State Government taking a small commission to allow the exploration. Will the hon. Minister of Petroleum and Natural Gas inform the House whether the Government is likely to take up this exploration and extraction of the crude oil in the foothills of Nagaland?

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, the House is aware and the country is also aware that because of the problem in Nagaland, there has been a blockade since 1994. Yes, to some extent efforts are being made to ensure that our people go there and try to explore and produce crude, and in that direction we are trying our best. But as of now, much things are yet to be done before we could start operation there. Only last month some officers who had gone there were killed. Without creating much difficulty, if it is successful, certainly we can get more crude from the North-Eastern States.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER: Somaiyaji, ask your question.

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Not now, one minute later.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: No, that cannot be permitted. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmuni to ask now.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, since the hon. Minister has just now stated that our present import bill

is Rs. 78,000 crore, will the hon. Minister inform the House whether the Ministry has any perspective plan and vision for the Tenth Plan period to the extent that the import will be reduced and to the extent our self-sufficiency in our own indigenous production will rise? I want to know whether in the light of this, it is a fact that ONGC has recently discovered a new deposit in Sundarbans in West Bengal after great effort for the last so many years and if so I want to know when will the operations begin.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Again, going out of North-East is a problem for me. I cannot say with figures, but I must say that we are trying to reduce our import. By this new exploration licensing policy, we have given 70 blocks in the last three years against 22 blocks in the previous ten years. We are also starting ethanol blending in petrol from 1st January, 2003.

The five per cent ethanol blending will start in nine major sugarcane producing States. We have also given CBM blocks. So far as the question about Sunderbans, which he has asked, is concerned, I will have to check up. I will inform the Member by a separate letter about it.

DR. NITISH SENGUPTA: I would like to tell that in view of the insufficiency of the crude from the North-East, not to speak of Barauni Refinery, even Bongaigaon Refinery is not being served by crude from the North-East. The whole thing in both the refineries is being conducted by a reverse flow of imported crude from Haldia. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether there is any proposal to import crude from Myanmar to feed the refineries in the North-East.

SHRI RAM NAIK: So far as our efforts with Myanmar are concerned, we are trying to export some of our diesel and petrol. We have also taken one block there for exploration. So, we will make those efforts. We are continuing with those efforts. As soon as we get some oil in the block which has been given to us in Myanmar, we will try to do that.

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV: Sir, there is infiltration in the North-East. here is also infiltration on the question concerning the North-East...*(Interruptions)* The hon. Minister has replied but I would like to know specifically about one question. In my Constituency, Silchar, the drilling is going on and we have been told by local officials that the outcome is very promising. In view of the shortage of crude oil, is he considering commercial drilling in Silchar? This is my question.

SHRI RAM NAIK: Sir, I have personally not visited his constituency. So, I do not know which area he is actually referring to. But I think, I will go there one day and try to see. If more oil is available anywhere, certainly we will do it. But exploration has to be done first and then only, commercial production can be started. One day, we can go together and see what best can be done.

MR. SPEAKER: Q. No. 425. Shri A. Narendra.

SHRI A. NARENDRA: Sir, Q. No. 425.

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Sir, Border Roads Organisation has so far constructed a total of 222 permanent bridges...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, we strongly feel that till there is a JPC constituted, we do not recognise the Minister. So, we are staging a walk out.

11.47 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi and some other hon. Members left the House.)

...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Let the questioner get his reply properly.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is the question of country's security and the country's youth sacrifice their lives for its defence. The way in which the opposition has been behaving with the hon. Defence Minister for the last four-five months is highly objectionable...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHIVAJI MANE: Mr. Speaker, Sir, we would also not listen to the leader of the opposition in view of their such behaviour...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER: Please resume your seat.

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT: Mr. Speaker, Sir, the opposition is behaving in an undemocratic manner. It is not right. It is intolerable...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have permitted the hon. Minister to give reply to the question which has been raised by Shri A. Narendra.

*...(Interruptions)**[English]*

MR. SPEAKER: Let me make it clear that I have been discussing on this issue with the Opposition for a long time. This issue can be sorted out by mutual discussion. In the meantime, the Minister is replying and you all must co-operate with the Minister. Those who do not want to listen to him.....

*...(Interruptions)**[Translation]*

SHRIMATI RENU KUMARI: I want to know from you as to what action you contemplate to take against the opposition for their undemocratic act...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Do you want a reply from the Minister or do you not want a reply from the Minister?

*...(Interruptions)**[Translation]*

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Mr. Speaker, Sir, it is a very serious matter. We won't listen to the leader of the opposition...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

Completion of Bridges

*425. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the bridges on border roads sanctioned by the Government and the Director General, Border Roads Organisation have not since been completed even after many years;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for abnormal delay;

(c) the steps taken by the Government to complete these bridges; and

(d) the time by which these bridges are likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Border Roads Organisation (BRO) has so far constructed a total of 222 permanent bridges. Presently 89 bridges are at various stages of construction. Out of these, the following 7 bridges have been delayed beyond 5 years:-

Passighat, Lohit and Tawangchu in Arunachal Pradesh; Chenab, Woyil and Kijipora in Jammu & Kashmir; Khurdangpo in Himachal Pradesh.

The main reasons for delay are inaccessibility, extreme weather conditions, frequent floods, difficulty in sinking of foundation wells in the river beds, militancy and abandonment of work by contractors.

(c) Construction of all bridges is being monitored closely for their early completion. The steps taken by BRO include proper site selection, on the job training for officers and subordinates, introduction of computer aided designs etc.

(d) Except in case of Woyil and Kijipora bridges, where construction is held up because of court cases, all efforts are being made to complete the other bridges at the earliest. No definite time-frame can be laid down due to difficulties expressed in the reply at para (a) & (b) above.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Mr. Defence Minister, Please reply to the question.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Now all of you please resume your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Please take your seat. How can you disturb the Minister?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, * as no matter in that regard has been raised in the House due to which the credibility of the House is declining. Second number was that a letter came here....(Interruptions)

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Speaker, Sir, they are not letting us to listen. You should not allow those to speak who have staged a walkout today if they want to speak but now when hon. Minister is speaking you should let us listen...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Hon. Minister is replying. The Members want to hear his reply in the House. I haven't given you the permission so you should resume your seat. The reply of the question would be given during the Question Hour. You can speak on this subject later on during the Zero Hour. How can I permit you in the Question Hour. Those who want to listen the reply should sit and those who do not should go out.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: It is a serious matter. Today they have walked out, we want to listen but they are not allowing us to listen...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: They should let you listen, I fully agree with your submission.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: If it is so you should not allow them to speak when they come...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Those who do not want to listen should go outside. If they want to listen then they will have to listen to hon. Minister.

[English]

Yes, Mr. Minister, go ahead with your reply.

[Translation]

You raise the question in Zero Hour if you want to.

[English]

SHRI AJIT KUMAR PANJA: Last week, Mr. Speaker, Sir, I raised the point. There is unholy alliance with CPI(M) and Congress.

MR. SPEAKER: I have not permitted you to speak, please sit down.

...(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Panja, I am not going to allow anything else at this stage, please sit down. You may go outside and ask them as to why they have walked out and then tell the House about it.

SHRI A. NARENDRA: Sir, the Minister has given the written reply to me. I want to ask my first supplementary.

I understand that the Border Roads Organisation has been entrusted with construction of roads along the Indo-Bangladesh border by the Ministry of Home Affairs. If it is so, I want to know what is the present status of the project and when the construction is likely to be completed.

I want to know whether the Border Roads Organisation has drawn up a time-bound action plan for improving, double-laning and maintenance of National Highway No. 44, which is the only Highway linking Tripura with the rest of the country.

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, to answer these specific cases and their progress, at the moment, I would need a notice.

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: Sir, thank you very much for giving me this opportunity...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI A. NARENDRA: I have not asked my second Supplementary.

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: Shri Bwiswmuthiary, would you please wait for a minute? His question has remained incomplete.

SHRI A. NARENDRA: Sir, I have been given to understand that out of the total length of 904 kilometers of National Highway No. 52, about 567 kilometers is in bad condition. What steps are being taken by the BRO to improve the condition of the roads so that this Highway in our boarder area is kept in good condition for transportation, particularly for Defence purposes?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Wherever the BRO is in charge of the work, they will be doing their work. Whichever specific question the hon. Member has in his mind—as I said in the answer to the first question—I would not be able to answer about every specific road and bridge and the status of those roads and bridges unless I get a Notice.

* Not recorded.

MR. SPEAKER: Rightly so.

[Translation]

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: Mr. Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak during Question Hour today. Several years ago, the Government of India and the Assam Government had entrusted BRO with the responsibility of constructing some roads and bridges in the Bodoland Autonomous region. However, that work is yet to be completed for want of adequate funds. Hence I would like to know from the hon. Minister the reason for not completing the work of constructing bridges and pathways in that area? Bodoland is a very backward region. Terrorism is creating serious situation in that region. However on the part of Indian Government neither the Ministry of Defence nor the Home Ministry nor PWD of the Assam Government have undertaken the work of constructing these roads and bridges...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: If you want a reply, then you have to be brief and specific. Please sit down now. Time will be over and you will not get a reply from the Minister. Please sit down now.

[Translation]

SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to by when the work of constructing the roads and bridges would be completed there.

[English]

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: Sir, the hon. Member says that for want of funds, a particular project in his area, that is in Bodoland, has not been taken up. I do not have any information of such a project. I shall certainly find out which that project is. It is because for want of funds I do not believe that in the North-East or for that matter in the entire Himalayan region, where the Border Roads Organisation normally functions, any project has been withheld.

Sir, if there are delays, then they are essentially because of reasons that are not within the control of the BRO and the Ministry of Defence. It could be for weather conditions there, for avalanches there and for snow conditions. In addition to these, there is also the condition of insurgency and other kinds of problems that the workers, who work in that region, have to face. We lose, on an average, 300 to 400 workers every year. They are

killed either by the insurgents or they fall prey to the vagaries of weather there. Our men are doing the best possible work there.

SHRI K. MALAISAMY: Sir, the fact that there is an abnormal delay in the execution of work has been conceded in the reply of the Minister. A beautiful bureaucratic reply has been given. The reasons for the delay and why the Government could not do it, all are given in the reply. But what is surprising to note in the reply is that 'no definite time-frame can be laid down'. We are very sorry to learn about that. Even in an act of God we are able to fix up a time-frame.

12.00 hrs.

If he is not able to give a definite time frame, can he afford to give a tentative time frame at least for each and every project that is delayed for years and years?

SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES: I said earlier that in the region where the Border Roads Organisation works, I do not believe that anyone can afford to give a definite timetable or even a tentative timetable. You take on the work in a certain situation. Having taken on that work, when you have reached a certain level, you suddenly discover that the soil conditions are such that no work is possible in that direction. You run into insurgency situations. In the North-East, roads are blocked for days and months on end. In these situations, for anyone to get up and say, 'I am giving you such a tentative date or such a definite date', would not be right. When a project is prepared, a certain date for completing it is invariably written into that contract, or written into that Memorandum of Understanding. However, it is not easy in the North-Eastern and in the Himalayan regions, to stay by any kind of commitment that is given.

MR. SPEAKER: Question No. 426, Shri G. Putta Swamy Gowda.—Not present.

[English]

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Entry of Foreign Lawyers

*422. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to amend the Bar Council rules to allow the entry of foreign lawyers;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Law Commission of India has urged the Government not to make drastic changes in the Bar Council rules;

(d) whether advice of the Law Commission has been taken into consideration while finalising the proposed amendment to the Bar Council rules; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Bar Council of India has been empowered under the Advocates Act, 1961 to frame rules for discharging its functions under the Act, which can be amended by the said Council only. The Bar Council of India has informed that it has not made any rules regarding the entry of foreign lawyers in the country and the Council has been strongly opposing the entry of foreign lawyers. Nevertheless, under the existing provisions of the Advocates Act, 1961, a foreign national is entitled to be enrolled as an advocate in India only if citizens of India are permitted to practise law in his country and that if any citizen of India is prevented from practising the profession of law in any country or is subjected to unfair discrimination in that country, no subject of such a country is entitled to practise the profession of law in India. Thus, foreign nationals are permitted to practise law in India on reciprocal basis only. However, the Act does not provide for practice of the profession of law in India by any foreign national who is not enrolled as an advocate under the Act.

(c) to (e) The Law Commission of India has undertaken study of the Advocates Act, 1961 and has circulated a Working Paper on its review to various institutions, including the Bar Council of India, for comments. The Law Commission has yet not finalised its report.

Joint Venture with States

*426. SHRI G. PUTTA SWAMY GOWDA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government propose to have joint ventures with State Governments in order to complete the pending projects on cost share basis;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of States, which have readily accepted the proposal to form such a joint venture; and

(d) the action taken by the Union Government to form such joint ventures?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. The State Governments of Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh came forward with proposals for the formation of joint venture with Ministry of Railways, Government of India to undertake suburban transport projects in Mumbai, four identified rail projects in Karnataka and Multimodal Transport System in Hyderabad respectively. Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) were signed and thereafter joint venture companies have been formed with Government of Maharashtra and Karnataka. Action on formation of joint venture company with Andhra Pradesh Government will be taken on receipt of the Detailed Feasibility and Investment Banking report being prepared by the Consultant. However, the work on Phase-I of the project in Hyderabad is in progress on 50:50 cost sharing basis between the Ministry of Railways and the Government of Andhra Pradesh. In addition, the projects are being undertaken on cost sharing basis with City and Industrial Development Corporation of Maharashtra Limited (CIDCO) in Maharashtra, with Government of Jharkhand, Government of Karnataka, Government of Tamil Nadu and Government of West Bengal.

[Translation]

Violation of International Air Space by Pakistan

*427. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether incidents of violation of international air space norms by the Pakistani military aircraft along the Indo-Pak border are increasing;

(b) if so, the number of times these norms were violated during 2002, month-wise; and

(c) the action initiated by Indian side upon this violation?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) There has been no increase in the incidents of violation of Indian airspace by Pakistani aircraft. A total of seven violations have occurred so far during the year 2002. Five of these were in January and two in February.

Appropriate air defence procedures in vogue were taken to tackle these violations.

*[English]***Royalty on Crude Oil**

*428. SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI
CHIKHALIA:
SHRI SAVSHIBHAI MAKWANA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether recommendations of the committee set up by the Government to devise a new scheme of royalty on crude oil has since been examined;

(b) if so, the decision taken on those recommendations;

(c) the time by which the decision about revision of royalty on crude oil is likely to be implemented;

(d) whether the Union Government have not finalised the crude oil royalty rates for the period 1993 to 1998; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (c) The Government had constituted a Committee to devise a new scheme of royalty on indigenous crude oil with effect from 1.4.1998. The Committee has submitted its Report which is under consideration of the Government. Royalty payable on crude oil has, however, been revised on ad hoc basis on three occasions since October, 1999 increasing the rate from Rs. 578 per Metric Tonne to Rs. 850 per Metric Tonne, pending finalisation of the rates.

(d) and (e) The methodology approved by the Government for fixation of royalty rate payable on indigenous crude oil for the period 1993-98 was based on the cost of production of Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) and Oil India Limited (OIL) duly audited by the Comptroller & Auditor General (C&AG). Based on the audited cost of production of ONGC and OIL, royalty rate for the period 1993-96 has already been finalised. Royalty rates for the period 1996-98 would be finalised after settlement of the audit observations with C&AG.

Power Shortage

*429. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRIMATI PRABHA RAU:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether power supply to Maharashtra and other States is not being made as per their demand;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the nature and extent of aid, if any, sought by different States in this context and the Union Government's response thereto;

(d) whether NTPC has agreed to meet the requirement in the matter of power shortage of the States particularly in Maharashtra;

(e) if so, the power requirements of the State Governments;

(f) the rate at which the power is to be supplied by NTPC to the State Governments;

(g) whether State Governments are reluctant to pick up power from NTPC; and

(h) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) No, Sir. Power supply to Maharashtra & other States is made as per allocation based on entitlements of the respective States in the Central Sector Generating Stations.

(b) Details of entitlements and drawal from Central Sector Generation Stations by Maharashtra & other States during the current year (upto November, 2002) are given in the enclosed statement.

(c) Requests are received from different States from time to time to allocate additional power from out of the 15% unallocated quota from Central Sector Generating Stations available for allocation at the discretion of the Central Government. This power is allocated keeping in view the relative power shortages and emergent/seasonal requirements of the States/UTs in a region from time to time.

(d) Yes Sir. NTPC is planning a capacity addition programme, which will partly meet the power requirements of the States including Maharashtra. During the 10th Plan, NTPC has planned an addition of 9160 MW of which 2480 MW is to be set up in the Western Region from which Maharashtra was offered 792 MW. In addition, 370 MW was offered from Units at these power plants of Western Region to be commissioned beyond 10th Plan and also 300 MW from the Mega projects of NTPC in the Eastern Region.

(e) According to the demand projection in the 16th Electric Power Survey Report prepared by the Central Electricity Authority, the peak demand and energy requirements in the country at the end of 10th Plan is projected as 1,15,705 MW and 7,19,087 Million Units respectively.

(f) Cost of energy from new power projects is dependent on a variety of factors like type and cost of fuel; distance of power project from pit-head, technology used, mode of financing; tax regime etc. However, the tariff for all these projects of NPTC will be determined by the Central Electricity Regulatory Commission from time to time.

The average tariff of power from the existing NTPC power stations for the year 2001-02 was 142.84 paise/kwh.

(g) and (h) Generally, there is no reluctance from the State Power Utilities to avail power from NTPC stations as NTPC plants run at high PLF and supply power at competitive prices. However, the Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) wrote to NTPC in August, 2001 indicating its unwillingness to enter into Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for any new project. Recently, Government of Maharashtra has expressed its desire to avail 850 MW power from NTPC's proposed plant at Sipat.

Statement

State-wise entitlement vis-a-vis actual drawals from Central Sector Generating Stations for the period April-November 2002

(All figures in Million Units)

States/UTs	Entitlement	Drawal
1	2	3
Chandigarh	376.2	322.4
Delhi	7389.3	7223.3
Haryana	4535.7	5043.5
Himachal Pradesh	1026.6	1055.5
Jammu & Kashmir	3458.7	3788.5
Punjab	5653.1	5537.9
Rajasthan	6076.3	6336.2
Uttar Pradesh	10352.1	9642.6

1	2	3
Uttaranchal	1135.8	1053.9
Total Northern Region:	40003.8	40003.8
Chhattisgarh	1861	1613.6
Gujarat	9325.3	10027.6
Madhya Pradesh	6191.8	5900.7
Maharashtra	10453.3	10503.0
Goa	1231.8	1018.4
Total Western Region:	29063.2	29063.2
Andhra Pradesh	4788.2	4353.2
Karnataka	4191.2	4760.6
Kerala	2304.3	2430.1
Tamil Nadu	5985.8	5888.9
Goa	494.5	416.1
Pondicherry	862.8	778.9
Total Southern Region:	18627.8	18627.8
Bihar	2954.1	3897.2
DVC	838.4	506.2
Jharkhand	10.5	75.2
Orissa	2113.0	2267.4
West Bengal	2391.7	1006.8
Sikkim	107.7	47.8
Madhya Pradesh	1187.7	1243.9
Gujarat	201.8	214.3
Kerala	418.5	439.4
Tamil Nadu	468.2	627.7
Pondicherry	27.3	41.6
Karnataka	453.0	934.0
Uttar Pradesh	265.1	237.6
Andhra Pradesh	769.1	702.9
Assam	450.8	449.5
Haryana	67.3	63.2
Chandigarh	67.6	60.0

1	2	3
Jammu & Kashmir	67.6	60.0
Rajasthan	67.6	59.9
Himachal Pradesh	67.6	60.0
Total Eastern Region:	12994.6	12994.6
Arunachal Pradesh	160.9	93.6
Assam	1081.5	1224.6
Manipur	297.4	303.0
Meghalaya	241.8	170.9
Mizoram	160.2	180.6
Nagaland	181.1	180.2
Tripura	272.3	242.3
Total North-Eastern Region:	2395.2	2395.2

**Financial Assistance to Mini Power Plants by
IREDA**

*430. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether IREDA and other agencies extend financial assistance to mini-power plants;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the number of applications cleared during each of the last two years;

(c) the conditions under which Government gives assistance to such units;

(d) whether the Government have not extended assistance uniformly to all deserving applicants; and

(e) if so, the steps proposed to introduce transparency and also efficiency in the process of financing such units producing energy from non-conventional sources?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), under the administrative control of this Ministry, extends loans to mini power plants based on wind energy, small hydro, bio-energy and solar energy. Financial Institutions and commercial banks also extend financial assistance to such projects, as per their own norms. IREDA has so far

sanctioned 151 projects during 2000-01 and 116 projects during 2001-02. Sector-wise details are given in enclosed statement.

(c) to (e) The Government provides central financial assistance to such units in the form of capital subsidy & interest subsidy uniformly depending upon eligibility criteria of different schemes, technical feasibility and economic viability, subject to budgetary provisions.

Statement

*Sector-wise details of the projects sanctioned by
IREDA during the last two years*

Sector	2000-01	2001-02
Wind Energy	43	33
Small Hydro	19	10
Energy Efficiency & Conservation	8	4
Solar Photovoltaic	33	16
Solar Thermal	27	31
Cogeneration	8	3
Biomass power	8	9
Briquetting	4	1
Biomethanation	1	—
Waste to Energy	—	4
Biomass Gasifier	—	1
Small Biogas	—	2
Miscellaneous	—	2
Total	151	116

[Translation]

Joint Venture Abroad by H.A.L.

*431. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited, Bangalore has been searching for partners abroad;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the HAL has formulated any scheme to set up a joint venture in the country as well as abroad; and

(d) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) are not searching for partners abroad. However, HAL have entered into a dialogue with M/s. Snecma, France to consider the feasibility of setting up a joint venture company at Bangalore for taking up manufacture of engine parts and assemblies for the Indian and world markets.

[English]

Adulteration in Petroleum Products

*432. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI:
SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no fool-proof method to detect adulteration in automobile fuels;

(b) if so, whether the guidelines laid down by the Bureau of Indian Standards to detect adulteration are inadequate;

(c) if so, whether the adulteration in automobile fuels is still going on in a large scale;

(d) if so, the other steps proposed to be taken to check the adulteration in automobile fuels in the country; and

(e) the number of complaints received by the Government against adulteration of petroleum products during the last three years in the country, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) to (d) Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) lays down the specifications of petroleum products and any deviation in respect of any standards stipulated in the specifications would lead to the conclusion of the presence of adulterant/adulterants. Thus the checking of the quality of the products is an ongoing process and it is not correct to conclude that there is no fool-proof method to detect adulteration. The specification laid down by BIS is adequate and BIS also brings out changes in specification, as per the requirement periodically.

The State Government authorities, Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) and the Anti Adulteration Cell (AAC) set up by the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas in March, 2001 periodically inspect and check the quality of the petroleum products. Action is taken as per provisions of the Essential Commodities Act, terms of the dealership agreement and/or the Marketing Discipline Guidelines.

(e) Complaints against adulteration of petroleum products are received by State Government, OMCs and AAC of Government of India. Since March, 2001, when the AAC was formed, 402 inspections were made by the Cell mostly as a result of complaints received. Details of region-wise inspections made by AAC are given below:—

	North	West	South	East	Total
No. of Retail Outlets inspected	123	82	115	82	402
No. of Samples failed	14	30	04	01	49

State-wise details of complaints would be laid on the Table of the House after compilation.

Declassification of Procurement Procedures

*433. SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:
DR. V. SAROJA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to declassify procurement procedures for Defence equipment and platforms which have been marked secret till date as reported in 'The Hindu' dated November 24, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Defence Production would be open for private sector;

(d) if so, whether the security aspect has been assessed before opening Defence Production Sector to private sector; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) The Government have decided

to declassify procurement procedures soon after they are finalised. The process of formulating the same is underway.

In May, 2001 Defence industry sector, which was hitherto reserved for the public sector has been opened upto 100% for Indian Private Sector participation with Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), permissible upto 26%, both subject to licensing. This includes all types of defence equipment. Detailed guidelines were issued by the Department of Industrial Policy & Promotion (DIPP) after consultation with the Ministry of Defence and Industry Associations for consideration of applications for grant of license in January, 2002.

The security concerns have been adequately addressed by incorporating the following provisions in the guidelines:—

- (i) Adequate safety and security procedures would be put in place by the licensee once the licence is granted and production commences. These would be subject to verification by authorised Government agencies.
- (ii) Arms and ammunition produced by the private manufacturers will be primarily sold to the Ministry of Defence. These items may also be sold to other Government entities under the control of the Ministry of Home Affairs and State Governments with the prior approval of the Ministry of Defence. No such item shall be sold within the country to any other person or entity. The export of manufactured items would be subject to policy and guidelines as applicable to Ordnance Factories and Defence Public Sector Undertakings. Non-lethal items would be permitted for sale to persons/entities other than the Central or State Governments with the prior approval of the Ministry of Defence. Licensee would also need to institute a verifiable system of removal of all goods out of their factories. Violation of these provisions may lead to cancellation of the licence.
- (iii) The Government also reserves the right to check the antecedents of the foreign collaborators and domestic promoters, including their financial standing and credential in the world market.

[English]

Export of Weapons

*434. SHRIMATI JAS KAUR MEENA:
SHRI KALAVA SRINIVASULU:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has emerged a leader in the world market for defence equipment; and

(b) if so, the details of target fixed for export of defence equipment during the current financial year?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Ordnance Factory Board and Defence Public Sector Undertakings have been exporting some of their products for several years mainly to countries in Asia and Africa and some to Europe and North America after meeting domestic requirements.

(b) Based on the Memoranda of Understanding with the Defence Public Sector Undertakings and in consultation with the OFB, defence exports are targeted at Rs. 230 crores in the year 2002-2003.

[English]

Expansion of Super Thermal Power Plants

*435. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal for the expansion of some super thermal power plants in the country;

(b) if so, the steps taken in this regard;

(c) whether the super thermal power plant to Talcher was also included in the expansion proposal;

(d) if so, the number of additional units being installed at that super thermal power plant under its expansion programme; and

(e) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) and (b) The following super thermal power plants are under execution by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) for yielding benefits during the X Plan period:

S.No.	Project & Location	Existing Capacity (MW)	Capacity to be added (MW)
1.	Talcher STPP, Orissa	1000	2000 in Stage-II
2.	Rihand STPP, Uttar Pradesh	1000	1000 in Stage-II
3.	Ramagundam STPP, Andhra Pradesh	2100	500 in Stage-III

In addition, NTPC have also planned to take up execution/expansion of the following super thermal power

projects which are in various stages of clearances/ approvals for benefits during X and XI Plan:

Sl. No.	Project & Location	Existing Capacity (MW)	Capacity to be added (MW)
1.	Sipat STPP, Chhattisgarh	—	1980 in Stage-I and 660 in Stage-II
2.	Barh STPP, Bihar	—	1980
3.	Vindhyachal STPP, Madhya Pradesh	2260	1000 in Stage-III
4.	Kahalgau STPP, Bihar	840	1000 in Stage-II
5.	Feroze Gandhi Unchahar TPP, Uttar Pradesh	840	210 in Stage-III
6.	National Capital Territory Power Project—Dadri, Uttar Pradesh	840	490
7.	North Karanpura STPP, Jharkhand	—	1980

Note: STPP = Super Thermal Power Project, TTP = Thermal Power Project.

In addition NTPC has signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Railways on 18.2.2002 for setting up of power plants upto 2000 MW capacity after selection of viable sites and based on feasibility. An MOU was also signed by NTPC with Tamil Nadu Electricity Board on 12.7.2002 for setting up the power plant with 1000 MW capacity at Ennore, Tamil Nadu.

Sl. No.	Project	Capacity of Units (MW)	Commissioning Schedule
1.	Talcher STPP, Stage-II (4x500 MW), Orissa	Unit-3-500 Unit-4-500 Unit-5-500 Unit-6-500	Unit-3-November, 03 Unit-4-August, 04 Unit-5-May, 05 Unit-6-February, 06

Transfer from Central Road Fund

*436. PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount transferred out of the Central Road Fund to the Ministry of Railways since its inception, till date;

(b) the number of rail over/under bridges constructed/ being constructed in the country and the amount spent from this fund on these projects upto March 31, 2002;

(c) whether this fund has also been utilised to provide safety works at unmanned level crossings; and

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e) Four additional units each of 500 MW are being installed at Talcher STPP Stage-II as per details given below:

(d) if so, the number of unmanned level crossings provided with improved safety arrangements, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) The amount received from the Central Road Fund since its inception, is as under:

Year	Rs. in crore
1999-2000	200
2000-01	300
2001-02	300
2002-03 (BE)	450

(b) Funds from Central Road Fund are being used to bear the Railway's share of the works of construction of Road Over/Under Bridges in lieu of busy level crossings on cost sharing basis as per laid down norms. At present, there are 385 works of Road Over/Under Bridges on cost sharing basis in various stages of execution. In the last two years the number of Road Over/Under bridges completed are 21 and 13 in the years 2000-01 and 2001-02 respectively. The funds spent out of the Railway Safety Fund funded by receipts from the Central Road fund (CRF) in the last two years are as under:—

Year	Expenditure (Rs. in Cr.)
2000-2001	47.87
2001-2002	87.01

(c) Yes, Sir. Funds are also utilized for manning of unmanned level crossings.

(d) The figures of manning are maintained Railway wise and not State-wise. The number of unmanned level crossings manned in last two years is as under:—

Railway	2000-01	2001-02
Central	0	116
Eastern	9	15
Northern	9	2
North Eastern	9	14
North East Frontier	1	26
Southern	7	3
South Central	12	49
South Eastern	14	53
Western	6	9
Total	67	287

Supply of ULSD and ULSUP In Cities

*437. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of metro cities to which Ultra Low Sulphur Diesel (ULSD) and Ultra Low Sulphur Unleaded Petrol (ULSUP) are being supplied through petroleum outlets;

(b) whether the Government have any proposal to introduce ULSD and ULSUP in all major cities and State capitals;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government have drawn a plan to augment production of ULSD & ULSUP in view of growing demand for these products; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Unleaded petrol alone is being supplied in the entire country from 1.2.2000. Presently, metro cities of Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai are being supplied petrol and diesel of 0.05% maximum sulphur content.

(b) and (c) The Government have decided to supply petrol and diesel of 0.05% maximum sulphur content in the following cities:—

Hyderabad/Secunderabad	from 16.12.2002
Bangalore	from 1.4.2003
Ahmedabad	from 1.4.2003
Kanpur	from 1.4.2003
Pune	from 1.4.2003

(d) and (e) The above decision of the Government has been conveyed to the oil companies who have drawn plans to meet the demand of 0.05% maximum sulphur content in line with the Government decision.

Assistance from External Agencies for Power Plants

*438. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal to set up some power plants in the country with the aid and assistance of External Agencies; and

(b) if so, the number of such proposed power plants along with their locations, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF POWER (SHRI ANANT GANGARAM GEETE): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Japan Bank of International Cooperation (JBIC) has recently appraised Bakreshwar Thermal Power Project (West Bengal) for financing.

The Largi HEP, 126 MW (H.P.) has been appraised by Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (KFAED) for assistance.

Kreditanstalt Fur Wiederaufbau (KfW) of Germany has shown interest in financing the expansion to Thermal Power Stations at Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh and Amarkantak in Madhya Pradesh.

DD Committee to Research and Social Marketing

*439. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Doordarshan has constituted a committee to advise it on qualitative research and social marketing;

(b) if so, the details of this committee and its objectives;

(c) whether outside ratings agencies are unable to properly guide Doordarshan in this matter;

(d) if so, the details of steps proposed/likely to be proposed to enhance the ability of Doordarshan to properly focus its programmes after assessing the reach of each of their programmes; and

(e) the steps proposed/likely to be proposed to revamp Doordarshan to hold its market share?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that Doordarshan has constituted a Research Advisory Committee consisting of eminent personalities in the field of Communication Research to advise Doordarshan on strengthening in-house research and improving programme content/quality.

(c) It is the considered view of Prasar Bharati that the rating agencies' sample does not adequately represent the viewership of Doordarshan. The sample size of the outside rating agency is limited to only 27 Cities/Towns, whereas the reach of Doordarshan lies in smaller cities and villages also.

(d) Doordarshan's Research Unit is being revamped suitably to facilitate proper assessment and to incorporate a feedback mechanism to enable restructuring of content and format of programme, according to viewers' needs and preferences.

(e) Prasar Bharati has informed that to meet the challenges posed by changes in the market scenario, Doordarshan has taken various steps in order to increase viewership and boost revenue during the coming years. These include improvement in the quality of content and presentation of channels, improvement in the quality of transmission, usage of more flexible rate card to meet challenges of the competitive market environment, introduction of effective system of advertising of Doordarshan's channels and programmes. Steps have also been taken to exploit full commercial potential of various programmes. Doordarshan has created its own marketing set up and a separate Development Communication division to look after business of various Government Ministries/Departments and Public Sector Undertakings.

[Translation]

Expansion of Powers of P.C.I.

*440. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to expand the functioning and enhance the powers of the Press Council of India (PCI);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Press Council of India has been empowered in regard to hearing of criminal and defamation cases;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) the rights and jobs assigned to the Press Council of India at present;

(f) whether the number of complaints against PCI have increased recently due to leveling of false allegations in the news appearing in various newspapers; and

(g) if so, the effective measures taken by the Government to ensure action against such persons involved in publishing false and baseless news?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) A proposal received from the Press Council of India (PCI) is under examination.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The powers of Press Council of India, set up to preserve the freedom of the press and to maintain and improve the standards of newspapers and news agencies in India, are as laid out inter-alia in Sections 14, 15 and 16 of the Press Council Act, 1978, and its functions as in Section 13 of the same Act.

(f) and (g) No such complaint against PCI has been received.

Bio Fuel Policy

*441. SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are contemplating to formulate a National Policy regarding bio-fuel; and

(b) the details and salient features of this policy?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) and (b) Government have already taken a policy decision with regard to blending of ethanol with petrol and have mandated supply of 5% ethanol blended petrol from 1st January, 2003 in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh and the Union Territories of Chandigarh, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and Pondicherry. Research and Development (R&D) work with regard to 10% blending of ethanol with petrol and 5% blending of ethanol with diesel has been taken up. In addition to this R&D studies of bio-diesel blending with diesel are also underway. Pilot projects for bio-diesel are being planned.

[English]

Railway Bridges

4643. SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether former Railway Minister had submitted a list comprising details of bridges which needed to be immediately repaired;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Electricity Connection In Chandigarh

4644. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the residents of various villages and labour colonies in U.T. Chandigarh have been asking for electricity connections and metered power supply;

(b) whether grant of such connections will drastically reduce the incidence of illegal 'kundi' connections; and

(c) if so, the reasons for not providing such regular connections sought by the residents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Chandigarh Administration has notified a policy on 18.4.2002, for the grant of Bulk Supply Electricity connection to Jhuggi Jhopri Clusters/Slum dwellers/unauthorised colonies/residents outside 'Lal Dora' on single delivery system. The policy provides for Single Point Delivery connection to the Leading Person at one or more points. The Leading Person has been defined to mean Resident Welfare Association or an authorized Leading Person or a competent company or contractor. The responsibility for giving further service connections to the Residents beyond the single point delivery connections vests with the Leading Person. According to the Chandigarh Administration, this policy measure is an improvement over the earlier policy of releasing individual electricity connections which led to increase in illegal kundi connections.

Corruption In Courts

4645. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the corrupt practice prevailing in various courts in Delhi as reported in *Dainik Jagaran* dated August 11, 2002;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the action proposed to be taken to check the situation prevailing in the courts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The control over District courts and courts subordinate thereto in NCT of Delhi is exercised by the Delhi High Court. Any

complaint against the judicial officers or the staff of the subordinate courts in Delhi, received by the Central Government, is forwarded to the Delhi High Court for appropriate action.

The Chief Justice every year nominates a group of Judicial Officers under the direct supervision and control for the purpose of inspection and vigilance matters.

The Anti Corruption Branch takes steps to prevent corruption, such as, conducting raids on specific complaints, creating awareness in the general public by issuing advertisements in the press and ensuring that the departments put up boards indicating names and phone numbers of officers of the Anti Corruption Branch where the cases of corruption can be reported.

[Translation]

Modernisation of Nasik Station

4646. SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any plans for the renovation of Nasik Road station and Odha station, keeping in view the 'Kumbh Mela' to be held in 2003 at Nasik, Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which the renovation work at these stations is likely to be completed; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. All necessary arrangements are being made for the Mela. Following works have been planned for better amenities at Nasik station:

- (i) Provision of pipeline for additional water on Platform.
- (ii) Provision of high pressure water.
- (iii) Temporary waiting hall at Nasik Road.
- (iv) Urinal/Lavatory/bathroom at Nasik Road.
- (v) Temporary waiting hall, booking office at Odha.

All these works are planned to be completed before starting of the *Sinhastha Mela*.

(c) Does not arise.

[English]

Plan for Power Sector

4647. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any discrimination for power sector in the Tenth Five Year Plan for North-Eastern Region;

(b) if so, the reasons for not allocating any money for the power sector by the Planning Commission; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) No, Sir. The Planning Commission has earmarked an outlay of Rs. 9,070.50 crores (including Rs. 1,868.33 crores for Sikkim) for National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC) projects in the North Eastern Region (NER) out of the total outlay of Rs. 32,226 crores for NHPC in Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07). In addition, an amount of Rs. 4,224 crores has been earmarked for North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) in Tenth Five Year Plan for execution of projects in NER. The State-wise Plan outlay for power sector in the Tenth Five Year Plan for NER, as projected by the Planning Commission is given in Statement enclosed.

Statement

Projected outlay for Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-07) for North Eastern Region (State-wise)—Power Sector

(Rs. in Lakhs)	
State	Projected Outlay
Arunachal Pradesh	49,119.00
Assam	83,542.00
Manipur	22,886.00
Meghalaya	50,137.00
Mizoram	19,280.00
Nagaland	24,795.00
Tripura	22,330.00
Total (NER)	2,72,089.00
Sikkim	24,000.00
Total	2,96,089.00

Construction of Over Bridge at Dhanbad

4648. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 1850 dated 29.11.2001 regarding construction of over bridge at Dhanbad and state:

(a) the cost involved in extending railway over bridge upto Purana Bazar Over Dhanbad Station in Eastern Railway;

(b) whether any request has been received to reconsider the earlier decision of rejection;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) The cost involved in extending Railway Over Bridge upto Puma Bazar is Rs. 1.5 crore.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Foreign Tours by Managing Directors

4649. SHRI RAM MURTI SINGH VERMA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the foreign countries visited and the period of stay by the Managing Directors of various Public Sector Undertakings under the Ministry of Railways during the last three years;

(b) the amount of foreign exchange paid to them by the Public Sector Undertakings both in cash and travellers cheques;

(c) the details of travellers cheques not presented for cash;

(d) the reasons for not recovering the public money saved and misused by those Managing Directors for themselves; and

(e) the steps taken to recover the amount saved by the Managing Directors?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) The details of the foreign countries visited abroad and the period of stay by the Managing Directors during last three years i.e. w.e.f. 01.04.1999 to 31.03.2002 are given below:

Name of PSUs	Name of countries	Period of stay	Amount of foreign exchange paid
IRCON International Ltd.	Bangladesh, Malaysia, Turkey, Syria and Iran	114 days	USD 23,550
BITES Ltd.	Sri Lanka, UK, Malaysia, Singapore, Colombia, Jamaica, Bangladesh, Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, UAE, Sharjah, Algeria and Myanmar	64 days	USD 22,060
Container Corporation of India Ltd.	Switzerland, UK, Austria, Germany, USA, Hongkong, Singapore, Holland, France and Iran	37 days	USD 15,250
Indian Railway Finance Corporation Ltd.	USA, Germany, Canada and UK	15 days	USD 4688.75
Konkan Railway Corporation Ltd.	UK, Malaysia, Iraq and Hongkong	43 days	USD 48,780
Mumbai Railway Vikas Corporation Ltd.	Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia	14 days	USD 4,300
Indian Railway Catering & Tourism Corporation Ltd.	Nil	Nil	Nil
Railtel Corporation of India Ltd.	Nil	Nil	Nil

(c) Travelling Allowances are paid according to the Managing Directors fixed entitlement as per Govt. of India instructions. On return, Travelling Allowances bill is submitted by MDs giving the full details of tour undertaken. Any foreign exchange, which has not been utilised is refunded on return. Therefore, on outstanding amount is due recoverable from MDs.

(d) and (e) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Sale of Land by HMT

4650. SHRIMATI MINATI SEN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the HMT Limited plans to sell off the non-performing assets of its subsidiary HMT watches to raise funds for paying off watch Division's 3,400 employees who have not got any salaries for the past three months;

(b) if so, whether the HMT watches' market has dwindled considerably over the years resulting in a huge reduction in production due to stiff competition and availability of cheap varieties of watches in the gray market;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether HMT watches, owning about 150 acres of land in Bangalore, have not decided to put on sale 32 acres of prime land attached to the factory in the city; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) The non-performing assets of HMT Watches are proposed to be disposed of for discharging its liabilities and reducing debt burden as per the turnaround Plan approved in 2000.

(b) and (c) There has been a fall in the production and sales due to competition, availability of spurious and cheaper variety of watches and liquidity crunch. The details of production & sales are as under:—

(Rupees in crore)

Year	Production	Sales
1999-2000	120.26	110.24
2000-2001	144.08	126.23
2001-2002	79.05	96.08
2002-2003 (Upto 31.10.02)	25.48	30.26

(d) and (e) Out of about 150 acres of land owned by HMT Watches Limited in Bangalore, 32 acres of surplus land including certain buildings have been advertised for disposal.

[Translation]

Parcel Office

4651. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether untrained goods clerks are posted in New Delhi booking office;

(b) if so, whether posting of the untrained goods clerks (Parcel Office) has led to increase in corruption;

(c) if so, the reasons for not posting trained commercial clerk in parcel office;

(d) whether it is a fact that these goods clerks have been working in parcel office for the last ten years but their posting is at other station;

(e) if so, the reasons for their posting in New Delhi parcel office;

(f) whether it is a fact that these goods clerks have to be periodically transferred to another station after four years; and

(g) the reasons for discrimination being meted out by the Administration against goods clerks?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) Since 1993, commercial clerks are recruited under a common category and are utilised in coaching, parcel and goods offices. They are re-deployed from one category to another category depending upon workload and requirement of staff in different categories. Trained

commercial clerks have been re-deployed in booking offices at New Delhi to cater to the heavy workload and trained goods clerks have been utilised for working in parcel office for the last about two years.

(f) Yes, Sir.

(g) There is no discrimination.

[English]

Nedumbassery Railway Station

4652. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received a proposal from the Government of Kerala to start Nedumbassery railway station during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) A proposal was received regarding opening of a halt station at Nedumbassery between Angamali and Chowara stations and the same has not been found commercially justified.

Recruitment of Airmen and Officers

4653. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in order to make up the shortage of airmen and officers in Indian Air Force is going all out to recruit airmen knowing regional languages with English language; and

(b) if so, the total number of vacancies in airmen's and officers' grade existed at present?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Presently there are 630 vacancies of officers and 8715 vacancies of airmen.

[Translation]

Agreement between IOCL and Adani Port

4654. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any agreement has been signed between the IOCL and Adani Port Limited for crude oil in Mundra (Kutch-Gujarat); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has signed a port services agreement with M/s. Gujarat Adani Port Ltd. for handling crude oil at Mundra Port.

(b) The agreement envisages receipt of 6 million tonnes per annum additional requirement of crude oil of IOCL's Panipat refinery at Mundra Port.

[English]

Functioning of AIR, Parbhani

4655. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether AIR, Parbhani is not broadcasting its own programmes;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures proposed to be taken by the Government to enable it to prepare and broadcast its own programmes as well as to become fullfledged Radio Station?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) Prasar Bharati has informed that AIR, Parbhani is technically a full fledged Station, already originating some of its programmes. They have also informed that it is proposed that the Station will be de-linked from AIR, Aurangabad, and will soon start functioning independently.

Separate Waiting Room for Soldiers at Nagpur Railway Station

4656. SHRI SUBODH MOHITE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways are aware of the demand made by the Ministry of Defence for setting up a separate waiting room for soldiers at Nagpur Railway Station;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for delay in taking action on the demand; and

(c) the time by which the demand is likely to be fulfilled?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) A demand from Movement Control Organisation (MCO) was received for a waiting room for soldiers adjacent to MCO's Office. The work has been sanctioned for execution in the year 2002-03.

Energy from Disposal of Waste

4657. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether various State Governments have awarded projects for generation of energy from disposal of wastes;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether the project at Hyderabad has since been completed and started functioning; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Projects for generation of energy from wastes for their disposal have been taken up by private entrepreneurs, industries, NGOs, Urban Local Bodies, etc. on 'Build Own and Operate' basis. However, ten States namely Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh have announced policy guidelines in respect of free supply of wastes at the project site, the provision of land at nominal lease rent and facilities for evacuation of power for wheeling, banking, purchase and third party sale of power, for the promotion of projects for recovery of energy from Urban and Industrial wastes.

(c) and (d) The project for production of 210 tonnes per day (TPD) fuel pellets from about 700 TPD of Municipal Solid Waste of Hyderabad city was completed in the year 2001-2002. The plant is presently producing about 50 TPD fuel pellets/briquettes from about 150 TPD of Municipal Solid Waste due to limited market.

[Translation]

Allotment of LPG Agencies/Petrol Pumps to Physically Handicapped

4658. SHRI RAJO SINGH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of disabled/physically handicapped persons in Bihar who have been allotted LPG agencies and petrol pumps during the last three years;

(b) the percentage of reservation in the allotment of dealerships for disabled/physically handicapped persons;

(c) whether the reservation quota for them has been fully exhausted in Bihar; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) During the last three years, Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have allotted 4 LPG distributorships and 12 Retail Outlets in favour of physically handicapped persons in the State of Bihar. However, out of these, OMCs have withdrawn the Letter of Intent (LOI) in favour of one LPG distributorship and 10 Retail Outlet dealerships pursuant to Government's decision on cancellation of allotments made on recommendations of the Dealer Selection Boards (DSBs) since 1.1.2000.

(b) to (d) OMCs are required to follow the 5% reservation for physically handicapped category in respect of all the States in all the marketing plans formulating during the last three years and percentage of reservation is ensured as per the 100 point roster system prepared for the purpose. OMCs have not exhausted the quota allotted in favour of physically handicapped category in Bihar, so far.

[English]

Cutting down of 784 Trees Near Mankhurd-Vasi Railway Lines

4659. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Central Railway, Mumbai has taken note of cutting down 784 trees near Mankhurd-Vasi Railway Lines in the 2nd week of November;

(b) whether in order to put new hoardings and make it visible, it is suspected, that Railway Advertising Agency, private agencies have cut down these trees;

(c) whether Railways have received representation in this regard from MPs, NGOs, BPCL, etc.;

(d) if so, the details thereof alongwith action taken by the Government thereon;

(e) whether Railway has received representations from commercial department and advertising agencies to remove those trees;

(f) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(g) whether these hoardings are put up in CRZ area;

(h) whether mangroves were damaged to install these hoardings;

(i) the basis on which such permission was given by Commercial Department;

(j) whether any inquiry/action has been taken against the Commercial Department or other concerned; and

(k) if so, the details of the action plan of the Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Yes, Sir. However, the trees cut down were not on Railway land.

(b) to (k) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Vacant Posts of SC/ST/Backward Classes

4660. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacant posts of various categories belonging to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes along with the period since when these have remained unfilled in his Ministry and its subordinate offices; and

(b) the steps being taken to fill up these posts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) The following vacant posts of various categories exist in this Ministry and its subordinate offices and the steps being taken to fill them up are as under:

One post reserved for Scheduled Tribes in the grade of Scientist 'B' (Group 'A') is vacant since 1.8.2001; the

post has been advertised in the Employment News/Rozgar Samachar dated 26.10.2002.

One post reserved for Other Backward Classes in the grade of Lower Division Clerk (Group 'C') is vacant at Solar Energy Centre since 16.4.2002. Nomination of a candidate of Other Backward Classes category has been requested for the post.

One post in the grade of Peon (Group 'D') is vacant since 28.1.2002 in Subordinate Office located at Bhopal, which is reserved for Scheduled Castes, action to fill up the post through Employment Exchange has been taken.

One post in the grade of Peon (Group 'D') is vacant since 16.9.2002 in the Ministry, which is reserved for Other Backward Classes. The post has not been filled up due to a Stay Order passed by the Hon'ble Central Administrative Tribunal, Principal Bench, New Delhi.

Programmes by Vishakhapatnam Akashvani

4661. SHRI B. VENKATESHWARLU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Vishakhapatnam station of All India Radio is introducing some innovative programmes to attract more artists to prepare programmes; and

(b) if so, the details of new programmes introduced/ likely to be introduced in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Prasar Bharati has informed that the introduction of innovative programmes in AIR Stations is an ongoing process, keeping in view the requirements of listeners. AIR, Vishakhapatnam, is also introducing many innovative programmes in various genres like Music (a musical notation of Adi Shankaracharya's "Soundarya Lahri"), Drama (old classics like "Malavikaagni Mitram", "Kumarasambhavam" etc.), Romantic Music (under a series called "Madhuratimadhuram"), series on evolution of Telugu literature, Folk Music etc.

[Translation]

Losses to Delhi-Ajmer Shatabdi Train

4662. SHRIMATI SUSHILA SAROJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Delhi-Ajmer Shatabdi is incurring losses;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government propose to ply Jan Shatabdi on this route instead of this train;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) Train-wise figures of profitability, earnings and expenditure are not separately maintained. Therefore, details regarding profitability of Delhi Ajmer Shatabdi Express train is not available.

(c) to (e) At present there is no proposal to introduce a Jan Shatabdi Express Service on this route as there are nine services (seven Broad Gauge and two Metre Gauge) connecting Delhi with Ajmer which are considered adequate for the traffic offering.

[English]

Reserves of Crude Oil

4663. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the places wherein surveys have been conducted to locate crude oil reserves in the country during the last three years;

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon during the said period;

(c) whether the crude oil reserves have been found during survey period; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) During the last three years National Oil Companies (NOCs), i.e. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL), and various private/joint venture companies carried out geo-scientific survey for hydrocarbon exploration in the following basins:-

Assam-Arakan, Assam-Shelf, Bengal, Cambay, Cauvery, Ganga, Himalayan Foreland, Rajasthan,

Krishna-Godavari, Satpura, Vindhyan, Upper-Assam, Eastern and Western Offshore.

In addition, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) carried out reconnaissance surveys in East-Coast offshore, Andaman Offshore and Southern Tip of India Offshore, including deep waters.

(b) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Natural Gas Policy

4664. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Government of Maharashtra has sent proposals regarding framing of its own Natural Gas Policy and regulatory model for the State;

(b) if so, whether the Government have considered any view about the constitutional powers of the State Government to enact legislation on gas related matters; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Government of Maharashtra are contemplating to legislate on the subject of 'Natural Gas'. However, Union of India is of the view that 'Natural Gas' is covered within the definition of 'mineral oil' and 'petroleum' which is a Union subject mentioned in the Entry 53 of Union List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution and, therefore, State Legislatures are not competent to enact any legislation on natural gas related matters. In this regards a Presidential reference has been made to the Supreme Court for seeking its opinion on the issue as to whether the subject 'Natural Gas' is a State or a Union subject.

[Translation]

Proposals from West Bengal for Power Projects

4665. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether some proposals relating to power sector received from the Government of West Bengal are pending with the Union Government for approval;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the pending proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Detailed Project Report (DPR) for setting up of Sagardighi TPP Phase-I (Unit-1&2) (2x250 MW) by West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited was received in Central Electricity Authority (CEA) in October, 2001 for grant of Techno-Economic Clearance. The same was returned to project authorities on 15.11.2001 for want of inputs/clearances such as water availability, clearance from Ministry of Environment and Forests etc. and resubmission thereafter.

[English]

Scheme for Rehabilitation of Workmen of PSUs

4666. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether any special schemes are in operation for rehabilitation of workmen of PSUs affected by retrenchment; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) Government have formulated a Scheme for Counselling, Retraining and Redeployment (CRR) for the employees of Central PSEs, who have been rationalized under the Voluntary Retirement scheme or other mode of restructuring, including retrenchment. This scheme has been introduced from the year 2001-02. The salient features of the Scheme are:

- Redeployment/self-employment of the rationalized employees through short duration training programmes, for which fund is provided by Government.
- Sensitization Camp prior to release of the VR optees in the premises of CPSUs/units.
- Provision of opportunity to the employees to engage themselves in income generating activities on self-employment basis and rejoin the productive process.

[Translation]

Land Acquired by IOCL in Faridabad

4667. SHRI AJAY SINGH CHAUTALA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation Limited has acquired land in Asawati and Pyala Villages of Faridabad district of Haryana for a project;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Indian Oil Corporation Limited has given meagre amount of compensation whereas other Oil Companies have given sufficient amount of compensation of the land losers besides giving them employment;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to provide due compensation and employment to the land losers of Asawati and Pyala Villages and the time by which this is likely to be done; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (f) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has acquired land in Asaoti (Asawati) Village through Land Acquisition Officer, Palwal, for its Lube Blending Plant. As per the award by the SDO, Civil, Land Acquisition Collector, Palwal, an amount of Rs. 1.68 crore (approximately) has been paid by IOC towards full compensation for the acquired land. Further, as per the orders of the Punjab & Haryana High Court, an enhanced compensation for the land losers, amounting to about Rs. 3.84 crore has been deposited in the bank through the Registrar of that Court. Thus, while compensation has been paid by IOC, as per decision of the Government and order of the High Court, there was no need for recruitment as the required manpower has been generated internally.

[English]

Test Results by FTL

4668. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHURY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some errors were detected in the test

results by FTL during the testing of samples sent by C. Bhure Lal Committee;

(b) if so, whether the dealers are authorised to get the second sample tested in other laboratory as per the provisions of MDG and Petroleum Act;

(c) if not, whether the dealers are punished for such offences which they have not committed and is only the error of laboratory technicians;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to issue any directions to the PSUs in this regard; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No reference of any error in analysis has been referred to FTL so far.

(b) As per Marketing Discipline Guidelines, the dealer's request for re-testing of sample is considered keeping in view the merits of the case by the competent authority and the sample is re-tested through one of the authorised laboratories. Petroleum Act is not applicable in case of sampling.

(c) to (e) Action is taken as per the Marketing Discipline Guidelines.

Judges Involved in Sex Scandal

4669. SHRI RAVI PRAKASH VERMA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that three Judges of the Karnataka High Court have been found involved in the Sex Scandal;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the action Government propose to take against these Judges?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Government have consulted the Supreme Court of India. The Court has informed as below:

"As per the In-House Procedure adopted by the Supreme Court of India as well as by the High Court, a fact finding Committee has already been constituted by Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India to enquire into the alleged allegation against the three Judges of the Karnataka High Court. The matter is in process and a decision will be taken in accordance with the procedure laid down in the In-House Procedure."

New Line between Abohar-Fazilka

4670. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether survey for laying new rail line between Abohar and Fazilka in Punjab has been completed;

(b) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and

(c) the time by which the laying work is likely to be started and completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) The Preliminary Engineering-Cum-Traffic Survey for new board gauge rail line from Abohar to Fazilka (42.717 km.) was completed in December, 1997. As per the survey report, the cost of the project has been assessed as Rs. 73.15 crore with a rate of return as (-) 7.44%. The project was included in the budget 1997-98 with the proviso that the work would be taken up after obtaining requisite clearances, which have since been obtained in September 2001. The final location survey has been completed and land acquisition is in process. No target date has been fixed for completion of this project.

Rifles

4671. SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the insas rifles jam in combat;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the magazines of the insas rifles sturdy enough to take the stress of combat; and

(d) if not, the corrective measures taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) There is no report of INSAS rifle getting jammed in combat.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The magazine of INSAS rifle is sturdy enough to withstand the rigours of combat. However, since the magazine is made of plastic material to reduce weight, it has been assigned shelf life of six years.

(d) Does not arise.

Halt Station on Gaya-Mughalsarai Section

4672. SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received representation regarding setting up of Halt Station at Railway Crossing No. 24 on Gaya-Mughalsarai Section in Mughalsarai Rail Division in Aurangabad district of Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any survey has been conducted recently by the Government in this regard apart from the same made by the Government in the late seventies for setting up of said Halt Station;

(d) if so, the details and outcome thereof; and

(e) the time which it is likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (e) Representations have been received for opening of a halt station at Railway Crossing No. 24 on Gaya-Mughalsarai section. The proposal has been examined and not found justified.

Changes in Law Relating to Rape

4673. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Women's Organisations advocated for changes in laws relating to rape;

(b) if so, whether the Law Commission of India also recommended for changes in the above law;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI

SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and it will be laid on the Table of the House.

Generation of Energy Through Bio-Mass

4674. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any comprehensive plan for generation of energy through Bio-mass;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the target fixed for power generation through bio-mass during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(d) whether any subsidy is being given to the manufactures of bio-mass gasifiers and also for the consumers for purchasing these kits;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether any amount of subsidy is being given to North East States for bio-mass gasifier based energy generation;

(g) if so, the details thereof;

(h) whether the Government have any proposal to extend the subsidy on bio-mass gasifier to other States also; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources is implementing programmes on biomass power generation, bagasse cogeneration and biomass gasification. A capacity of 502 MW has already been installed under these programmes. During the Tenth Plan, Central Financial Assistance will be provided in the form of capital subsidy or interest subsidy depending on the type of project. Other promotional incentives will also be available for development of projects, capacity building and awareness creation.

(c) A target of 775 MW has been fixed for power generation through biomass for the Tenth Plan.

(d) and (e) Capital subsidy is being provided for biomass gasifiers for electrical, mechanical and thermal applications, depending upon the capacity of the plant,

and various categories of users. Subsidy is also available for village electrification projects. No direct subsidy is given to manufacturers of biomass gasifier equipment.

(f) and (g) Higher subsidy is being provided to North-Eastern States for biomass gasifier based energy generation. Grants are also available for conversion of existing diesel power plants in North-Eastern Region to biomass gasifier based power stations.

(h) and (i) The subsidy is already being provided to the States for projects being directly undertaken by them. It is also provided through the States for projects undertaken by any other organisations or agencies.

[Translation]

Meat Shops at Hindon Air Force Base

4675. SHRI C.N. SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of meat shops are being opened in the vicinity of Hindon Air Force base ignoring the security aspect;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps being taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to ensure the security of Hindon Air Force base?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) All laid down security measures are implemented to ensure security of Hindon Air Force base.

[English]

Photo Identity Card to Family Member

4676. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the retired army men and army senior citizens have been provided the facility by the Government for authorising their family member through authorised photo identity card for the purpose of getting liquor;

(b) if so, the time since when this facility is being provided and whether orders to this effect have been issued to all the canteen managers;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the procedure for making canteen liquor authorised photo identity card?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) No, Sir. As per existing instructions dated the 12th April, 1996 only disabled ex-servicemen can authorize their representative to collect liquor on their behalf. All such disabled ex-servicemen should, however, get a certificate from Armed Forces Medical Authorities certifying their disability and inability to travel to the canteen. No photo identity cards are issued to the dependents.

Permanent Judge for Diu

4677. SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have not appointed any permanent Judge for Diu in the U.T. of Daman & Diu;

(b) whether a Judge visiting from Daman to discharge the functioning;

(c) if so, whether the people are denied the privilege of seeking bail even in most emergent and genuine case because of the abnormal distance of 750 Kms. between Daman & Diu;

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government to appoint a permanent Judge for Diu; and

(e) the time by which the appointment is likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir. One Civil Judge (Senior Division) and Chief Judicial Magistrate is deputed to hold sitting for one week in a month at Diu. Similarly, one District and Sessions Judge (part time) is deputed to hold sitting at Diu for 5 consecutive days once in 3 months.

(d) and (e) At present, there is no proposal with the Central Government to appoint a Judge exclusively for Diu.

Problem faced by American Companies in India

4678. SHRI Y.V. RAO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether US has expressed concern over the problems faced by American power companies in India;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the corrective measures taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) During the visit by the Minister of Power to the US in the first half of October, 2002, the US Assistant Secretary of Energy, Ms. Vicky Bailey, in her address at a symposium, stated that there was an erosion of confidence within the US Power Business Community about the Power Sector in India on account of certain contractual and payment problems being faced by the existing Independent Power Producers (IPPs) with US investments. She observed that it would be extremely difficult for American investors to invest in India unless structural issues in the Indian Power Sector were addressed.

The main issue relates to the Dabhol Power Project which is an IPP set up in Maharashtra on the basis of a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) entered into between Dabhol Power Company (DPC) and the Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB). Phase-I of the Dabhol Plant (740 MW) has been shut down after MSEB stopped taking power from 29th May, 2001 following disputes with DPC. Both DPC and MSEB have initiated legal proceedings against each other over different provisions of the PPA and the matter is in various stages before Courts, Arbitrators and Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission (MERC). The disputes are to be resolved primarily by these two parties to the contract as well as the Government of Maharashtra, who have guaranteed the payment obligations of MSEB to DPC under the PPA, subject to final orders on the various legal proceedings. Government of India has agreed to facilitate any amicable solution to the various issues so as to revive/restructure the Dabhol power project.

Representatives of four US companies viz. PSEG India, CMS India, Covanta Asia-Pacific and El Pasco India, during a recent meeting with Secretary (Power) discussed their problems with the Tamil Nadu Electricity Board relating to arrears, payment of invoices and establishing of security mechanisms as envisaged in the PPAs. The problems faced by these companies have been discussed with the State Government, who are taking appropriate measures to resolve the issues.

Power Supply to Karnataka by Neyveli Power Plant

4679. SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Neyveli Power Plant has stopped the power supply to Karnataka in view of the Karnataka's refusal to release water from Cauvery river;

(b) if so, whether any communication has been received in this regard by the Union Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the measures being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) A communication from Kamataka Power Transmission Ltd. was received in Central Electricity Authority (CEA) making a request that loss of assistance from Neyveli Lignite Corporation's (NLC) power station to Kamataka be made good by suitably altering the allocation of power from other Central Generating Stations, in the wake of threat of Tamil Activists to stop power from NLC's power station to Karnataka. CEA informed that it would not be possible to selectively stop power flow to Kamataka since Neyveli TPS-II (1470 MW) is connected to the Southern regional grid and its output is allocated to all the constituent States of Southern Region. Stoppage of power station would, therefore, affect all the States in the Region.

[Translation]

Consumption of Electricity

4680. SHRI JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to bring legislation to check excessive consumption of electricity in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Energy Conservation Act, 2001 (52 of 2001) has already been enacted to provide for efficient use of energy and its conservation and for matters connected therewith or

incidental thereto. The Act empowers the Central Government to:

- Notify energy intensive industries, other establishments, and commercial buildings as designated consumers.
- Establish and prescribe energy consumption norms and standards for designated consumers.
- Direct designated consumers to—
 - Designate or appoint certified energy manager in charge of activities for efficient use of energy and its conservation.
 - Get an energy audit conducted by an accredited energy auditor in the specified manner and intervals of time.
 - Furnish information with regard to energy consumed and action taken on the recommendation of the accredited energy auditor to the designated agency.
 - Comply with energy consumption norms and standards, and if not so, to prepare and implement schemes for efficient use of energy and its conservation.
 - Direct mandatory display of label on notified equipment and appliances.
 - Specify energy consumption standards for notified equipment and appliances.
 - Prohibit manufacture, sale, purchase and import of notified equipment and appliances not conforming to standards.

The Act also empowers the State Governments to:

- Prescribe energy conservation building codes for efficient use of energy and its conservation in commercial buildings.
- Amend the energy conservation building codes to suit regional and local climatic conditions.
- Direct owners or occupiers of commercial buildings to comply with the provisions of energy conservation building codes.

Delimitation of Constituency

4681. SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH:
SHRI SURESH CHANDEL:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Commission on Delimitation of constituencies constituted by the Government would submit its report prior to the elections in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reserve constituencies would be reserved and other constituencies would be reserved; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) On the request of Election Commission of India, the delimitation work in respect of the State of Himachal Pradesh would be taken up by the Delimitation Commission and finalized after the completion of the general elections to the Legislative Assembly of that State in February, 2003. Therefore, the question of reservation/de-reservation of constituencies in the State of Himachal Pradesh before the general elections does not arise.

Welfare Scheme

4682. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the formula adopted by the Government for providing loans/grants and other financial assistance for battery operated vehicles along with the details of contribution provided by the other Governments for these schemes; and

(b) the details of schemes being implemented by the Government of Rajasthan and any other voluntary organisation in Rajasthan in this regard during the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources is implementing the demonstration programme on Battery Operated Vehicles (BOVs) throughout the country through Nodal Agencies and Departments in the States and Union Territories during the year 2002-2003. This programme provides subsidy for the following types of BOVs:—

- (i) Central Subsidy is being provided for Battery Operated Buses/Mini buses (10 seaters and above) @33% of the cost of vehicle (exclusive of excise duty, sales tax and all other levies), or Rs. 3.50 lakh per vehicle, whichever is less.

- (ii) Central subsidy for Battery Operated Passenger Three Wheelers (8 seater and above) @ 33% of the cost of the vehicle (exclusive of excise duty, sales tax and all other levies), or Rs. 80,000 per vehicle, whichever is less.
- (iii) Central subsidy for Battery Operated Passenger Cars (four seater) @ 33% of the cost of vehicle (exclusive of excise duty, sales tax and all other levies), or Rs. 75,000 per vehicle, whichever is less.

(b) The Government of Rajasthan and any other Voluntary organisation in Rajasthan have not so far availed of the Ministry's scheme for battery operated vehicles during the last three years.

[English]

Power Units Capable of Break-Even

4683. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Power units capable of break even by 2005-06" as appearing in the 'Statesman' dated November 11, 2002;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the plans formulated by the Government to save the power utilities from such collapse?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news-item refers to the one-day Workshop of Energy & Finance Secretaries & Chief Executive Officers of Utilities of States on turnaround strategy held on 26.10.2002 in New Delhi. Earlier, on 27.03.2002, the Government set up an Expert Committee under the Chairmanship of Shri Deepak Parekh, Chairman of Infrastructure Development Finance Company (IDFC) to assist in developing State-specific reform programme to rapidly restore and sustain the financial viability of the power sector and effectively harness the funds under the APDRP and other sources. In September, 2002, the Committee submitted first part of its Report pertaining to structuring of Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP), reform framework and principles of financial structuring of the State Electricity Boards (SEBs). The main recommendations of the Committee are given hereunder:

- Union Government should ex-ante commit to a level of funding for this Programme and agree to transfer it through a defined annual allocation.
- There would be two streams of support from the APDRP Fund: one for investment and the other as an incentive based on reduction of the gap between unit cost of supply and revenue realisation (calculated based on the number of units purchased).
- To enable the States to begin to effect improvements, 50% of the first year's allocation of APDRP funds, i.e., Rs. 1,750 crore be made available to the States for investments.
- Assistance under this scheme should be leveraged by obtaining a matching contribution from the State, i.e., the Fund should provide 50% of the funds required for a project, the balance 50% funds of the project should be raised by the State.
- Efforts under this segment be preferably directed towards concentrated zones for better and quick results.
- More weightage should be given to investments that are aimed at reducing commercial losses.
- The remaining assistance from the Fund, i.e., Rs. 1,750 crore from the first year and the allocations for the remaining years under incentive stream should be disbursed as one-for-two matching grant based on reduction of the gap between unit cost of supply and revenue realisation.
- In effect, the incentive will be matched in the ratio of 1:2 (i.e. for every 2 rupees of loss reduction, the incentive will be one rupee), to the overall reduction in the gap at enterprise level, after adjusting for the factors that are extraneous to the operational performance. However, on review of availability of funds, this proportion of incentives could be considered for improvement.
- To reward performance over a reasonable length of time, performance be rewarded on a yearly basis, taking financial year 2000-2001 as the base year of reference for calculating the improvements eligible for performance improvement.

For the second part of the Report to prepare State-specific reforms, the referred Workshop was held on 26th October, 2002 to seek the views of the State Authorities

on reform and turnaround strategy. Apart from the presentations on the turnaround strategy made by the States participating in the Workshop, discussions were also held on rating of Electricity Boards by Credit Rating Information Services of India Limited (CRISIL) and Investment and Credit Rating Agency Limited (ICRA) and implementation of APDRP. As the information received was not adequate, State Governments have been asked to send information on their turnaround strategy and plan. This information is awaited from most of the States.

(c) After receipt of the above, the Deepak Parekh Committee would submit its second part of the Report on State-specific reforms for consideration of the Government.

Debt Burden of SEBs

4684. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the State Electricity Boards have failed to pay their dues to the Union Government to ease the debt burden;

(b) if so, whether the REC has decided to liberalise the dues to be collected from defaulting States by charting out a rescheduled package;

(c) if so, whether the corporation is evolving a package acceptable to the defaulting States; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) has offered liberalized reschedulement package to the defaulting States. The nature and tenure of the reschedulement package to the defaulting States may differ from State to State depending upon the quantum of default and the ability of the State Power Utilities to repay. The salient features of REC's reschedulement package are as under:—

- Overdue interest to be frozen as on 31.3.2002 and to be paid w.e.f. January, 2003 in 60 equal monthly instalments without any further levy of interest.
- Over dues principal to be paid w.e.f. January, 2008 in 15 years @ the current average lending rate of REC.

— Balance loan to be paid in Equated Monthly Instalments (EMIs) w.e.f. January, 2008 in 15 years at current average lending rate of REC (50% difference between Present Value and Net Present Value (NPV) will be waived and 50% will be capitalized).

— Penal interest as on 31.3.2002 to be frozen and to be waived in phased manner.

— No interest to be charged from 31.3.2002 to 31.12.2002 on the entire outstanding and to be waived in phased manner.

The reschedulement package has been offered to defaulting States viz. Assam, Bihar, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttaranchal and West Bengal.

[Translation]

Illegal Activities at New Delhi Railway Station

4685. SHRI SUBODH ROY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the railway land from the Paharganj main gate of New Delhi Railway Station to Reservation Office is under illegal occupation of street vendors;

(b) if so, whether the Government have prepared a list of such vendors who have illegally occupied the railway land;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action being taken against such vendors;

(d) whether touts are selling tickets in the campus of New Delhi Railway Station and Reservation Office; and

(e) if so, the action taken against such touts?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) The land from the Paharganj main gate of New Delhi Railway Station to Reservation Office, is outside Railway boundary and belongs to the State Government of the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Required information is being collected from the State Government, and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(d) and (e) A few instances have come to notice. Checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance Departments and Police is also associated from time to time. The persons apprehended are taken up under the relevant provisions of law.

[English]

Film on Empowerment of Women

4686. SHRI SAIDUZZAMA. Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are very few feature films produced on social issues;

(b) if so, whether attention of the Government has been drawn to an outstanding brilliant production entitled "Swaraj the Little Republic" centered around the legend of martyrdom of Prophet Hussain and showing the misdeeds of Panchayati Raj and High caste men against women who, rose to succeed in getting water for their village against all odds with help from the Rajasthan administration;

(c) if so, whether the film also raises hope for law and justice arising from the determined four women who fought for empowerment of women against all odds;

(d) if so, whether the Government will organise full support for such films and ensure their productions and screening over DD, etc.; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Production of films in India is in the private sector and no statistics are maintained by the Government in this regard. However, according to information received from Central Board of Film Certification, the statistical data for the last three years of films classified as 'social' indicates that production of such films is on the increase:

1999—593

2000—702

2001—816

Further, Films Division and National Film Development Corporation Ltd. which are organisations attached with this Ministry also produce films, documentaries etc. on social issues and empowerment of women.

(b) to (e) 'Swaraj' (The Little Republic) was cleared by the CBFC in May 2002 with a 'U' certificate. The film was selected under Indian Panorama 2002 and was screened during the International Film Festival of India at New Delhi. Further, Directorate of Film Festivals under

this Ministry arranged for its participation in Montreal International Film Festival, Sao Paulo International Film Festival, Cairo International Film Festival, Kolkata Film Festival, Mumbai Film Festival and Pune Film Festival. The film has also been invited to the Munich International Film Festival, Friburg International Film Festival and Palm Spring International Film Festival.

The film was also screened for Members of Parliament and others in Delhi on 10.12.2002. As regards showing the film on Doordarshan, Prasar Bharati being an autonomous body, the producer is free to show his film on the channel in accordance with procedures laid down by Prasar Bharati.

Kerosene to States

4687. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the monthly quota of kerosene to each State;

(b) whether the Government of Kerala has urged that its quota may be raised and restored the earlier monthly quota and reasons for reducing the same; and

(c) the response of the Union Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The monthly allocation of kerosene to various States/Union Territories made by the Government for the month of December, 2002 is given in Statement enclosed.

(b) and (c) Yes, Sir. Government have reduced the kerosene allocation to various States/Union Territories for the year 2002-2003, including Kerala, taking into account the number of LPG connections released during October, 2000 to November, 2001 in each of the State/Union Territory.

Statement

Name of State/UT	SKO allocation for the month of December, 2002 (in Metric Tonnes)
1	2
Andaman & Nicobar	476
Andhra Pradesh	45517

1	2
Arunachal Pradesh	816
Assam	21757
Bihar	53885
Chandigarh	1174
Chhattisgarh	12332
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	250
Daman & Diu	190
Delhi	15738
Goa	1833
Gujarat	65098
Haryana	12994
Himachal Pradesh	4709
Jammu & Kashmir	8441
Jharkhand	18064
Karnataka	41719
Kerala	19730
Lakshadweep	73
Madhya Pradesh	41477
Maharashtra	113936
Manipur	1738
Meghalaya	1717
Mizoram	563
Nagaland	1111
Orissa	26453
Pondicherry	1109
Punjab	22678
Rajasthan	34767
Sikkim	533
Tamil Nadu	48560
Tripura	2629
Uttar Pradesh	105094
Uttaranchal	8204
West Bengal	64898
All India (Total)	800263

Kerosene Outlets in Punjab

4688. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are considering to open new kerosene outlets in Punjab;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these outlets are likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) After the dismantling of Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM) with effect from 1.4.2002, the oil companies are free to choose locations and set up SKO-LDO dealerships in various parts of the country, including Punjab, depending upon economic viability.

Reduction of Gold Contents in Shields

4689. SHRI G.S. BASAVARAJ: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have proposed to reduce the gold content of awards presented by the International Film Festival Committee like Swarna Kamal;

(b) if so, whether such a move will dilute the sanctity of such awards and lower the dignity of both the Government and the recipient; and

(c) if so, the estimated saving from reducing the gold contents in awards medals and shields and extent to which this is going to relieve pressure on the budgetary deficit?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) A suggestion has been made to give a trophy and to increase the cash awards instead of using Gold/Silver for the National Film Awards and the Awards for the Competitive Section of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI). However, no decision regarding this change has been taken so far.

[*Translation*]

High Speed Patrolling Ship

4690. SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted any test of high speed patrolling ship;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the benefits likely to accrue therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Two high speed interceptor boats built by M/s ABG Shipyard were extensively tested by the Coast Guard for ascertaining their speed vis-a-vis the approved design specifications. These boats achieved the desired speed during trials.

(c) Induction of high speed interceptor boats would help the Coast Guard in the performance of its functions such as patrolling, search and rescue, interdiction of offending vessels etc.

[*English*]

Ayurveda System of Treatment

4691. SHRI P. RAJENDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ayurveda System of treatment is recognized by the World Health Organisation, but it is not adopted in the Railway hospitals;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken or proposed to be taken by the Government for adoption of Ayurveda System of treatment in Railway hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Ayurveda is a time tested Indian system of medicine and has been in vogue for a long time in the country. It has been recognized by World Health Organisation. However, Ayurveda has not been adopted in the Railway Hospitals.

Medical Services in Indian Railways have been developed in the last 150 years and sustained, based on

the specific requirements of Railway Organisation. Some important thrust areas being, Medical fitness certification of a large industrial work force spread across the country, which in turn is based on the modern diagnostic and therapeutic criteria, emergency medical care services to meet the needs of Railway beneficiaries, health prevention and promotion based modern medical system etc. Ayurveda will not meet these specific needs. There is no intention to develop parallel medical services in Ayurveda as civilian infrastructure is already existing. Several such Ayurveda facilities are already existing in adequate numbers. As on date, there is no proposal before the Ministry for adoption of Ayurveda system of treatment in Railway hospitals.

Norms for Re-employment to Ex-servicemen

4692. SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the norms prescribed for the recruitment/re-employment of Ex-servicemen;

(b) whether the Government proposes to lay greater emphasis on the hassle-free re-employment of Ex-servicemen; and

(c) if so, the guidelines sent to various departments/ State Governments in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) In order to provide re-employment opportunities to ex-servicemen in civilian departments the Central Government have provided for reservation in Group 'C' and Group 'D' vacancies for them. In Defence Security Crops 100% vacancies are reserved for ex-servicemen. In para-military forces 10% vacancies of Assistant Commandants are reserved for ex-servicemen. The Central Public Sector Undertakings and nationalized Banks also provide for reservation in Group 'C' and 'Group 'D' posts. Certain relaxations in educational qualification and in the prescribed maximum age limit for recruitment have also been provided for ex-Servicemen. The State Governments have been requested from time to time to provide reservation and other concessions for ex-Servicemen in State Government jobs as provided by the Central Government. However, because of the shrinking job opportunities in civil it has not been possible to provide employment to all the ex-Servicemen seeking employment assistance.

[Translation]

Irregularities in the Manufacturing of Rescue Submarine

4693. SHRI HARIBHAI CHAUDHARY:
SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have got any information regarding irregularities committed in manufacturing rescue submarine;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) whether the Government have fixed responsibility in this regard and if so, the persons held responsible therefor; and

(d) the action taken by the Government so far after fixing responsibility?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No Rescue submarines have been manufactured till date in the country.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

[English]

Construction/Expansion of High Court Building in Orissa

4694. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether any proposal from the Government of Orissa regarding financial allocation for construction/expansion of High Court building and residential units for Hon. Judges and other officers/staff in Cuttack city, has been pending with the Union Government for several months;

(b) if so, the time by which the proposed plan is likely to be approved by the Union Government; and

(c) the action taken by the Government so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) It is the primary responsibility of the State Government to provide infrastructural facilities for its High Court/Subordinate Courts. However, the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for the development of infrastructural facilities for the Judiciary covers construction of court buildings and residential accommodation for Judges/Judicial Officers covering High Courts and Subordinate Courts, and not the residential quarters for the Staff. The State Government of Orissa can utilise the funds allotted under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for construction of High Court building and residential units for Judges for the High Court. As per norms of the Scheme, the State Government is required to contribute equivalent matching share against the funds released by the Central Government.

The Department of Justice has received requests from various State Governments/High Courts for provision of funds to the tune of Rs. 648.47 crore for construction/expansion of High Courts, which includes a demand of Rs. 20.30 crore for construction/expansion of Orissa High Court building at Cuttack.

During 2002-2003, an amount of Rs. 18.00 crores has been provided by the Planning Commission for construction/expansion of various High Courts. Out of this, an amount of Rs. 27.01 lakhs has been tentatively earmarked to the Government of Orissa for construction/expansion of High Court building at Cuttack.

Inclusion of Bihar Under APDRP

4695. SHRI ARUN KUMAR: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any request from Government of Bihar and Members of Parliament to include some districts including some naxal affected districts of Bihar under Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP); and

(b) if so, the details of districts in Bihar have been included in APDRP so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir. However, while considering the schemes of Bihar for sanction under the Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP) no distinction has been made between naxal affected and non-naxal affected districts.

(b) Details of the districts of Bihar sanctioned under APDRP are as under:

Project Area	Scheme Cost (Rs. in Crore)
PESU (East)	43.85
Patna	46.49
Muzaffarpur	63.55
PESU (West)	46.63
Gaya	80.35
Bhagalpur	35.61
Chhapra	72.40
Darbhanga	59.86
Rohtas	72.82
Saharasa	45.61
Purnea	69.38
Addl. Metering [PESU (East), Patna and Muzaffarpur]	81.02
Total	717.57

Setting up of Anti Adulteration Cell

4696. SHRI KOLUR BASAVANAGOUD: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have set up an Anti Adulteration Cell to check adulteration of petrol, diesel, kerosene, etc. at Chennai;

(b) if so, whether the consumers from Karnataka have to register their complaints of adulteration at Chennai office;

(c) the number of petrol/diesel outlets and LPG dealers in Karnataka;

(d) whether the Government propose to set up such a cell at Bangalore to facilitate consumers in Karnataka State;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes,

Sir. The Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas has set up Anti Adulteration Cell, which has its headquarters at Delhi and four regional offices at Delhi, Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) At present, there are 1,111 Petrol/Diesel outlets and 451 LPG distributorships in Karnataka.

(d) to (f) Chennai Regional Office would be incharge of all the Southern States, including Karnataka and there is no proposal to set up any cell at Bangalore.

Benami LPG Agencies of BPCL in Delhi

4697. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 722 dated July 18, 2002 and state:

(a) whether the Government have since taken a final view and sought certain details from BPCL;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) Government have not taken a final view in the matter as the relevant details from the company are still awaited.

CBI Cases against GAIL Officials

4698. SHRI A.F. GOLAM OSMANI:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBI has registered case against senior officials of GAIL including former officials who have conspired to give a private oil company undue benefit at the exchequer's loss;

(b) if so, the facts and details thereof; and

(c) the action Government propose to take against the officials of GAIL who have been found in favouring to a private company and causes losses to the exchequer?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) CBI has registered a case No. 63 (A)/2002-DLI dated 14th November, 2002 under section 120 B of IPC read with section 13(2) and 13(1)(d) of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988 against some officials and former officials of GAIL.

As the matter is still under investigation, no action by the Government against the accused officials is contemplated at this stage.

Loco Running Staff

4699. DR. (SHRIMATI) C. SUGUNA KUMARI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether existing Loco running staff are required to put extra hours of work leading to fatigue bearing an adverse impact on safety of passengers in the Railways particularly in South Eastern Railway; and

(b) if so, the reasons thereof and reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No Sir. Running Staff working passenger trains are rostered as per crew links in which all statutory provisions of rest and working hours are complied with. However, Running Staff may have to work beyond the duty hours stipulated in the link in exceptional exigencies of accidents, floods, agitation, equipment failures, etc. only. duty hours of Loco Running Staff of entire Railways are monitored constantly.

(b) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Doubling and Electrification of Railway Routes

4700. SHRI THAWAR CHAND GEHLOT:
SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the railway lines doubled and electrified during the last three years, zone-wise and State-wise;

(b) the railway lines which are being doubled and electrified alongwith the date of completion thereof and the progress made so far in that work, project-wise;

(c) the expenditure incurred thereon, project-wise;

(d) the details of those railway lines in regard to which survey for doubling and electrification has been conducted, project-wise;

(e) whether the Government have also received certain representations for doubling and electrification of the railway lines during the current year; and

(f) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (f) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Purchase of Submarine from Mazagon Dock Limited

4701. SHRI ABDUL RASHID SHAHEEN:
SHRI SHIVAJI MANE:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Mazagon Dock Limited has received submarine purchase order from the Indian Navy or from any other country, during the last three years, till date;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that the said company receives maximum purchase orders?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Not Applicable.

(c) Government have approved a long term perspective plan for indigenous construction of submarines and acquisition of national competence in submarine building. Project 75 is part of this plan. Mazagon Dock

Limited, Mumbai has been identified as the yard to ultimately construct French designed Scorpene Submarines on successful completion of negotiations with the French Company. However, no final decision on the proposal has been taken.

(d) Supply orders are placed on shipyards including MDL, Mumbai for construction of ships/submarines depending upon the availability of resources, and technical capabilities of the shipyards.

[English]

Setting up of HPTs in Tenth Five Year Plan

4702. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:
SHRI Y.G. MAHAJAN:
DR. (SHRIMATI) SUDHA YADAV:
SHRI RAMDAS RUPALA GAVIT:
SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the number of High Power Transmissions (HPTs), of varying capacity have been set up during the Ninth Five Year Plan period, State-wise/U.T.-wise;

(b) the expenditure incurred thereon in each State/UT;

(c) the names of places where HPTs of varying capacity proposed to be set up/converted from low to high power during the Tenth Five Year Plan, State-wise/U.T.-wise;

(d) the outlay proposed therefor during the Tenth Five Year Plan in each State and Union Territory for the said purpose; and

(e) the time by which the proposed HPTs are likely to set up, location-wise?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that 58 HPTs of Doordarshan and 28 HPTs of AIR were commissioned during 9th Five Year Plan period. The State-wise details

of expenditure incurred on the above HPTs is given in Statement enclosed.

(c) and (d) The Tenth Plan proposals of AIR and Doordarshan are yet to be approved. Prasar Bharati has informed the State-wise plans are not formulated by AIR and Doordarshan.

(e) The HPTs presently under implementation are expected to be completed, in phases, during the next 3-4 years.

Statement

A-DOORDARSHAN

Expenditure incurred on HPTs commissioned during 9th Plan

State/UT	Expenditure (Rs. Lakhs)
Andhra Pradesh	1139.47
Assam	882.65
Bihar	540.27
Chhattisgarh	214.90
Goa	214.95
Himachal Pradesh	232.83
Jammu & Kashmir	2116.63
Jharkhand	684.80
Karnataka	1339.60
Kerala	1176.24
Madhya Pradesh	1927.85
Maharashtra	413.00
Manipur	228.02
Meghalaya	225.88
Orissa	1787.24
Pondicherry	587.02
Punjab	1354.54
Rajasthan	1606.77
Tamil Nadu	587.22
Tripura	430.87
Uttar Pradesh	3201.46
Uttaranchal	297.71
West Bengal	2167.60

B-ALL INDIA RADIO

Sl. No.	State	Place	Power	Replacement/ New	Capital Investment (Expenditure up to March 2002 Rs. in Lacs)
1.	Andhra Pradesh	Hyderabad	200 kW MW	Replacement of 50 kW MW	550.59
2.	A & N Islands	Port Blair	100 kW MW	Replacement of 20 kW MW	300.59
3.	Assam	Guwahati	100 kW MW	Replacement of 50 kW MW	284.50
4.	Chhattisgarh	Jagdalpur	100 kW MW	Replacement of 10 kW MW	349.35
5.	Delhi	Khampur	250 kW SW	Replacement of 50 kW SW	2249.01
6.	Delhi	Khampur	250 kW SW	Replacement of 50 kW SW	
7*.	Delhi	Khampur	250 kW SW	Replacement of 100 kW SW	2981.42
8*.	Delhi	Khampur	250 kW SW	Replacement of 100 kW SW	
9*.	Delhi	Khampur	250 kW SW	Replacement of 100 kW SW	
10.	Jammu-Kashmir	Srinagar	300 kW MW	Replacement of 200 kW MW	1054.86
11.	Jammu-Kashmir	Jammu	50 kW SW	Replacement of 2 kW SW	116.40
12*.	Jammu-Kashmir	Kargil	200 kW MW	New	606.16
13.	Jharkhand	Ranchi	50 kW SW	Replacement of 20 kW SW	507.89
14.	Kerala	Alleppy	200 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	458.65
15.	Madhya Pradesh	Indore	200 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	750.34
16.	Maharashtra	Nagpur	300 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	894.94
17.	Manipur	Imphal	300 kW MW	Replacement of 50 kW MW	697.48
18.	Nagaland	Kohima	100 kW MW	Replacement of 50 kW MW	273.04
19.	Orissa	Cuttack	300 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	785.79
20.	Orissa	Sambalpur	100 kW MW	Replacement of 20 kW MW	345.00
21.	Orissa	Jeypore	50 kW SW	New	605.00
22.	Punjab	Jalandhar	200 kW MW	Replacement of 50 kW MW	401.65
23.	Rajasthan	Jodhpur	300 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	859.85
24.	Uttar Pradesh	Gorakhpur	100 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	282.96
25.	Uttar Pradesh	Aligarh	2 x 250 kW SW	Replacement of 2 x 50 kW SW	2077.83
26*.	Uttar Pradesh	Najibabad	200 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	98.42
27.	West Bengal	Kolkata	200 kW MW	Replacement of 100 kW MW	466.15
28.	West Bengal	Kurseong	50 kW MW	Replacement of 20 kW SW	418.85

*Schemes under implementation.

[Translation]

Improvement In Performance of HEC

4703. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:
SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA:

Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to review the functions of the management system in view of the fall in the performance of Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd. (HEC);

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to improve the performance of this industry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) to (c) The functioning of the Heavy Engineering Corporation Ltd. (HEC) and its top management has been reviewed by the Government from time to time. The performance of the company had marginally improved during 2001-02 compared to 2000-01 as indicated below:—

(Rupees in crore)

Performance	2001-02	2000-01
Production	162.00	147.00
Net Sales	152.00	145.00
Net Loss	173.78	189.26

(d) Besides carrying out periodic reviews this Ministry renders all possible assistance to HEC. Further, a committee has been constituted to identify domestic and global opportunities for PSEs under this Department in the current business environment and pool together the synergies and experiences for improving their performance.

[English]

HIV Positive Cases In Armed Forces

4704. SHRI AMAR ROY PRADHAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that thousands of Jawans are HIV positive in Indian Armed Forces;

(b) if so, the number of such Jawans, category-wise;

(c) whether any indepth study has been made to find out reasons;

(d) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to motivate the army personnel not to indulge in such activities and check this evil disease among army personnel?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (e) Data collected through the AIDS Control Organization, AFMC Pune, the three Service Referral Centres for HIV/AIDS and Management Information System Organization (Medical and Health) have revealed prevalence of HIV positive cases among Jawans in the Indian Armed Forces. However, the number of such cases in the Armed Forces is lower than the national average.

Preventive steps taken by the Government to check spread of the disease among the Armed Forces personnel include stepping up of health education activities on prevention and control of HIV/AIDS through audio-visual and other medium. Such activities are undertaken by medical, nursing, para-medical staff and also by Commanders at all levels and religious teachers. A video film highlighting the causes and prevention of HIV/AIDS specifically among the Armed Forces Personnel has been developed and distributed to all Units for exhibition.

Samarjan Railway Bridge

4705. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Samarjan Railway Bridge, District Dhemajli, Assam has been washed away in flood;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the reconstruction work of Samarjan Railway Bridge is likely to be completed; and

(d) the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) No Railway bridge at Samarjan area was washed away. However, approach embankment of Pile Bridge (Bridge

No. 347-C) between stations Gogamukh and Dhemaji was washed away during the floods in 2002. Restoration of approach embankment has been completed with expenditure of approximately Rs. 23.50 lacs.

[Translation]

Opening of Military Schools

4706. DR. (SHRIMATI) SUDHA YADAV: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Haryana to open military and Sainik Schools;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time by which the proposal is likely to be cleared by the Union Government;

(d) the reasons for not clearing the said proposal till date; and

(e) the number of Military and Sainik Schools are to be opened in the country in near future, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Sainik School in a State is opened after a specific request is received from the concerned State Government agreeing to provide required infrastructure in the form of land, buildings, equipments etc. and special grants-in-aid for establishment and running of the Sainik School.

Requests have been received from Government of Haryana for opening of two Sainik Schools (in village Matenhail, district Jhajjar and village Palli Gothra, district Rewari) and a Military School in Haryana in the memory of Ch. Devi Lal.

(c) and (d) Government of Haryana are yet to give a positive response to provide necessary infrastructure and meeting fully the financial commitments for opening and running of Sainik Schools in Haryana. There is no plan to consider any proposal to open new Military schools anywhere.

(e) Except for proposal for opening of two Sainik Schools in Bihar, no other proposals, meeting the laid down requirements, are under consideration with the Ministry of Defence.

[English]

Issue of Work Orders of ATF/HSD by IOCL

4707. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the oil companies specially IOCL is issuing work orders of ATF/HSD to such tankers having the permission and capacity of 24 KL Hexane only;

(b) if so, whether it is not a gross violation of explosive rules, Motor Vehicle Act, pollution rules transportation guidelines of the oil companies;

(c) if so, the names of officials of oil corporation responsible for issuing such wrong work orders; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken against such officials to avoid the repetition of violation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Work Orders were placed by Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) for utilization of Tank Trucks in different States having permission for 24 KL Hexane, which is class 'A' (Dangerous product) petroleum product. Tank Trucks having permission for carrying class 'A' petroleum product were used for transportation of ATF, which is class 'B' (Non Dangerous product) petroleum product to meet emergent requirements.

(b) Tank Trucks having permission of explosive department for carrying Hexane (class 'A') are used on Non-Dangerous petroleum product (class 'B') such as ATF/HSD also. It is the responsibility of the transporter to comply with the provisions of Motor Vehicles Act.

(c) and (d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Purchase of IT Systems by ONGC

4708. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the ONGC have received representations from Members of Parliament about various irregularities and corruption in I.T. Department;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the contract of maintenance of computers have been given to a particular company in violation of rules;

(d) if so, the facts thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government/ONGC on the representations received from Members of Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of House.

Use of Ash

4709. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the quantum of ash emanating from Suratgarh Super Thermal Power Station everyday and the quantum which is lying at present around this power station;

(b) the names of other Thermal Power Stations which emanate ash in heavy quantum;

(c) whether the Government have formulated any scheme for proper use of this ash; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) According to Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam, the quantum of fly ash emanating every day from Suratgarh Super Thermal Power Station in Rajasthan is 4100 Metric Tonne. The quantum of fly ash, which got accumulated at this Power Station upto October, 2002 was 28.366 lakh Metric Tonne.

(b) The names of the other Thermal Power Stations which are emanating ash in heavy quantum are given in Statement enclosed.

(c) Yes, Sir.

A Fly Ash Mission was set up in 1994 to promote the utilization of fly ash in the country by generating confidence in the user agencies regarding feasible modes

of its utilization in the country. The Mission has been playing a useful catalytic role in increasing the utilization of fly ash in the country. At present, about 19 Million tonnes of fly ash constituting 22% of the fly ash produced in the country is being utilized. This has increased from 2.739 Million Tonnes of fly ash constituting about 6.61% in 1995-96.

Ministry of Environment & Forests (MOEF) have issued a Gazette Notification dated 14.09.1999 regarding utilization of fly ash. The Notification, inter-alia, requires 100% utilization of fly ash for all new power plants within 9 years as well as 100% use of fly ash for all existing power plants within 15 years. The Notification enjoins upon the thermal power plants to draw up the action plan for utilization/disposal of the fly ash. A High Level Committee has been set up under the Chairmanship of Secretary (E&F) to monitor the implementation of the provisions of the Notification.

(d) The question does not arise.

Statement

List of Thermal Power Stations Emitting Fly Ash

S. No.	State/Utility	Name of TPS
1	2	3
Andhra Pradesh		
1.	Andhra Pradesh Power Generation Co. (APGENCO)	Kothagudem
2.	-do-	Kothagudem V
3.	-do-	Nellor
4.	-do-	Ramagundem B
5.	-do-	Rayalseema
6.	-do-	Vijaywada
7.	National Thermal Power Corporation Ltd. (NTPC)	Ramagundem
Assam		
8.	Assam State Electricity Board	Bongaigaon
Bihar		
9.	Bihar State Electricity Board	Barauni

1	2	3
10. -do-		Muzaffarpur
11. NTPC		Kahalgaon
	Chhattisgarh	
12. Chhattisgarh State Electricity Board		Korba East
13. -do-		Korba West
14. BALCO		BALCO
15. -do-		Korba
	Delhi	
16. Delhi Vidyut Board		Indraprastha
17. -do-		Rajghat
18. NTPC		Badarpur
	Gujarat	
19. Ahmedabad Electricity Co.		Sabarmati
20. Gujarat Electricity Board		Wanakbori
21. -do-		Gandhinagar
22. -do-		Kutch
23. -do-		Sikka
24. -do-		Ukai
25. Gujarat Industrial Power Corporation Ltd. (GIPCL)		Surat Lignite
	Haryana	
26. Haryana Power Generation Corporation Ltd.		Faridabad
27. -do-		Panipat
	Jharkhand	
28. Tenughat Vidyut Nigam Ltd.		Tenughat
29. Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC)		Bokaro 'A'
30. -do-		Bokaro 'B'
31. -do-		Chandrapura
32. Jharkhand State Electricity Board (JSEB)		Patratu

1	2	3
33. Trombay Power Co.		Jojo Bera
	Karnataka	
34. Karnataka Power Corporation Ltd. (KPCL)		Raichur
	Madhya Pradesh	
35. NTPC		Vindhyachal
36. Madhya Pradesh State Electricity Board (MPSEB)		Satpura
37. -do-		Amarkantak
38. -do-		Sanjay Gandhi
	Maharashtra	
39. Bombay Suburban Electricity Supply Ltd. (BSES)		Dahanu
40. Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB)		Bhusaval
41. -do-		Chandrapur
42. -do-		Khaperkheda
43. -do-		Koradi
44. -do-		Nasik
45. -do-		Paras
46. -do-		Parli
47. Trombay Power Co.		Trombay
	Orissa	
48. Orissa Power Generation Co. Ltd. (OPGCL)		Ib
49. NTPC		Talcher Kaniha
50. -do-		Talcher Thermal
	Punjab	
51. Punjab State Electricity Board (PSEB)		Bhatinda
52. -do-		Lehra Mohabat
53. -do-		Ropar

1	2	3
Rajasthan		
54.	Rajasthan Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (RRVUNL)	Kota
55.	-do-	Suratgarh
Tamil Nadu		
56.	Neyveli Lignite Corporation (NLC)	Neyveli I
57.	-do-	Neyveli II
58.	Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB)	Tuticorin
59.	-do-	Mettur
60.	-do-	North Chennai
61.	-do-	Ennore
Uttar Pradesh		
62.	NTPC	Dadri
63.	-do-	Rihand
64.	-do-	Singarauli
65.	-do-	Unchahar
66.	-do-	Tanda
67.	UP Rajya Vidyut Utpadan Nigam Ltd. (UPRVUNL)	Harduaganj
68.	-do-	Obra
69.	-do-	Panki
70.	-do-	Anpara
71.	-do-	Parichha
West Bengal		
72.	Calcutta Electric Supply Co.(CESC)	B.B.G.S.
73.	-do-	S.G.S.
74.	-do-	T.G.S.
75.	NTPC	Farakka
76.	West Bengal Power Development Corporation Ltd. (WBPDC)	Bandel
77.	-do-	Santalidih
78.	-do-	Kolaghat

1	2	3
79.	-do-	Bakreshwar
80.	Durgapur Power Ltd. (DPL)	Durgapur
81.	-do-	Mejia
82.	Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC)	Durgapur

Capital Investments made in BPCL and HPCL

4710. SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN:
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total capital investments made initially in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited, unit-wise;

(b) the capital investment made thereafter in each of these units; and

(c) the total capital investment as on March 31, 2000 and the Government's share therein?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The total capital investments made initially by the Government in Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (BPCL) was Rs. 25.72 crore, and in Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) Rs. 36.39 crore.

(b) An amount of Rs. 2.04 crore was spent in 1983-84 in BPL towards payment of partly paid equity shares.

(c) Government's equity holding as on 31.3.2000 in HPCL was 17,30,76,750 equity shares of Rs. 10/- each representing 51% of the issued share capital, and 9.93 crore equity shares of Rs. 10/- each representing 66.20% of the paid up capital in BPCL.

[English]

Payment of Service Tax

4711. SHRIMATI PRABHA RAU:
SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether various private channels have failed to pay the 5% service tax on the payments received by them for advertisements;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) since when the payment of 5% service tax became due and the outstanding amount of tax against each channel; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to recover the outstanding dues?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (d) The Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

ONGC Strength

4712. SHRI CHADA SURESH REDDY:
SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has more officers than workers resulting in unrest in certain categories; and

(b) the steps proposed to review the top sided organisational structure of ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) As on 01.10.2002 the manpower strength of Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) was 23,734 executives and 16,093 non-executives. ONGC has reported that there is no unrest and the industrial relations are quite peaceful. However, in view of the new increasingly competitive and challenging environment, ONGC has embarked upon an organisational restructuring exercise to address the imbalances in availability and requirement of manpower through Corporate Rejuvenation Campaign.

Rural Electrification in Meghalaya

4713. SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have received any proposal from the Government of Meghalaya for allocation funds for rural electrification during the Tenth Plan period;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Meghalaya State Electricity Board (MeSEB) has formulated an action plan to achieve 100% village electrification in the 10th Plan pursuant to Resolution of the Chief Minister's Conference held on 3rd March, 2001 to complete electrification of all villages by 2007 and coverage of all house holds by 2012. MeSEB proposed to electrify 2904 villages and 2904 Tribal bastis in the 10th Plan at an estimated outlay of Rs. 323.69 crores.

(c) MeSEB proposes to meet the requirement of funds for village electrification under Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) and Minimum Needs Programme (MNP). Government has released an amount of Rs. 75.00 lakhs under Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources to Meghalaya during 2001-02 for electrification of tribal villages.

- Against an allocation of Rs. 4112.00 lakhs for all the six components including rural electrification an amount of Rs. 2055.98 lakhs has been released as the first instalment (50%) to Meghalaya during 2002-03. An allocation of Rs. 6.00 crores has been made for rural electrification during 2002-03.
- Against an allocation of Rs. 30 crore under MNP for 2002-03, Government has released an amount of Rs. 15.00 crores to Meghalaya.
- States can also access funds from Rural Electrification Corporation (REC), Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) for the programme.
- REC have formulated new schemes for electrification of dalit bastis and hamlets at lower rate of interest.

[Translation]

New Technology Engines

4714. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have developed a new engine in the wake of frequent accidents of the passenger trains;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the names of the trains which are likely to be provided with new technology engines; and

(d) the total number of such engines required in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir. However, an exercise is currently in hand to finalize crew friendly features/amenities, which can be provided in drivers cab to reduce fatigue and improve the working conditions. These features are expected to enable the drivers to be vigilant and free from fatigue thus creating safer operating conditions.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

National Commission for Review of Constitution to set up National Judicial Commission

4715. SHRIMATI JAYABEN B. THAKKAR: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Commission for Review of the Constitution has suggested to set up a National Judicial Commission for ensuring the Government's participation in going into the complaints of incompetence and misbehaviour of the judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts and in the appointment of judges of the Apex Court; and

(b) if so, the details in regard to progress made in this matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) While the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution has recommended the establishment of a National Judicial Commission under the Constitution for the Supreme Court only, the Government is committed to setting up a National Judicial Commission for judicial appointments in the Supreme Court and the High Courts as also to evolve a Code of Ethics for the Judges. As it involves constitutional amendment hence consultation with political parties is going on.

Investment by NRIs in PSUs

4716. SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to formulate a scheme for alluring Non-Resident Indians to invest in public sector undertakings; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) The general policy and facility for Foreign Direct Investment as available to foreign investors/companies are fully applicable to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) as well. In addition, Government have extended concessions specially to NRIs and Overseas Corporate Bodies (OCBs) having more than 60% stake by NRIs. These, among others, include (i) NRI/OCB investment permitted in the real estate and housing sectors and domestic airlines sector upto 100% (ii) NRIs and OCBs are permitted to invest upto 40% in the banking sector, and (iii) individual NRIs can invest beyond 24% in Small Scale Industries in the first instance provided they do not have a stake in any other industrial undertaking.

[English]

LPG through Pipelines

4717. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether LPG-pipeline are being laid in different cities of the country for supplying gas to the households directly;

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to protect these pipelines from sabotage by anti-social elements and terrorists; and

(c) the steps taken to safeguard gas supply against any unforceable incidents on fire etc.?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) have taken initiative to supply LPG through bulk LPG/cylinder manifold installation (piped/reticulated system) to domestic customers on pilot basis in some of the cities of the country.

(b) and (c) The above mentioned system is captive for the user housing complex and it does not have access to the public; hence, sabotage by anti-social elements/terrorists does not apply.

Availability of Auto Pilots

4718. SHRI CHANDRA VIJAY SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to non-availability of Auto Pilots on Indian Air Force Jaguar aircraft resulted in loss of four aircraft costing Rs. 141.40 crores and the lives of three pilots;

(b) if so, the reasons for the delay in purchase of this important and vital facility; and

(c) the steps being taken against those responsible for loss of equipment and lives?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Defence Ties with USA

4719. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR:
SHRI ANANTA NAYAK:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal for expansion of bilateral defence cooperation with United States of America;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government also have a proposal to explore avenues in commercial defence ties with United States; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in that regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Bilateral defence cooperation between India and the U.S. is being promoted through the India-US Defence Policy Group set up in 1995. The DPG has met four times in the last seven years, to discuss defence cooperation in an increasing number/variety of areas including service-to-service cooperation. It would not be in the interest of national security to give full details of such defence cooperation.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Discussions on commercial defence ties with the US is still at a preliminary/nascent stage. It would not be

in the public interest to give further details regarding such discussions.

[Translation]

Expansion of Cantonment Area

4720. SHRIMATI JAYASHREE BANERJEE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Cantonment Board has sent any proposal to expand the cantonment area of Jabalpur;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Question do not arise.

[English]

Progress on Project in Kargil

4721. SHRI HASSAN KHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the present status of Chutok Project in Kargil District;

(b) whether Nimoo-Bazgo project now changed to new site at Alchy-Saspole in Leh district; and

(c) the details of both these projects in Ladakh which were taken up by NPHC in 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Chutak Hydro-electric Project (18 MW) in Kargil District and Nimoo Bazgo HE Project (24 MW) in Leh District of Jammu & Kashmir were entrusted by the Government of Jammu & Kashmir to the National Hydro-electric Power Corporation (NHPC) for execution in the Central Sector in July 2000, consequent upon a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Government of Jammu & Kashmir and the Government of India.

Survey and investigation works under Stage-I of hydro project development are under process for preparation of a pre-feasibility Report in respect of the Chutak HE Project. The Ministry of Environment and Forests has accorded Stage-I site clearance for the project for undertaking the requisite survey & investigation activities and for collecting environmental data.

NHPC, after carrying out extensive desk studies has identified an alternative site for the Nimoo Bazgo HE Project in view of the high project and generation cost at the earlier site. A joint team of officers from National Hydro-electric Power Corporation, Central Electricity Authority, POWERGRID and Jammu & Kashmir Power Development Corporation inspected the proposed new site and concluded that it was suitable for construction of a dam and power house. Investigation works required for preparation of the pre-feasibility report of the project at the new site near Alchi are nearing completion.

[*Translation*]

Losses to LPG Projects Run by ONGC

4722. DR. SUSHIL KUMAR INDORA:
SHRI NAWAL KISHORE RAI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the LPG projects operated by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation have to suffer huge losses on account of its inability to sell products;

(b) if so, the project-wise quantum of the loss suffered by ONGC during the last six months of the current year alongwith the name of the product, project-wise;

(c) the details of the institutions having purchase agreement with these projects; and

(d) the details of institutions violating the above mentioned agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) At present, Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) produced by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC) is being marketed through the public sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs), and the upliftment of LPG by these OMCs have been in line with the estimated figures of production, the actual production by ONGC and market demand.

Cheating and Misleading of Uneducated Rural Passengers

4723. SHRIMATI SUSHILA SAROJ: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of cheating and misleading the passengers and particularly the uneducated rural

labourers by touts at Patna, Muzzaffarpur, Darbhanga Samastipur and Chhapra stations of Bihar have continuously been increasing;

(b) if so, whether the Government are contemplating to take action against these agents and ticket collectors;

(c) if so, the details of the action taken by Government in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) Some instances have come to notice. To prevent touts and anti-social elements indulging in such malpractices, frequent checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance departments and sometimes in association with the Police, at all major stations including Patna, Muzzaffarpur, Darbhanga, Samastipur and Chhapra stations of Bihar. Persons found indulging in such malpractices are apprehended and prosecuted under relevant provisions of law. Disciplinary action is taken against the Railway staff, if found involved in such activities.

[*English*]

Accidents at Unmanned Level Crossings

4724. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of unmanned level railway crossings in the country at present, State-wise;

(b) the number of accidents occurred at unmanned level crossings in the country during the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the number of persons killed/injured in these accidents and compensation paid in each case;

(d) whether the Government propose to convert all unmanned crossing in manned crossing;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) The number of persons killed/injured during the last three years are as under:—

Year	Killed	Injured
1999-2000	201	228
2000-01	138	152
2001-02*	163	197*

*Figures are provisional.

As per decree of Motor Accident Claims Tribunal, compensation amounting to Rs. 2,43,725/- has been paid to the dependents of two road users in accidents at unmanned level crossings during the last three years. In the first case an amount of Rs. 91,186/- has been paid and Rs. 1,52,539/- has been paid in the second case.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

(f) As per the Codal provisions, manning of the level crossings necessitated due to increase in the road traffic is to be done at the cost of the State Govt./Road Authority normally. However, considering the grave consequences of the accidents at unmanned level crossings, Ministry of Railways have decided in the year 1999 to man 449 vulnerable/hazardous level crossings at Railway's cost depending upon the traffic volume and visibility considerations etc. subject to availability of the funds.

Statement

States	Unmanned Railway Crossings
1	2
Assam	431
Andhra Pradesh	1516
Bihar	1864
Delhi	02
Gujarat	2862
Haryana	378
Himachal Pradesh	290
Jammu & Kashmir	34
Karnataka	947
Kerala	313

1	2
Madhya Pradesh	1694
Maharashtra	1476
Manipur	1
Mizoram	1
Orissa	1157
Punjab	1019
Rajasthan	2115
Tamilnadu	1305
Tripura	19
Uttar Pradesh	3138
West Bengal	1491
Chandigarh	1
Pondicherry	9
Goa	2
Nagaland	1

The figures of accidents at unmanned level crossings are not maintained State-wise but Zone-wise. The number of accidents on Railways for the last three years are as under:—

Railway	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02
Central	7	5	6
Eastern	—	—	—
Northern	14	25	27
North Eastern	14	13	15
Northeast Frontier	4	5	2
Southern	8	6	9
South Central	12	12	10
South Eastern	5	5	8
Western	3	1	3
Konkan	—	1	—
Total	67	73	80

*Figures are provisional.

[Translation]

Import of Naphtha and Solvent by Private Companies

4725. SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH RAJUKHEDI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the private companies are permitted by the Government to import Naphtha and solvent;

(b) if so, the details of private companies permitted by the Government to import said petroleum products during the last three years;

(c) the quantum of solvent and Naphtha imported and the names of the ports where these products were unloaded;

(d) whether the Union Government have received the utilization reports of the said imported petroleum products from these private companies; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Naphtha is freely importable as per ITC (HS) classifications of export and import, 2002-07. An item, which is freely importable, can be imported without a licence by any person/company, while simultaneously observing the other formalities.

(b) to (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Foreign Investment for Power Generation

4726. SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether any assistance has been received from the foreign countries and organizations to augment power generation in the country during the last three years;

(b) if so, the details thereof, year-wise, and scheme-wise;

(c) the percentage of work completed till date, scheme-wise;

(d) whether any country has given its reaction in regard to work relating to power generation; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes, Sir. Power Sector has received assistance from foreign countries and organizations to augment power generation in the country.

(b) and (c) Scheme-wise details of assistance received from foreign funding agencies for Power generation during last three years is given in Statement enclosed.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Statement

Utilisation of External Assistance in Power Generation Projects during last 3 Years

(Rs. Cr.)

Sl. No.	Name of Project	Executing Agency	Funding Agency	1999-2000			2000-01			2001-02			Commissioning Schedule
				Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual	Budget	Revised	Actual	
				Estim. (Rs. Cr.)	Estim. (Rs. Cr.)	Utilis. (Rs. Cr.)	Estim. (Rs. Cr.)	Estim. (Rs. Cr.)	Utilis. (Rs. Cr.)	Estim. (Rs. Cr.)	Estim. (Rs. Cr.)	Utilis. (Rs. Cr.)	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1.	Simhadiri TPP	NTPC	JBIC (JY)	329.04	355.82	355.89	103.69	546.00	827.43	44.10	491.00	1055.29	Completed
2.	Faridabad Gas Based Proj.	NTPC	JBIC (JY)	262.38	262.36	262.71	116.98	116.98	127.80	0.00	0.00	0.00	Completed
3.	Unchahar-II TPP	NTPC	ADB (USD)	65.76	20.50	20.56	30.90	29.89	29.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	Completed

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
4.	Dulhasti HEP	NHPC	JBIC (JY)	23.00	26.24	33.45	46.95	73.00	69.62	95.53	86.05	86.05	Dec, 2003
5.	Dhauliganga HEP	NHPC	JBIC (JY)	167.00	140.00	103.69	222.00	141.00	136.00	311.92	203.95	190.32	Mar., 2005
6.	Tural H.E.P.	NEEPCO	JBIC (JY)	30.00	30.00	9.55	60.00	60.00	7.80	86.72	50.00	7.68	Jun 2006
7.	Asam Gas Based Proj.	NEEPCO	JBIC (JY)	16.00	16.00	19.65	37.00	37.00	23.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	Completed
8.	Nathpa Jhakri H.E.P.	NJPC	IBRD (USD)	171.00	100.00	102.85	127.00	74.00	74.00	83.00	94.00	113.00	Dec 2003
9.	Snsailam Left Bank H.E.P.	APGENCO	JBIC (JY)	200.00	205.00	203.20	177.00	177.00	180.76	122.44	112.28	122.57	Oct 2003
10.	Ghatghar Pumped Storage Proj.	Irrign. Dept./Gom	JBIC (JY)	30.00	25.00	27.73	40.00	87.20	84.06	149.59	149.59	128.45	Sep 2004
11.	North Madras TPP	TNEB	ADB (USD)	33.00	62.55	82.60	40.46	40.46	40.67	0.00	0.00	0.00	Completed
12.	Bakreshwar TPP	WBPDCL	JBIC (JY)	583.14	460.00	631.19	322.00	328.00	248.00	130.00	130.00	153.00	Completed
13.	Purulia Pumped Storage Proj.	WBSEB	JBIC (JY)	224.75	102.95	11.93	171.00	53.18	60.33	162.10	106.98	92.32	Dec 2006
14.	Teesta Canal H.E.P.	WBSEB	JBIC (JY)	9.62	9.62	22.51	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Completed
Total				2144.69	1816.04	1887.51	1495.13	1763.71	1909.81	1185.40	1423.85	1948.68	

[English]

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

Payment of Revenue by Foreign T.V. Channels

4727. SHRI V. VETRISILVAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether foreign television channel companies in the country are paying a meagre amount of revenue than the Indian television channel companies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have asked the foreign television channel companies to increase the revenue amount;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the response of those companies;

(e) whether a huge amount of Central revenue is outstanding against the foreign television channels;

(g) the steps being taken by the Government to realise the same?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (d) As informed by Deptt. of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, in terms of the information available in respect of Income Tax paid by satellite channels in India for financial year 2000-2001, the foreign television channel companies have on an average, paid higher amount of Income Tax than their Indian counterparts.

(e) to (g) As informed by Deptt. of Revenue, Ministry of Finance, separate statistics for Direct Teas outstanding against the foreign television channel companies are not centrally maintained. Whenever any instance of suppression of income by any person (including foreign television channel companies) comes to the knowledge of the Government, appropriate action as provided in the law is taken to prevent loss of revenue to the Government.

[Translation]

Trains from Jamnagar and Porbandar in Gujarat

4728. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the trains running from Jamnagar, Porbandar, Rajkot and Bhavnagar of Gujarat at present;

(b) the reservation quota allotted in first and second class coaches in these trains at each of these stations;

(c) whether Members of Parliament, Chambers of Commerce and Industries, Railway Passengers' Association and other associations have demanded in increase in the reservation quota;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon;

(e) whether the Railways propose to increase the reservation quota in these trains during 2003; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) to (f) Requests are received from time to time from various sources for allotment/enhancement of reservation quota. Periodical reviews of the quota are conducted from time to time and adjustments in reservation quotas at various stations are made, if found justified and feasible.

Statement

The details of the trains serving Jamnagar, Porbandar, Rajkot and Bhavnagar and the reservation quotas in First Class (FC) and Sleeper Class (SL) in these trains at above mentioned stations are given below. The reservations quotas mentioned below are one direction. The reservation quota in train Nos. 9263 and 9216 can be accessed by Rajkot, Jamnagar and Porbandar on first-come-first served basis. In trains Nos. 9018, 8402, 2477, 6337, 9265 and 5045, the access to the reservation quota has been given both to Rajkot and Jamnagar on first-come-first served basis.

Jamnagar:

Train No and Name		Reservation Quota in	
		FC	SL
1	2	3	4
1.	9263/9264 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Porbandar Express (bi-weekly)	—	633
2.	207/208 Viramgam-Okha East Passenger	—	—
3.	9017/9018 Bandra (T)-Jamnagar Saurashtra Janata Express	—	535
4.	8401/8402 Puri-Okha Express (weekly)	—	179
5.	9005/9006 Mumbai Central-Okha Saurashtra Mail	—	82
6.	203/204 Viramgam-Okha Mixed Fast Passenger	—	—
7.	247/248 Ahmedabad-Okha Fast Passenger	—	—
8.	2477/2478 Jammu Tawi-Jamnagar Express (weekly)	—	358
9.	6337/6338 Ernakulam-Okha Express (bi-weekly)	—	548
10.	9503/9504 Ahmedabad-Jamnagar/Rajkot Express	—	—
11.	9215/9216 Mumbai Central-Porbandar Saurashtra Express	—	331
12.	9265/9266 Dehradun-Okha Uttaranchal Express (weekly)	—	265

1	2	3	4
13.	5045/5046 Gorakhpur-Okha Express (weekly)	—	509
14.	211/212 Rajkot-Porbandar Express	—	—
Porbandar:			
1.	9267/9268 Okha-Porbandar Express (weekly)	—	469
2.	9215/9216 Mumbai Central-Porbandar Saurashtra Express	—	331
3.	213/214 Bhanvad-Porbandar Passenger	—	—
4.	9263/9264 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Porbandar Express (bi-weekly)	—	633
5.	205/206 Kanalus-Porbandar Passenger	—	—
6.	211/212 Rajkot-Porbandar Fast Passenger	—	—
7.	215/216 Bhanvad-Porbandar Passenger	—	—
Rajkot: B.G. Trains			
1.	9263/9264 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Porbandar Express (bi-weekly)	—	633
2.	207/208 Viramgam-Okha East Passenger	—	—
3.	9017/9018 Bandra (T)-Jamnagar Saurashtra Janata Express	—	535
4.	8401/8402 Puri-Okha Express (weekly)	—	179
5.	9005/9006 Mumbai Central-Okha Saurashtra Mail	—	290
6.	1465/1466 Jabalpur-Rajkot Express via Bina-Katni (bi weekly)	—	245
7.	203/204 Viramgam-Okha Mixed Fast Passenger	—	—
8.	247/248 Ahmedabad-Okha Fast Passenger	—	60
9.	2475/2476 Jammu Tawi-Hapa Express (weekly)	—	225
10.	2477/2478 Jammu Tawi-Jamnagar Express (weekly)	—	358
11.	1463/1464 Jabalpur-Rajkot Express (5 days a week) via Itarsi	—	150
12.	6333/6334 Trivandrum-Hapa Express (weekly)	—	572
13.	6337/6338 Ernakulam-Okha Express (bi-weekly)	—	532
14.	9503/9504 Ahmedabad-Jamnagar/Rajkot Express	—	—
15.	9215/9216 Mumbai Central-Porbandar Saurashtra Express	—	331
16.	6613/6614 Coimbatore-Rajkot Express (bi-weekly)	—	290
17.	7017/7018 Secunderabad-Rajkot Express (bi-weekly)	—	302
18.	9265/9266 Dehradun-Okha Uttaranchal Express (weekly)	—	265
19.	2905/2906 Howrah-Hapa Express (weekly)	—	511
20.	5045/5046 Gorakhpur-Okha Express (weekly)	—	509
21.	9505/9506 Ahmedabad Rajkot Express	—	—

1	2	3	4
22.	9501/9502 New Bhuj-Rajkot Anand Express	—	—
23.	211/212 Rajkot-Portbandar Fast Passenger	—	—
MG Trains			
1.	321/322 Rajkot-Wansjaliya Fast Passenger	—	—
2.	349/350 Rajkot-Visavadar Fast Passenger	—	—
3.	9837/9838 Rajkot-Veraval Mail (presently cancelled)	12	—
4.	347/348 Rajkot-Veraval Fast Passenger	—	—
5.	341/342 Rajkot-Veraval Fast Passenger	—	—
6.	329/330 Rajkot-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	8	—
Bhavnagar:			
1.	9925/9926 Surendranagar-Bhavnagar Mail (Cancelled due to gauge conversion)	—	—
2.	9947/9948 Dhola-Bhavnagar Girnar Link Express	12	76
3.	329/330 Rajkot-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	8	—
4.	375/376 Botad-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	—	—
5.	381/382 Palitana-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	—	—
6.	9935/9936 Ahmedabad-Bhavnagar Intercity Express	11	38
7.	301/302 Ahmedabad-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	—	—
8.	385/386 Palitana-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	—	—
9.	9909/9910 Ahmedabad-Bhavnagar Shetrunji Express	48	32
10.	383/384 Palitana-Bhavnagar Fast Passenger	—	—

[English]

Contractual Workers in ONGC, A.P.

4729. SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether highly qualified persons are working in ONGC Ltd., Krishna Godavari Project, Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh as Contractual/Society workers for the last over fifteen years as skilled/semi-skilled workers;

(b) the number of SC/ST/OBC & Minority Communities out of them;

(c) whether the Ministry of Labour had issued notification prohibiting the employment of contractual labour in various works in the establishment of the ONGC Ltd.;

(d) if so, whether the Hon'ble High Court of Hyderabad has also delivered a judgement to regularise the services of these workers; and

(e) if so, the reasons for not regularising Contractual/Society workers in ONGC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Irregularities in Army Recruitment

4730. SHRI KODIKUNNIL SURESH:
SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are several allegations regarding bribes/irregularities in recruitment against Army Recruitment Officers in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government of India have received any specific complaint against the officials;

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government thereon;

(e) whether the Government have issued any specific guidelines for the recruitment;

(f) if so, the details thereof;

(g) whether there are number of genuine candidates those are not getting chance for the recruitment; and

(h) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) A few complaints have been received regarding irregularities in Army recruitments by Zonal Recruiting Offices/Branch Recruiting Offices, cutting across State-borders. A large percentage of these complaints are anonymous/pseudonymous. Nevertheless, all complaints are investigated and due action is taken against persons found guilty. In a few cases specific complaints against the officials have also been received which have been duly investigated and punishment commensurate with the offence awarded.

The details of complaints received and punishment awarded are:—

Year	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002 (upto September 2002)
Total cases reported	92	82	102	100	70
Cases where punishment awarded	06	04	05	02	03
Individuals awarded punishment	08	04	05	02	07

(e) Yes, Sir.

(f) As per the guidelines issued for recruitment, all recruitment for the Army is done through the open rally system. These rallies are conducted by members pooled from different Branch Recruiting Offices to ensure impartiality. The recruitment process consists of written examination and physical and medical tests. The entire process takes place in full view of the public. The system has been made open, transparent, fair and candidate friendly.

(g) No, Sir.

(h) Does not arise.

Calcutta High Court's Decision to Stop Cow Slaughtering on Bakri-Id

4731. SHRI SHRINIWAS PATIL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that the Calcutta High Court while deciding writ petition No. 709 on August 28, 1982 held that on the day of Bakri Id slaughters of cow and its progeny shall remain stopped;

(b) whether the West Bengal Government filed appeal against High Court in the Supreme Court during 1983;

(c) whether the Supreme Court while deciding appeal during November, 1994 declared the slaughter of cow and its progeny on Bakri-Id, illegal;

(d) whether in spite of the judgment of the Supreme Court on cow slaughter etc. having been published in AIR 1995 Supreme Court page 464 a few lakhs cows are being slaughtered on the said day in gross contempt of the Supreme Court order; and

(e) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Shri Ashutosh Lahiri and Others filed a writ petition No. 709 of 1971 before the Calcutta High Court, challenging the validity of exemption of slaughter of scheduled animal, namely cows, from the operation of the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1950 on Bakri-Id day. By its judgment dated 20.8.1982, the Division Bench of the High Court allowed the petition and issued a mandamus to the State of West Bengal and its delegate officers calling upon them to forbear from giving any exemption under Section 12 of the West Bengal Animal Slaughter Control Act, 1950 in respect of slaughter of cows on the occasion of Bakri-Id day thereafter. The respondents (State of West Bengal and 27 others) filed SLPs against the judgment of the Calcutta High Court before the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in the year 1983 and vide its judgment dated 16.11.1994, the Hon'ble Supreme Court confirmed the decision of the High Court and dismissed the appeals.

(d) and (e) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

PSUs in Orissa

4732. SHRI ANANTA NAYAK: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of public sector undertakings in Orissa under his Ministry;

(b) the amount of investment made by those PSUs during the last three years;

(c) whether some of those PSUs are incurring losses; and

(d) if so, since when these are running in losses and the total losses incurred by those PSUs, PSU-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) No Public Sector Undertaking under the Department of Heavy Industry is located in the State of Orissa.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Railway Dispensaries at Bahadurgarh and Sonapat

4733. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a public demand for opening of Railway dispensaries at Bahadurgarh and Sonapat;

(b) if so, whether a number of representations have been received by the Railways in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) There was a demand for opening of a Railway dispensary at Sonapat. A dispensary has been opened at Sonapat which is functioning effectively. No demand/representation has been received for opening of a Railway dispensary at Bahadurgarh.

Alternative Arrangement at Idichakkaplamoodu

4734. SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide alternative arrangement by demolishing the existing structure of unsafe over bridge at Idichakkaplamoodu following land slide in Thiruvanantharam-Nagercoil rail route;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which it is likely to be provided?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The work has already been sanctioned at the cost of Rs. 2484.27 lakhs. General arrangement drawing has also been finalised and approved and soil investigation at the site for foundation is also in progress. It will be reconstructed in lieu of Road Over Bridge (ROB) No. 116 at Km. 246/16-17 at Idichakkaplamoodu.

(c) The Road Over Bridge is expected to be completed within 18 months.

[Translation]

Regularisation of Doctors

4735. SHRI BRAJ MOHAN RAM: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether some ayurvedic and homoeopathic doctors have been working for 10-15 years on part time basis in various divisions and rail factories under the

Ministry of Railways and the proposal to regularise their services is lying pending for the last five years;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether it is mandatory to regularise the services of part time ayurvedic and homoeopathic doctors on the allopathic pattern from May 1, 2000;

(d) if so, the reasons behind non-regularisation of the services of such doctors from May 1, 2000;

(e) whether the Government have also received requests from the various MPs/MLAs in this regard; and

(f) if so, the details thereof and action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA):

Statement

(a) to (f) A total of 154 Ayurvedic/Homoeopathic practitioners are engaged on Honorary basis and their services are utilized for 2 to 4 hours per day. The practitioners are paid fixed honorarium ranging from Rs. 2,500 to 3,000 per month. These practitioners, as already brought out, are not Railway employees, and there are no proposals pending before the Board for their regularisation. It is also submitted that it is not mandatory to regularise their services on the allopathic pattern from May 1, 2000. Some Hon'ble Members of Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) have made representations on their behalf for their regularization, and the position has been duly explained to the Hon'ble MPs and MLAs in the replies given by the Board.

Hon'ble Lok Sabha Petitions' Committee received a representation from certain Homoeopathic Medical practitioners on the same matter and Hon'ble Lok Sabha Petitions Committee sought replies in support of the oral evidence tendered by the Railway Board which were submitted, in compliance.

[English]

Contract Engineers in EIL

4736. SHRI PRAVIN RASHTRAPAL:
SHRI P.S. GADHAVI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received a large number of representations regarding implementation of High Powered Committee recommending the re-appointment of contract Engineers in the Engineers India Ltd. (EIL);

(b) whether EIL have not taken any contract engineer during the last 3 years inspite of the recommendations of the High-Powered Committee;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government will enquire into the lapses on the part of management of EIL and accept the recommendations of the Committee; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Some representations have been received for implementation of recommendations of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation about contract employees of Engineers India Limited (EIL).

(b) to (e) EIL in June, 2000 had decided to fill up 50% of the vacancies/requirement of Management Trainees on an annual basis from contract engineers. Such vacancies were to be filled up from the contract engineers working in the company or who have left the service of the company on completion of contract period/foreclosure of contract, and meet the selection criteria. However, no Management Trainee has been recruited by EIL since the year 2000 in view of less quantum of workload/business in hand.

The recommendations of the Committee on Subordinate Legislation were examined by the Government. However, the same could not be accepted in toto.

[Translation]

Setting up Engineering Colleges

4737. COL. (RETD.) DR. DHANI RAM SHANDIL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of the engineering colleges operating in the country at present for imparting training to the Air Force personnel;

(b) the number of personnel being imparted training every year;

(c) whether these colleges are not adequate to provide requisite number of engineers, aircraft technicians, mechanical and electronic engineers to the Air Force;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to set up independent engineering colleges; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) At present, no separate engineering college is being run in the country for imparting training only to Air Force personnel.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) and (e) A proposal for setting up an Air Force Engineering College is under examination.

CNG Facilities at Petrol Pumps

4738. DR. BALIRAM:

SHRI RAM RATI BIND:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the petrol pump owners in Delhi who have applied for CNG filling facility at their pumps;

(b) the dates on which they have applied for the purpose and action taken in each of the cases;

(c) the details of the retail outlets shortlisted by the Indraprastha Gas Limited in consultation with the oil companies in Delhi and whether the applicants who have applied for CNG facilities have been included therein;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Requests are received from time to time retail outlets of oil marketing companies for installation of CNG facilities at their retail outlets. Based on technical feasibility CNG facilities are being created at the retail outlets in a phased manner. So far, CNG facilities have been provided at 35 retail outlets of oil marketing companies. Further, 40 more technically feasible retail outlets have been identified for providing CNG facilities in a phased manner. List of 40 short-listed retail outlets is given in statement enclosed.

Statement

List of 40 Retail Outlets for CNG Facility Co-Location

S. No.	Station Name	Location	R.O.
1	2	3	4
1.	Auto Centre	Defence Colony	BPCL
2.	Auto Rink	Badarpur Mathura Road	BPCL
3.	Nemchand Tarachand	GT Karnal Road	BPCL
4.	Saksham Motors	Hari Nagar, Near DDU Hospital	BPCL
5.	Sidhu Service Station	GT Kamal Road	BPCL
6.	Associated Service Station	Sham Nath Marg	HPCL
7.	Batra Car Care	Humayun Road	HPCL
8.	Bhai Oil	Nizamuddin West	HPCL
9.	Chadda Oil Company	Shivaji Park	HPCL
10.	Chadha Service Station	Delhi Gate	HPCL

1	2	3	4
11.	Dhaura Kuan Service Station	Dhaura Kuan	HPCL
12.	Koushalya Automobiles	Friends Colony	HPCL
13.	Kundanlal Service Station	Wazirpur	HPCL
14.	Narayan	Timarpur	HPCL
15.	Panchshila Service Station	Andrews Ganj	HPCL
16.	Service Circle	Mathura Road	HPCL
17.	Deep Fuel Centre	Vikas Marg Extension, Karkardooma	HPCL
18.	Walia Service Station	Okhla	HPCL
19.	Amish Enterprises	Libaspur	IBP
20.	Ford Service Centre	Rangpuri	IBP
21.	Ganga Auto Aids	NH-8	IBP
22.	Paul	Maya Puri	IBP
23.	Rakesh FS	Varun Niketan	IBP
24.	SD Soin & Sons	Qudsia Road	IBP
25.	Satbir FS	IGI More	IBP
26.	Shrioil	Nodia TPT	IBP
27.	Bharat Service Station	Singho Border	IBP
28.	Ajit Motor	Delhi Cantt.	IOC
29.	Arora Service Station	Pitampura	IOC
30.	Auto Service	Punjabi Bagh	IOC
31.	Batra Service Station	Naraina	IOC
32.	Delhi Automobiles	Jasola	IOC
33.	Fortune Service Station	Rohini	IOC
34.	Gupta Service Station	Rao Tula Ram Marg	IOC
35.	Kailash Service Station	Amar Colony	IOC
36.	Ramesh Service Station	Mayapuri	IOC
37.	Sarita Service Station	Sarita Vihar	IOC
38.	Shiva Service Station	Pitampura	IOC
39.	Speedways SC	Jail Road	IOC
40.	Tuli	Punjabi Bagh	IOC

[English]

**Allotment of Petrol Pumps/LPG
Agencies to SCs/STs**

4739. SHRI GEORGE EDEN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have issued any notification regarding allotment of Petrol Pumps and LPG Agencies of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government has implemented that notifications; and

(d) if so, the total number of Petrol Pumps and LPG Agencies allotted to SCs/STs upto the end of the last calendar year, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) In the guidelines for selection of dealers/distributors for retail outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships/SKO-LDO dealerships issued by the Government, 25% reservation has been provided for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in the allotment of dealerships/distributorships.

As on 1.4.2002, there were 1881 retail outlet dealerships and 1269 LPG distributorships allotted to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, in operation in various States/UTs in the country.

Marketing by Oil Companies in Madhya Pradesh

4740. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of oil companies entrusted with the task of marketing in Madhya Pradesh; and

(b) the target of marketing the products set by each oil company and achievement made thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) At present, 4 Public Sector Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) namely, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), Hindustan

Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) and IBP Co. Limited are marketing the petroleum products in Madhya Pradesh.

(b) OMCs are selling the petroleum products mainly petrol, diesel and LPG as per the demand in various States of the country. Kerosene is an allocated product.

Oil Refinery at Paradeep

4741. SHRI PRABHAT SAMANTRAY:
SHRI PRASANNA ACHARYA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the total projected estimated cost for setting up oil Refinery at Paradeep by IOCL;

(b) the total expenditure incurred so far and the time by which it is likely to start functioning;

(c) whether there are any plans to convert the Refinery into crude oil depot; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) The project was approved at an estimated cost of Rs. 8,312 crore based on August 1999 prices.

(b) Total expenditure incurred on the project till date is Rs. 599 crore. The project completion schedule of the project are being reworked by IOCL.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Self-Employment Scheme by NTPC

4742. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NPTC has evolved various income generating and self-employment schemes;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the persons benefited by these schemes in different States, particularly in Maharashtra and Karnataka; and

(d) the steps taken by the NTPC to create more employment and awareness among the people for self-employment?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (d) For the benefit of Project Affected Persons (PAPs), National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) have formulated a comprehensive Resettlement & Rehabilitation (R&R) policy during May, 1993 which include the following options:

- (i) For self-employment schemes, the policy envisages a grant of Rs. 15000 to the willing PAPs to enable them to start self-employment schemes of their choice. NTPC facilitates the process through coordination with concerned Government agencies or the Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). They are also encouraged to undergo various training courses offered by Government institutions to improve their capacity and capability.
- (ii) For others, provisions like allotment of shops, award of petty contracts etc. were made.

Prior to formulation of the above R&R policy, there was no specific provision for the self-employment schemes. However, in such cases preference was given in shop allotment and award of petty contracts.

No specific scheme has been set up on the above in the States of Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Completion of CBI Investigation

4743. SHRI SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to refer to the answer given to USQ No. 3213 dated December 8, 2000 and state:

(a) whether CBI has since completed its investigation;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof and action taken thereon; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) CBI had registered from cases in connection with the granting of telecast and marketing rights for sports events to private firms. Their present status is given below:

S. No.	Case No. and Date of Registration	Allegation in brief	Action Taken/Present Status as on 15.11.2002
1	2	3	4
1.	RC. 1 (A)/2000-ACU. VIII/ND dt 8/11/2000	Alleged irregularities in awarding of contracts for marketing rights of French Open 1997 Tennis Tournament.	CVC have advised closure of case against two officers, namely, the then DG:DD and the then DDG (C&S) DD. CVC have also advised action as deemed fit against the then DDG (Sports) and the then DDG (Finance) under CCS (Conduct) Rules, on account of seizure of the gold coin embossed with Stracon. Action against them is being taken in consultation with DG:DD.
2.	RC. 2 (A)/2000-ACU. VIII/ND dt. 8/11/2000	Alleged irregularities in awarding of contract for marketing rights of Wimbledon 1997 Tennis Tournament.	CBI's recommendations have been received and the case has been referred to CVC for first stage advice on 14.3.2002.
3.	RC. 3(A)/2000-ACU. VIII/ND dt. 8/11/2000	Alleged irregularities in purchase of telecast rights of Independence Cup Cricket Tournament, 1997	Case has been closed in consultation with CVC and with the approval of the competent authority, as the allegations could not be proved.

1	2	3	4
4	RC. 4(A)/2000- ACU. VIII/ND dt. 8/11/2000	Alleged irregularities in purchase of telecast rights of ECC Knockout 1998 Cricket Tournament	CBI's recommendations have been received and the case has been referred to CVC for advice in September, 2002
5.	RC. 5 (A)/2000- ACU. VIII/ND dt. 8/11/2000	Alleged irregularities in purchase of telecast rights of World Cup Cricket Tournament, 1999	Case has been closed in consultation with CVC and with the approval of the competent authority, as the allegations could not be proved.

Incentives for Setting up of Hydro Power Projects

4744. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated any incentives package to independent power producers for setting up Hydro Power Projects in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any scheme for development of small hydro projects upto 3 to 25 MW capacity has been launched;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether private parties are being involve in the scheme;

(f) if so, the number of private parties who have came forward to set up the projects; and

(g) the number of projects approved and the total power capacity likely to be added by these projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M.

KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) Government accords high priority to the harnessing of the country's hydro potential. The strategy includes participation of independent power producers for setting up of hydro power projects. The investment policy has been made more attractive and provides for debt equity ratio up to 4:1; 100% foreign equity participation; liberalized rate of depreciation in respect of assets; import of equipment for power projects at concessional customs duty; 16% rate of return on equity and sale of power on a suitably structured two part tariff. New norms have also been notified for certain other incentives.

(c) and (d) Ministry of Non-conventional Energy Sources have announced a number of Schemes to encourage independent power producers for setting up Small Hydro Power (SHP) projects of upto 25 MW station capacity. These include incentives for Detailed Survey and Investigation; preparation of Detailed Project Reports; and Interest Subsidy for commercial projects. The details of various incentives under these Schemes are given in the statement enclosed.

(e) to (g) Yes, Sir. So far, 70 small hydro projects aggregating to 226 MW capacity have been set up by the private developers; and 47 projects aggregating to 177 MW capacity are under implementation.

Statement

Incentives to Independent Power Producers Under Small Hydro Power Programme

Schemes	Areas	Below 500 KW	500 KW upt to 1 MW	Above 1 MW & upto 5 MW	Above 5 MW & upto 15 MW	Above 15 MW & upto 25 MW
1	2	3	4	5		
Survey & Investigation	Plain	Upto Rs. 0.75 lakhs	Upto Rs. 1.00 lakhs	Upto Rs. 1.50 lakhs		
	Hilly	Upto Rs. 1.00 lakhs	Upto Rs. 2.00 lakhs	Upto Rs. 3.00 lakhs		

1	2	3	4	5
Detailed Project Report	Plain	Upto Rs. 0.75 lakhs	Upto Rs. 1.00 lakhs	Upto Rs. 1.50 lakhs
	Hilly	Upto Rs. 0.75 lakhs	Upto Rs. 1.00 lakhs	Upto Rs. 2.00 lakhs
Interest Subsidy for Commercial Projects	Plain	5.00%	2.50%	2.00% 1.50%
	Hilly & NE region	7.50%	5.00%	3.00% 2.00%

Maintenance Work of Mejia Thermal Power Station by U.T.P.L.

4745. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether U.T.P.L. company has got maintenance work contract in Mejia Thermal Power Station under the District of Bankura in West Bengal without any tender for ten years;

(b) if so, the extra ten percent of the estimated cost is likely to be given to U.T.P.L. company;

(c) the reasons for non-tendering;

(d) whether ten percent money is being given to U.T.P.L. to look after maintenance job; and

(e) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (e) M/s. Utility Powertech Ltd. (UPL) is a Joint Venture Company of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) & Bombay Suburban Electric Supply Company (BSES). At present M/s. Utility Powertech Limited has not been awarded maintenance contract in Mejia Thermal Power Station under the district of Bankura in West Bengal for a period of ten years. However, in pursuance of resolution of DVC Board to award contract work to M/s. UPL on the same techno-commercial terms as being awarded by NTPC, an umbrella agreement between DVC and M/s. Utility Powertech Limited was signed on 3.1.2002 for the maintenance job of different power stations. The agreement covers based guidelines on assignment of the maintenance jobs of thermal power stations. M/s. UPL may assign the job through tendering process to a contractor which will be accepted by DVC and for the said job, M/s. UPL will get profit @ 10% on contractor's

price of assigned job and the cost of managerial personnel. There is also provision for additional site overhead charges. This umbrella agreement has been signed between DVC and M/s. UPL in line with NTPC's similar umbrella agreement with M/s. UPL. The Plant Chiefs/Project Heads may consider awarding such contract work to M/s. UPL within the framework of the umbrella agreement.

Restrictions on Retired Judges

4746. SHRIMATI PRABHA RAU: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to consider imposing restrictions on the retired judges from accepting jobs, positions and engagements which may impinge on the credibility, dignity and independence of the higher judiciary; and

(b) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) No Sir. Article 124(7) of the Constitution of India prohibits a retired Judge of the Supreme Court to plead or act in any Court or before any authority within the territory of India. Similarly article 220 of the Constitution prohibits a retired Judge of High Court to plead or act in any Court or before any authority in India except the Supreme Court and the other High Courts. These restrictions are based on legal ethics, i.e. a person who has held office of a Judge in Supreme Court or High Court shall not plead or act before any authority where he is capable of influencing decisions.

However, article 128 and article 224A of the Constitution provide for utilising the services of the retired Judges of the Supreme Court and High Courts respectively, allowing them to sit in the respective Court after retirement as per the exigencies.

The retired Judges represent a pool of talent, well-versed in the art of adjudication and conversant with functioning process. Therefore, their services are often utilised by the Union and State Governments by appointing them in various Tribunals, Commissions of Inquires etc. For such appointments, sitting Judges of Supreme Court and High Courts cannot be spared due to the huge pendencies prevailing in various Courts. In fact, the Hon'ble Supreme Court of India in its recent judgment of 12.7.2002 in C.A. No. 3993 of 2002 (Arising out of SLP(C) No. 7482 of 2001)- T. Fenn Walter & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Ors. has discouraged the frequent appointments of sitting Judges of High Courts to Commission, Tribunals, etc., as the performance of other non-judicial work would create unnecessary burden on the Judges and it would affect the administration of justice.

Thermal Power Plants by NTPC in Kerala

4747. SHRI T. GOVINDAN: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have received any proposal from the Government of Kerala to set up thermal power plant either by NTPC or any other agency in the State for approval; and

(b) if so, the present status thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Central Electricity Authority (CEA) have accorded Techno-Economic Clearance (TEC) for setting up of thermal power plants in Kerala in case of the following projects:

Sl. No.	Name of the project/executing Agency/District	Capacity (MW)	Date of TEC Letter	Present Status
1.	Vypeen CCGT M/s. Siasin Energy Ltd., Ernakulam	679.2	25.09.1998	Escrow agreement and Financial Closure is yet to be achieved.
2.	Kannur CCGT M/s Kannur Power Projects (P) Ltd., Kannur	513	16.02.2000	-do-

Note : CCGT = Combined Cycle Gas Turbine

National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) have resorted to International Competitive Bidding (ICB) for sourcing of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG)/Natural Gas (NG)/Regassified LNG for its various existing/expansion gas projects including Kayamkulam. The expansion of Kayamkulam Combined Cycle Power Project is subject to availability of Liquefied Natural Gas at reasonable firm price/terms and commitment from beneficiaries to purchase power from the station.

Indian Oil LNG Consortium

4748. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh signed a MoU with Indian Oil Corporation Limited for Kakinada Indian Oil LNG Consortium (KIOLC) project;

(b) if so, the present position of the project; and

(c) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to complete the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Kakinada Indian Oil LNG Consortium (KIOLC) submitted a detailed project report for Kakinada LNG Project in February, 2001 to Government of Andhra Pradesh for its in-principal clearance for the LNG terminal along with an integrated 1000 MW power project. Government of Andhra Pradesh has also extended its support for implementation of the project by signing an MoU. The project will be implemented by the joint venture company to be formed by their partners of KIOLC.

Hitler Plane

4749. SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether PDA Engineering college, Bangalore had sold a rare World War-II vintage German MESSERSCHMITT BF 109E fighter bomber to a antique dealer in Bangalore;

(b) if so, whether the Indian Air Force has sought this are Hitler plane back from the party to whom it was sold; and

(c) if so, the steps taken by the Government to get back this plane of historical importance?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) It has been reported that the plane has been sold to an antique dealer in Bangalore.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Ministry of Defence has requested the Government of Karnataka to take necessary steps.

Sinking of Dry Dock

4750. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a Floating Dry Dock sunk Off Andaman Coast recently;

(b) if so, whether efforts are on to salvage the same; and

(c) the reason for sinking of the floating dry dock?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir.

(c) It is being investigated by a Board of Inquiry.

MBT of India

4751. SHRI SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the production of Arjun has been stalled;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Government are going to change the MBT of India;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the status of T-90 Tank with respect of MBT?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) to (e) With the induction of 124 fully formed imported tanks and production of 186 tanks through Semi Knocked Down (SKD) and Completely Knocked Down (CKD) kits, followed by indigenous production of 1000 tanks, T-90 is expected to be the Main Battle Tank (MBT)

of the Army till the end of the XII Plan. An indent has also been placed for 124 MBT Arjun tanks for raising one regiment each during the X & XI Plan periods.

Retail Outlets by HPCL and IBP

4752. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether H.P.C.L. has been allotting new dealerships to their existing dealers only on adhoc basis, and IBP has allotted adhoc dealerships to landowners only;

(b) if so, the reasons for following different criteria by the two Public Sector Companies;

(c) whether other Public Sector Oil companies have also been given such permission; and

(d) if so, the criteria approved to be followed by them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) has allotted retail outlet dealerships, on ad-hoc basis, through existing dealers for operating terminated dealerships and such dealerships for which dealers are not in place. So far, IBP has not allotted any approved Marketing Plan dealership on ad-hoc basis.

(b) to (d) With the dismantling of the Administered Pricing Mechanism (APM), Oil Marketing Companies are empowered to appoint their dealers on their commercial interest.

CNG Stations in A.P.

4753. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether HPCL has completed a survey to set up 34 CNG auto stations in various places in Andhra Pradesh;

(b) if so, the criteria used to determine the viability of some areas for location of such auto stations by HPCL;

(c) the cost of each auto station which would supply CNG;

(d) whether dealers have been selected by HPCL; and

(e) if so, the details of such selection of dealers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

[*Translation*]

Viable and Unviable Projects

4754. SHRI C.N. SINGH:
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the norms laid down for declaring a rail project as viable or unviable;

(b) the number of projects declared as unuseful after conducting survey during the Ninth Five Year Plan and the details of expenditure incurred thereon, project-wise;

(c) whether there is any provision to revive unuseful projects;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the details of projects which are likely to be revived during the Tenth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) As per extant norms, a project is considered financially justified if it yields a return of not less than 14% under Discounted Cash Flow method.

(b) to (e) A number of surveys have been carried out during Ninth Five Year Plan for the various project proposals. However, some proposals could not be taken up for implementation due to un-remunerative nature, constraint of resources and heavy throw forward of ongoing works and not by virtue of being declared as unuseful. The details of the surveys, alongwith the expenditure incurred, is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[*English*]

Appointment of Administrative Tribunal in the U.T. of Daman and Diu

4755. SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the proposal for the appointment of a Administrative Tribunal in the U.T. of Daman & Diu has been pending with the Union Law Ministry for a long time;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the action taken by the Government to expedite the appointment with a view to obviate problem being faced by the local public on this account; and

(d) the time by which this appointment is likely to be made?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The Government has not received any proposal nor any such proposal is contemplated for appointment of Administrative Tribunal in the U.T. of Daman & Diu. The Benches of the Central Administrative Tribunal are set up keeping in view the number of cases pertaining to a particular region. Otherwise, one of the Benches of the Tribunal will have jurisdiction to decide the cases. The cases of Central Government employees of U.T. of Daman and Diu, come within the jurisdiction of the Mumbai Bench of the Central Administrative Tribunal.

Maintenance to Divorcee Muslim Women

4756. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether in view of the latest (October 2002) ruling of the Supreme Court that mere statement of "Talaq" by the husband, without corroborating evidence does not absolve him of the responsibility of maintenance of the Muslim wife;

(b) whether the Government propose to amend the law relating to the maintenance of divorced or deserted Muslim women; and

(c) if so, the steps taken and being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes Sir. The Supreme Court on October 1, 2002 in *Shamim Ara vs. State of U.P. and Another*, (2002) 7 Supreme Court Cases 518, has held that a mere plea taken in the written statement that divorce has been pronounced sometime in the past, cannot by itself be treated as effective *talaq*. The husband is required to adduce evidence and prove the pronouncement of *talaq*. In such a situation, the Court has held that neither the marriage between the parties stands dissolved nor does the liability of the husband to pay maintenance come to an end. Therefore, the husband shall continue to remain liable for payment of maintenance until the obligation comes to an end in accordance with law.

(b) No.

(c) Does not arise.

Report of Sixteenth Law Commission

4757. DR. A.D.K. JAYASEELAN: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all reports of the sixteenth Law Commission would be treated as confidential until tabled in both Houses of Parliament;

(b) whether six reports of Law Commission on various important issues are presently pending with Ministry of Law; and

(c) the action Government proposes to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The sixteenth Law Commission has submitted nine reports so far. Out of these, eight reports *i.e.*, report nos. 175 to 182 have been laid in the Parliament. The 183rd report which has been received only on 11.11.2002, will be laid in the Parliament after its translation into Hindi.

Loan from Asian Development Bank

4758. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Asian Development Bank has agreed to extend \$600 million to the Indian Railways during 2002-2005;

(b) if so, the details of terms and conditions for sanctioning the loan;

(c) whether the Railways have accepted these conditions; and

(d) if so, the details of the projects which are likely to be implemented by Railways after getting this loan from Asian Development Bank?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): Statement—(a) No Sir. Asian Development Bank (ADB) is yet to approve loan to the Indian Railways. However, Ministry of Finance along with the Ministry of Railways has negotiated with ADB in November, 2002 for a loan of US\$ 313.6 million.

(b) and (c) The loan shall be available as per the provisions of a draft loan agreement to be entered into by the Ministry of Finance, on behalf of Govt. of India. It has loan covenants relating to the Loan, Use of Proceeds of the Loan, Particular Covenants, Suspension, Cancellation, Acceleration of Maturity, Loan Effectiveness and Delegation of Authority. These conditions have been finalised between Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Railways and the ADB.

(d) The following four sanctioned sub-projects have been appraised by the ADB and will be funded through this loan:

- (i) Keonjhar-Tomka: New Broad Gauge Railway Link
- (ii) Second Bridge on Mahanadi river
- (iii) Third Line between Bhatapara and Urkura
- (iv) Gooty-Pullampet: Patch Doubling

In addition, the sub-projects which are part of the investment initiative of Strengthening of Golden Quadrilateral under National Rail Vikas Yojana are to be proposed for ADB funding.

Advisory Committees for AIR/DD

4759. SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the various Advisory Committees for All India Radio and Doorsarshan are presently working without the non-official members; and

(b) if so, the reasons for not nominating non-official member to such committees?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) Prasar Bharati has informed that the Prasar Bharati has recently revised the guidelines of Programme Advisory Committees (PACs), which among other things, provide for a common PAC for both DD and AIR Stations wherever they co-exist. Efforts are in progress to constitute the PACs.

[*Translation*]

Vacant Land of Bokaro and Chandrapur Thermal Power Stations

4760. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the land of thermal power station, Bokaro and Chandrapur Thermal Power Station of Damodar Valley Corporation has been lying vacant;

(b) if so, whether the Government of Jharkhand and other applicants have applied for issuance of no-objection certificate for the public use of the said land;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken/proposed to be taken by the Government and the DVC in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Damodar Valley Corporation (DVC) has informed that they do not have any surplus land at Chandrapur Thermal Power Station (CTPS). They have surplus land at Bokaro Thermal Power Station 'B' (BTPS 'B') for which DVC has sent derequisition proposal for the remaining land to the District Land Acquisition Officer, Bokaro, DVC.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Details of applications received by DVC for use by the Government of Jharkhand and others are given in statement enclosed.

(d) DVC has asked for certain information, pertaining to all these cases, which has not yet been received.

Statement

BTPS

(1) Application from State Govt. of Jharkhand.

(i) Land for construction of Yatri Shed near Kathara-BTPS more (Area not specified).

(ii) Land for construction of following PCC Road:

- Construction of PCC Road from Shiv Mandir at Govindpur to Naya Kheth.
- Construction of 300ft. PCC Road from House of Md. Sabir at Nishan Hut to DVC Road.
- Construction of PCC Road from Jhopar Patti to Railway line.
- Construction of PCC Road from the house of Mahato at Govindpur to DVC Colony.

(iii) Construction of permanent building for Bokaro Thermal Police Station.

(2) Other applicants.

Application has been submitted by Shri A.K. Mishra, Secretary, Bokaro Thermal Degree College, for five acres of land for construction of Bokaro Thermal Degree College.

[*English*]

Ayurveda System of Treatment in Military Hospitals

4761. SHRI P. RAJENDRAN: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Ayurveda system of treatment is recognized by the World Health Organisation, but it is not adopted in any of military hospitals;

(b) if so, whether the Government adopt Ayurveda System of treatment in all Military Hospitals; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES):

Statement

(a) to (c) The Army Medical Corps (AMC) provides war-time and peace-time treatment to the Armed Forces personnel and their families. Keeping in view the peculiar requirements of the Armed Forces, Allopathic system of medicine is more suited. Hence it has not been possible to adopt the Ayurveda system of medicine in the Military hospitals. However, the Armed Forces have initiated the process of introduction of the indigenous system of medicine by establishing dispensaries under the aegis of Station Headquarters in various Stations of the Armed

Forces, viz., AF Station, New Delhi, Meerut and Secunderabad for the benefit to the families of the Armed Forces personnel and those desirous of availing themselves of the system. The staff, drugs and the day to day running of these dispensaries are under the Station Welfare authorities.

Parcel Office of Delhi Division

4762. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the rule prescribed for giving S.L.R. of trains on lease;

(b) the reasons for booking goods (on lease) at starting stations on S.W.A. (Sender Weight Acceptance) when weighing machine is working properly and there is proper lighting arrangement at parcel office in Delhi Division; and

(c) the reasons for giving S.L.R. on lease when goods booked by Railways are lying in sheds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Under the SLR leasing scheme, space in the luggage compartments of the front SLR (brakevan) of passenger carrying trains is leased out by inviting bids through open tenders. As per rules, loading/unloading of parcels is done by the lease holder and is not supervised by the Railways. The lease holder is required to give declaration regarding the number and details of packages and that the total weight of the packages does not exceed the permissible loading limit. Each parcel is not required to be weighed under this scheme for bulk booking of parcel traffic and parcels are accepted on the basis of declaration given by the lease holder. However, random checks are conducted at destination station and penalty charges raised if overloading is detected. The parcels booked through Railway, are being cleared in rear brakevan (SLR), by Parcel Vans (VP) and also by running parcel express trains. By introduction of SLR leasing scheme, the Railways' earnings have increased.

[Translation]

Shifting of Level Crossings

4763. SHRI RAGHURAJ SINGH SHAKYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of requests received by the Government for the shifting of level crossings under the Northern Railway during the last three years, State-wise;

(b) the details of action taken thereon, State-wise;

(c) whether the Government have shrugged off its responsibility in this regard; and

(d) if so, reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Number of level crossings, for shifting of which requests have been received during the last three years, is 7. Out of these 7 requests, 5 pertain to Uttar Pradesh and 1 each from Punjab and Haryana.

(b) Out of 7 cases, proposal/funds have not been received from the State Govt. so far in four cases. In two cases, the work of shifting of the level crossings has been completed and in one case, the request for shifting of the level crossing has not been found technically feasible.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

Agreement with Gujarat Adani Port Ltd.

4764. SHRI KAILASH MEGHWAL:
SHRI A. BRAHMANIAH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have signed any agreement with Gujarat Adani Port Limited to jointly construct 57 kilometer rail line from Adipur to Mundra Port costing about Rs. 160 crore;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the share of the Railways in the income/profit to be earned from this rail route and the criteria followed in determining the Railways' share in the agreement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir. M/s. Gujarat Adani Port Limited (GAPL) has constructed Railway line from Adipur to Mundra at their own cost.

(b) Ministry of Railways has entered into the agreements to grant permission to GAPL to Build, Own & Maintain this line, and Operation of this will be by the North Western Railway.

(c) Ministry of Railways will operate the line to provide seamless operation. Revenue will be collected by the Railways, which will be apportioned between the Railways and the Gujarat Adani Port Limited on the same lines as

amongst zonal Railways after fully recovering the cost incurred by the Railways. In addition, GAPL will pay 2% of the apportioned revenue to the Ministry of Railways as requisite fee.

Train from Delhi to Jaipur via Alwar during Day Time

4765. DR. JASWANT SINGH YADAV: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that there is no train from Delhi to Jaipur via Alwar during day time for the people of Alwar district of Rajasthan;

(b) whether the Government propose to run a new train on this route;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) No, Sir. Presently, 2413 Delhi-Jaipur Express, 2015 New Delhi-Ajmer Shatabdi Express, 4311 Bareilly-New Delhi Ala Hazrat Express 9264 Delhi Sarai Rohilla-Porbandar Express and 9266 Dehradun-Okha Uttaranchal Express are available between 05.10 hours and 13.40 hours ex-Delhi area, reaching Jaipur via Alwar between 10.30 hours and 19.25 hours. Introduction of additional trains in this sector is not feasible, at present, due to operational and resource constraints.

[English]

Funds to Andhra Pradesh for Power Sector Reforms

4766. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI:
SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:
DR. N. VENKATASWAMY:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Union Government for monetary assistance towards implementation of power sector reforms;

(b) if so, the details thereof along with the reaction of the Union Government thereto;

(c) whether this request is pending for a long time;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether Andhra Pradesh Power Transmission Corporation had signed a MOU under APDRP recently;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) the amount of grant and loan proposed to be released to Andhra Pradesh under the programme?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (d) The Government of Andhra Pradesh had approached the Union Government in January 2000 for a special assistance of Rs. 1,000 crore (50% as grant and 50% as loan) to support the State Government's efforts in restructuring the power sector.

The Government of India has since launched the Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme (APDRP) to assist the States in improving their sub-transmission/distribution and providing incentive linked grants to bridging gap between cost of supply and average revenue. During the year 2002-03 a budget provision of Rs. 3500 crore has been made under APDRP scheme.

(e) to (g) APTRANSCO entered into a Memorandum of Agreement with the Ministry of Power on 29.5.2002 for implementing the APDRP in Andhra Pradesh. As per the Memoranda of Agreement (MoA), the beneficiary State is required to agree to systematically improve its financial viability by benchmarking their performance and periodically monitoring the same. The existing benchmarks shall be compared with the expected level to be achieved within the agreed time frame. These benchmarks, inter-alia, apply to SEB/Utility level as well as Circle levels covering the following parameters:

- Input energy to circle Vs metered energy sale to consumers (energy billed on flat rate/assessed basis is not to be included).
- Transmission & Distribution losses in Million Units (MU) (flat rate sales and unmetered sales are not to be included)
- Gap between Average Revenue Realisation and Average Cost of Supply (ARR & ACS) per unit of energy (ARR—ACS)—Average revenue realization—ARR (Ratio of Gross Revenue sales in crores of Rupees And Nett Energy Input in MU) for entire State, ACS (Ratio of cost of supply (including generation cost, purchase and overhead cost) in crores of Rs. and Nett energy Input in MU for entire State).

- Productivity—Ratio of Metered energy sale to consumers and total Manpower strength in the circle (executives plus supervisors plus support staff).
- Billing cycle time (Period)
- Feeder outages (Numbers)
- Failure rate of Distribution Transformers (percentages)
- Consumer complaints (Numbers)
- Complaint disposal time (Period)
- High Tension/Low Tension ratio
- Average Load Factor on Distribution Transformers
- Average power factor.

During the year 2002-03, a total number of 98 schemes have been sanctioned under APDRP costing Rs. 1476.51 Crores (of which the APDRP component is Rs. 738.26 crores). An amount of Rs. 39.07 crore has been released on 4th April, 2002.

Generation and Consumption of Power

4767. SHRI BHARTRUHARI MAHTAB: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the present consumption of power in Orissa and out of it the percentage of power generated in the State by its own resources;

(b) the names of areas from where supply of the remaining power is made available to the State;

(c) contribution made by the Union Government in the efforts being made by the Government of Orissa to attain self-sufficiency in power generation; and

(d) the annual losses incurred by Grid Corporation during each of the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) The average monthly energy consumption in Orissa during April-November, 2002 was 1095 MUs. Out of this, the average generation from its own sources in Orissa including NTPC's old Talcher TPS fully dedicated to the State was 688 MUs i.e., 62.83% of the average monthly consumption. The remaining 407 MUs (37.17%) was made from drawals of its shares in the Central Sector Stations in the Eastern Region, shared project of Machkund and

surplus generation from the captive plants at NALCO, ICCL & HPCL in Orissa.

(c) The Power supply position in Orissa has been by and large satisfactory. As against the average monthly availability of 1095 MUs, the requirement was 1123 MUs during the period April-November, 2002 resulting in a marginal shortage only 2.4%. The shortage is partly attributable to regulation of power supply imposed by NTPC during March-May, 2002 on account of non-payment of dues by GRIDCO. Eastern Region as a whole is surplus and substantial power is being exported outside the region. Besides a capacity addition of 150 MW planned in the State sector in Orissa during 10th plan period, the State would also have entitlements in Central and Mega Power Projects planned in the Eastern Region.

(d) The annual losses incurred by GRIDCO during each of the last three years are given below:

Year	Rs. (in crores)
1999-2000 (Provisional)	187.00
2000-2001 (Revised Estimate)	216.00
2001-2002 (Annual Plan Figures)	230.00

Upgradation of Refineries

4768. SHRI PABAN SINGH GHATOWAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the refineries in the country except BRPL have already upgraded their process technology to meet diesel quality (Bharat Stage-II) with effect from April, 2005;

(b) if so, whether the Government have any plan to upgrade their process technology for meeting Bharat Stage-II and Bharat Stage-III specifications from April, 2005 and 2010 (likely to advance to 2007), respectively;

(c) if so, the details thereof including action taken so far in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Government, in January, 2002, accepted the interim recommendations of the Mashelkar Committee on Auto Fuel Policy to supply petrol and diesel of Bharat Stage-II specifications in the entire country and of Euro-III equivalent specifications in the seven mega cities from 1.4.2005.

The Government have advised the oil companies in respect of the above decisions and the oil companies are implementing/finalizing the product quality improvement projects to produce petrol and diesel of the required specifications by the appointed date.

Procurement of Wagons

4769. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Railways approved in September 1995 procurement of 18,400 Nos. (FWUS) of wagons during the year 1996-97 with the direction that 50 percent of the quantity should be procured through tender and balance through M/s. Wagon India Ltd.;

(b) whether the Railway Board invited limited tender on 25.9.1995 for procurement of 9,200 FWUS for 1996-97 and tender was opened on 03.11.1995;

(c) whether the audit observation was specific to a particular tender which if finalised on time could have resulted in a saving of Rs. 12.88 crore to the Railways; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) Railways achieved the target of 22000 wagons set for the year 1996-97 by acquiring 22185 wagons in terms of four wheeler units (FWUs) during that year. Thus the question of any extra expenditure due to delay in procurement against 1996-97 tender does not arise. Supplies against the particular tender were taken in the year 1997-98 at the then prevailing prices and the difference between estimated and actual expenditure was due to escalation in prices during intervening period.

Vacant Posts of Notary Public

4770. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that a very large number of posts of Notary Public are lying vacant in various courts of Punjab;

(b) if so, the details of such vacant posts, district-wise; and

(c) the time by which these vacant posts are likely to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) There are no posts of Notary Public created as such under the Notaries Act, 1952. The said Act has been enacted to regulate the profession of notaries and defines the word 'notary' as a person appointed as such under the Act. Accordingly, question of any post of Notary Public lying vacant anywhere does not arise.

Reconstitution of LPG/SKO Dealerships in Delhi

4771. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of representations received from Members of Parliament for reconstitution of LPG/SKO dealership in Delhi during the last six months;

(b) the action taken by the Government/Oil Companies on such representations;

(c) the details of pending proposals with various oil companies; and

(d) the time by which the pending proposals are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) During the last six months, Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has received one proposal for reconstitution of M/s. Associated Trading Co., SKO/LDO dealer of Delhi, from Member of Parliament.

(b) to (d) IOCL has advised the dealer to submit the application alongwith the relevant documents for reconstitution, on 28th October, 2002. The final decision will be taken by the company upon receipt of the relevant documents from dealer.

Gauge Conversion of Rajkot-Veraval Rail Line

4772. SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI
CHIKHALIA:
SHRI RATILAL KALIDAS VARMA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the physical and financial progress with respect to conversion to broad gauge of the Rajkot-Veraval line;

(b) the target time fixed for completion of the project;

(c) whether the allocation for this work is commensurate with the time frame specified for completion of the project; and

(d) if so, the details of status of extension of this project to Somnath and Kodinar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Gauge conversion of Rajkot-Veraval rail line has been taken up where earthwork, bridge works, ballast supply etc. are in various stages of progress. Gauge conversion of Rajkot-Junagarh is targeted for completion during 2002-2003. Rs. 37.32 crore has been spent on this work upto March, 2002 and an outlay of Rs. 35 crore has been provided during 2002-2003.

Target for completion of entire project has not yet been fixed. The project will be completed in the coming years as per availability of resources.

(d) The survey for extension of this line upto Kodinar has been completed. The report is under examination. However, Government has approved extension of this line upto Somnath.

Witnesses Turning Hostile in the Cases Pending before Courts

4773. SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are taking measures to prevent witnesses turning hostile in the cases pending before the courts;

(b) if so, details thereof; and

(c) the time by which these measures are likely to be introduced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE

MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) Section 162 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973 provides that no statement made by any person to a police officer in the course of an investigation shall, if reduced to writing, be signed by the person making it. To prevent the problem of witness turning hostile, the Law Commission in its 178th Report has, *inter-alia*, recommended insertion of Section 164-A after Section 164 of the Code of Criminal Procedure, 1973. A copy of the proposed Section 164-A is given in statement enclosed. The same would be processed in consultation with the State Governments as the Criminal Law and Criminal Procedure are on the Concurrent List of the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India. It is, however, not feasible to fix time frame for this.

Statement**Extract of recommendations from 178th Report of the Law Commission**

- "164A (1) Any police officer making an investigation into any offence punishable with imprisonment for a period of ten years or more (with or without fine) including an offence which is punishable with death, shall in the course of such investigation, forward all persons whose evidence is essential for the just decision of the case, to the nearest Magistrate for recording their statements.
- (2) The Magistrate shall record the statements of such persons forwarded to him under sub-section (1) on oath and shall keep such statements with him awaiting further police report under section 173.
- (3) Copies of such statements shall be furnished to the investigating officer.
- (4) If the Magistrate recording the statement is not empowered to take cognizance of such offence, he shall send the statements so recorded to the magistrate empowered to take cognizance of the case.
- (5) The statement of any person duly recorded as a witness under sub-section (1) may, if such witness is produced and examined, in the discretion of the court and subject to the provisions of the Indian Evidence Act, 1872, be treated as evidence".

Levying Cess from Mumbai Commuters

4774. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway Board has finally decided to start levying cess from Mumbai commuters;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be started;

(c) whether the Government propose to start cess after some progress in MRVC;

(d) whether commuters organizations and Members of Parliament have requested that cess be levied only after benefits are made available to commuters; and

(e) if so, the details about the cess and Government's viewpoint and response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Mumbai Urban Transport Project is funded by World Bank. Levy of surcharge on Mumbai Suburban Commuters in as per World Bank's requirement and had been agreed to by the Government of Maharashtra and Ministry of Railways, who equally share the cost of the project. The surcharge may not be levied before the next financial year.

The total surcharge to be raised will be Rs. 2891 crores in a period of 14 years. Out of the amount so collected, 50% will be passed on to Government of Maharashtra; balance 50% share of Indian Railways will be passed on to Ministry of Finance to enable repayment of the loan taken from World Bank.

(d) No such request has been received.

(e) Does not arise.

Financial Powers to High Courts

4775. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have asked the State Governments to delegate more financial powers to High Court to make judiciary independent;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the response of the State Government thereto;

(c) whether the State Governments sought more financial assistance from the Union Government in this regard; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) The Central Government has been periodically urging the State Governments to delegate more financial powers to High Courts. As per the information received from a number of States, the status of delegation of financial powers to High Courts is given in Statement enclosed.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) It is the primary responsibility of the State Governments to provide funds for the High Courts and Subordinate Courts. However, Central assistance is provided for development of infrastructural facilities for the Judiciary which includes construction of court buildings and residences of Judges/Judicial Officers covering both High Courts and Subordinate Courts.

During 2001-02, the Central Government has sanctioned the Pilot Project of Computerisation and Networking of City Courts in the four metropolitan cities i.e. Delhi, Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata to serve as model for the States. This project is fully funded by the Central Government and is estimated to cost Rs. 14.9 crore.

Statement

Responses from State Governments regarding Grant of financial powers to the Judiciary

Sr. No.	Name of the State	Gist of action taken
1	2	3
1.	Assam	Have requested the Finance Department for conferring more financial powers to Chief Justice of the Gauhati High Court
2.	A & N Islands	Does not have any exclusive High Court
3.	Chennai	The Government of Tamil Nadu have informed that the financial powers delegated to Chief Justice of Madras High Court on most of the items are more than the powers delegated to Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India.

1	2	3
4.	Goa	Has informed that High Court at Panaji is an extended Bench of Bombay High Court.
5.	Haryana	Enhanced powers delegated to Registrar, Punjab & Haryana High Court in respect of contingent expenditure and reappropriation in respect of office expenses, rent rebate, taxes, motor vehicles, other charges, professional and special services.
6.	Himachal Pradesh	The State Finance Secretary has been requested for taking necessary action in this regard.
7.	Kerala	Financial powers delegated to Chief Justice and Registrar of High Court have been enhanced.
8.	Karnataka	Financial powers have been delegated to Chief Justice of Karnataka vide Notification dated 19.9.1993.
9.	Maharashtra	Proposal for conferring more financial powers has been forwarded for approval to Bombay High Court.
10.	Meghalaya	Financial powers have been conferred on the Chief Justice of the High Court of Gauhati vide Notification dated 20.12.2000.
11.	Madhya Pradesh	Financial powers including powers to create posts of the level of Under Secretary and temporary Class-III and Class-IV staff have been delegated to Chief Justice of High Court.
12.	Nagaland	Conferring of more financial powers on the Chief Justice of the High Court is under examination by the Government.
13.	Orissa	All financial powers enjoyed by Administrative Department of

1	2	3
		the Government have been delegated to Chief Justice of High Court of Orissa.
14.	Rajasthan	Since the Registrar of the High Court enjoys powers available to Heads of Department under GFR, on further action is necessitated. For enhancing the financial limit, it has been decided that specific request would be considered.
15.	Sikkim	Financial powers have been delegated to Chief Justice/Registrar General/Registrar of High Court vide Notification dated 28.3.2001.
16.	Tripura	The matter is being considered by the Government of Tripura.
17.	Uttaranchal	The Finance Department has been requested to consider and take necessary action in this regard.
18.	West Bengal	Secretary, Judicial Department of the State Government has been requested for taking necessary action.

[Translation]

ROB/RUBs in Jharkhand

4776. SHRI RAM TAHAL CHAUDHARY:
SHRI LAXMAN GILUWA:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the pending/ongoing ROB/RUB projects in Jharkhand;

(b) the details of proposals submitted by the Government of Jharkhand for construction of road over/under-bridges in the State;

(c) whether the Government propose to construct railway over-bridge at Chakradharpur on Ranchi-Chaibasha road, Khallari on Ranchi-Khailari road, Namkum on Ranchi-Tata N.H. 33 and at Chandala on Tata-Purulia N.H. 32; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) A statement is enclosed.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Road over Bridges at Khailari, Chakradharpur and at Namkum have already been sanctioned and are at different stages of planning and progress. There is no proposal for construction of ROB at Chandala. However a proposal for construction of ROB in lieu of level crossing at Km. 378/519-521 between Chandil and Mannekui Stations has been sanctioned during Works Programme of 2002-2003.

Statement

(a) and (b) In all 19 firm proposals of Road over/under bridges were received from the State of Jharkhand fulfilling preliminary pre-requisites out of these 16 works were sanctioned during Works Programme of 2002-03 and three were sanctioned earlier. All these are at different stages of planning and execution at present. These are given below. However, a proposal of Road over bridge at Koderma in lieu of level crossing No. 34/A/T has been received for inclusion in the Railway's Works Programme of 2003-04 which is being examined.

1. Ranchi-Lohadaga (NG) Sec. Road Over Bridge between Ranchi-Piska Stations near Dibadih Chowk at Km. 422/2-3.
2. Telo-Chandrapura-Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No. 12-A/T.
3. Daltonganj-Kajri-Road Over Bridge in lieu of LC No. 13-B/E.
4. Dhanbad Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at Km. 272/24-26 bet. Dhanbad-Bhuli in replacement of L.C. No. 1/BT.
5. Dhanbad Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at Km. 320/17-19 bet. Parasnath-Chegro in replacement of LC. No. 15/A/T.
6. Asansol Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at Km. 243/17-19 bet. Thaparnagar-Kalubathan in replacement of LC. No. 8A.
7. Dhanbad Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at Km. 269/11-13 bet. Dhokara-Dhanbad in Replacement of LC. No. 18/B/T.
8. Dhanbad Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at Km. 156/8-9 bet. Ray-Khalari in replacement of LC. No. 6/B/T.

9. Asansol Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at west end of Jasidih station bet. Simultala-Jasidih in replacement of LC. No. 30/B.
10. Dhanbad Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) at Km. 276/12-14 bet. Bhuli-Tetulmari in replacement of LC. No. 3/A/E.
11. Howrah Divn.-Road Over Bridge (2 lane) near Pakur Station in replacement of LC. No. 38.
12. Road Over Bridge at Km. 213/21-23 bet. Ghatsila-Galudih stations in replacement of LC. of Tata-KGP Sec.
13. Road Over Bridge at Km. 390/57-59 bet. Kunki-Kandra stations in replacement of LC of Tata-Muri sec.
14. Road Over Bridge at Km. 378/519-521 between Chandil-Manikui stations in replacement of LC. of Sini-Chandil sec.
15. Road Over Bridge at Km. 414/12 bet. Namkum-Ranchi stations in replacement of LC of Ranchi-Muri sec.
16. Road Over Bridge at Km. 419/13 bet. Ranchi-Hatia stations in replacement of LC of Ranchi-Hatia Sec.
17. ROB at Chakradharpur at Km. 312/240.
18. ROB at Tata Nagar at Km. 249.638.
19. Rebuilding of ROB No. 441A at Kharkhari at Km. 341/BG/6-7

In addition 3 works of Road over bridges at Karkend, Barwa Adda and ISRI have been taken up on deposit terms which are also at different stages of planning and progress.

[English]

Recovery of Outstanding Dues from North Eastern States

4777. SHRIMATI RANEE NARAH: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the NEEPCO has to recover huge outstanding dues from the North Eastern States;

(b) if so, the details in this regard as on date, State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken to ensure speedy recovery of the dues from the above States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) Yes Sir.

(b) The details of outstanding dues payable by the North Eastern States to the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO) from the North Eastern States are given in statement enclosed.

(c) On the basis of the recommendations of the Export Group under the Chairmanship of Montek Singh Ahluwalia that was endorsed, with minor modifications, by the High Level Empowered Group of Chief Ministers under the Chairmanship of Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, Government of India announced the scheme of one-time settlement of outstanding dues on 17.04.2002. On 20.05.2002 a model Tripartite Agreement (TPA) that is to be signed among the State Government, Ministry of Finance, Government of India and the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) was circulated to all the States. The benefits that would accrue to the States participating in the scheme are:

- (i) Waiver of 60% of the interest/surcharge on the delayed payments as on 30.09.2001.
- (ii) Securitisation of the remaining 40% of the interest/surcharge and the full principal amount

through 8.5% per annum tax-free bonds issued by the respective State Governments. The bonds will have a moratorium of 5 years on repayment of principal with the entire principal being repaid between the 6th and 15th years.

- (iii) Incentives of the 19% of the nominal value of bonds dues for the States that comply with the provisions of the scheme without committing any default during a block of six years 2002-2003 to 2005-2006.
- (iv) Incentive of 2% of the nominal value of bonds for the timely opening and maintenance of Letters of Credit.
- (v) Assistance from APDRP Funds for distribution improvement and reducing commercial losses; and
- (vi) Allocation from the discretionary quota of power from the central power generating stations.

Three North Eastern States of Assam, Sikkim and Nagaland have signed the Tripartite Agreement under the scheme. The State Governments of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram and Tripura have been advised to sign the TPA to participate in the scheme.

Statement

Details of dues payable by the North-Eastern States to NEEPCO

(Rs. in Crore)

Sl. No.	States/SEBs	As on 30.09.2001			As on 30.11.2002		
		PRIN	INT*	Total	PRIN	INT**	Total
1.	Arunachal Pradesh	17.93	4.13	22.06	24.22	3.18	27.40
2.	Assam	508.57	284.08	792.65	795.63	198.10	993.73
3.	Manipur	107.52	41.77	149.29	163.21	25.64	188.85
4.	Meghalaya	11.39	2.72	14.11	23.71	2.40	26.11
5.	Mizoram	32.62	7.93	40.55	54.64	7.25	61.89
6.	Nagaland	48.37	23.49	71.86	68.84	11.67	80.51
7.	Tripura	59.07	10.59	69.66	85.15	11.28	96.43
Total		785.47	374.71	1160.18	1215.40	259.52	1474.92

*As on 31st March, 2001

**As on 31st March, 2002

NGO In Awareness Camps

4778. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have not responded positively to requests from NGOs and other people to actively participate in awareness camps and campaigns throughout the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to ensure that peoples participation is given priority in making use of renewable energy a success in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Under various programmes of the Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources (MNES) the awareness campaigns on use of biogas, improved chulhas, solar devices, etc. are organised in local/regional languages in rural and urban areas of the country through Government and Non-Governmental organizations. MNES has provided financial support to the concerned State Nodal Agencies (SNAs) for their participation, by putting renewable energy pavilions, in the important events/trade fairs/exhibitions to be organized by the NGOs so that all displays and informations could be provided to the visitors in local/regional languages.

(c) The Ministry has plans to encourage people participation through organization of exhibitions, competitions, seminars, etc. for publicity and awareness campaigns on the use of renewable energy in the rural/urban and backward areas of the country during the 10th Five Year Plan.

[*Translation*]

Development of Engines for LCA

4779. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether India has developed engines of Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) which have been successfully tested in the Russian Defence Laboratory;

(b) if so, the time by which these engines are likely to be test-flown;

(c) whether these engines are fitted with fully indigenously developed spare parts; and

(d) if not, the ratio between the indigenous and imported spares?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. The indigenously developed Kaveri engine has accumulated more than 1200 hours of ground testing. The core engine Kabini has been successfully tested at CIAM, Russia and the full engine is likely to be dispatched to Russia for altitude testing during January 2003.

(b) It is planned to carry out test flight of Kaveri engine with LCA by June 2005.

(c) and (d) The design of the Kaveri engine is totally indigenous. Major thrust has been given for indigenous development of materials, sub-systems and general spares. Kaveri engine is planned to have 75% indigenous content during initial series production and efforts would be made for raising it progressively.

[*English*]

**Non-Functioning of Thermal Power Plants
In Maharashtra**

4780. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether some Thermal Power Plants under Maharashtra State Electricity Board are not functioning to their full capacity due to shortage of coal;

(b) if so, whether any action have been taken by the Government to ensure coal supply to these Thermal Plants;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the poor quality capacitors are proposed to be replaced to increase the distribution efficiency and power supply of MSEB; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) None of the Thermal Power Plants of Maharashtra State Electricity Board (MSEB) are reported to be functioning at reduced capacity due to shortage of coal.

(d) and (e) Supply and Distribution of electricity within a State is in the purview of concerned State Government/

State Power Utility. According to Maharashtra State Electricity Board, there are no poor quality capacitors in MSEB system, hence question of replacement of capacitors does not arise.

[Translation]

Awarding of Contract of IC Net Satellite by ONGC

4781. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether ONGC has awarded contract of IC Net Satellite Systems to any company;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the criteria of awarding such contract to a company;

(d) whether several MPs have urged the Government to probe the said awarding of contract; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Government on such representations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of House.

Manufacturing of Spare Parts

4782. SHRI SATYAVRAT CHATURVEDI:
SHRI SUNDER LAL TIWARI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to identify those spare parts which can be manufactured indigenously by private sector to achieve self-reliance in the field of defence production;

(b) if so, by when;

(c) the steps taken in this regard; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) Indigenisation of defence equipment is an ongoing process. Indigenisation of spares of defence equipment has been undertaken in aircrafts, warships, armaments, tanks, vehicles and electronic as well as engineering equipment. The list of items/spare parts for indigenous production through the private sector is reviewed from time to time having regard to the latest requirements of the Armed Forces.

[English]

Monitoring of Power Distributions

4783. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI:
Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to constitute District Energy Committees to monitor effective power distributions in Maharashtra;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the criteria adopted for nominating the members of this committee?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) There is no proposal presently under consideration of the Government to constitute district Energy Committees to monitor effective power distribution in Maharashtra.

(b) and (c) Do not arise in view of the reply to (a) above.

[Translation]

Review of Cases against Directors of Reliance Group

4784. DR. M.P. JAISWAL:
SHRI HARIBAHU CHAUDHARY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 7487 dated May 16, 2002 and state:

(a) whether the information has since been collected;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the action taken against each State;

(c) if not, the reasons for delay; and

(d) the time by which it is likely to be laid on the Table of the House?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) For fulfilling the assurance given in respect to the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 7487 dated May 16, 2002, information has been sought from various Ministries/Departments of the Central Government. So far replies have been received from 31 Ministries/Departments and all of them have sent 'NIL'

information. However, the information from the remaining 24 Ministries/Departments is still awaited. The assurance given to the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 7487 dated May 16, 2002 shall be fulfilled as soon as the information is received from rest of the Ministries/Departments.

[English]

Recommendation of Santhanam Committee

4785. SHRI SHANKAR PRASAD JAISWAL:
COL. (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Santhanam Committee on Administrative Reforms had recommended that Council of Minister should bear a certain percentage to the total strength of the Legislature;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government propose to amend the Constitution or the Representation of the People Act to give effect to this recommendation; and

(d) if not, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The requisite information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Financial Assistance to Private Sector Power Units

4786. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have sanctioned grants to some private sector power units to upgrade their infrastructure;

(b) if so, the names of private sector power units which have received grants from the Union Government; and

(c) the amount sanctioned to each of them during the last three years, unit-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Expansion of Activities of IOCL In South-East Asia

4787. SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Indian Oil Corporation Limited is targeting new markets in South-east Asia to expand its activities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the modalities worked out to enter these foreign markets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has launched a series of strategic initiatives and set up overseas offices at Kuala Lumpur for coordinating business activities in the region and for seeking new customers for its products and services. A Franchise Blender cum Distributor has also been appointed by the Corporation in Malaysia, who blends and markets SERVO lubricants in the South East Asia. IOC has also plans to tap the markets in Thailand, Philippines and Indonesia. Further, IOC has plans to initiate dialogue with the national oil companies in these countries for collaboration and also to institute consultants for advising the mode of entry, identifying possible partners and exploiting business opportunities in these countries.

Increase In Judicial Work

4788. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether judicial work had increased manifold due to docket explosion;

(b) if so, whether there is no corresponding growth in the number of judicial officers and staff as per statement made by the Chief Justice of India in a Law Day Celebration;

(c) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(d) if so, the outcome thereof and the corrective steps taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir. The judicial work has increased manifold in the High Courts as well as Subordinate Courts. As far as the Supreme Court of India is concerned, pendency of cases which was 1,04,936 as on 31.12.1991, has come down to 23,012 as on 31.05.2002 due to various measures taken by the Supreme Court for expediting the disposal of cases.

(b) Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India in an inaugural address on Law Day on 26th November, 2002 said that there is no corresponding growth in the number of Judicial officers. The relevant part of the inaugural address by Hon'ble the Chief Justice of India is quoted below:—

"...Although the judicial work has increased manifold for the reasons as stated earlier, there has been no corresponding growth in the number of judicial officer and their staff. This problem of under-staffing of the judiciary was indicated way back in 1987 in the 120th report of the Law Commission. Even the recent Parliamentary Committee Report of Mr. Pranab Mukherjee reiterated the same. The Law Commission in its 120th report way back in 1987 recommended for 50 judges per million..."

The Supreme Court vide its Judgment dated 21st March, 2002 in Writ Petition No. 1022/89-All India Judges Association & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Ors., inter-alia, directed as under:

"...We, therefore, first direct that the existing vacancies in the Subordinate Courts at all levels should be filled, if possible latest by 31st March, 2003, in all the States. The increase in the Judge strength of 50 judges per 10 lakh people should be effected and implemented with the filling up of the posts in a phased manner to be determined and directed by the Union Ministry of Law, but this process should be completed and the increased vacancies and posts filled within a period of five years from today. Perhaps increasing the judge strength by 10 per 10 lakh people every year could be one of the methods which may be adopted thereby completing the first stage within five years before embarking on further increase if necessary..."

(c) and (d) Judge strength of High Courts is reviewed and revised every three years based on the pendency of cases, fresh institutions and average disposal per judge.

It is the primary responsibility of the State Governments in consultation with the respective High Courts to take necessary action to fill up the vacancies in the subordinate judiciary and to increase its sanctioned strength in pursuance of the Supreme Court's order in the All India Judges Association Case.

Transmission of Power from Eastern Region

4789. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether transmission lines between Nidadavolu-Bhimadoh and lower Sileru-Bommur to facilitate for transmission of power from Eastern region to Andhra Pradesh and other Southern region have been completed;

(b) if so, the total power is likely to be transmitted from the Eastern region through these transmission lines;

(c) the details of other transmission lines under construction to transmit power from Eastern region to Southern States; and

(d) the estimated cost and estimated power likely to be transmitted from Eastern to Southern region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) The executive of Nidadavolu-Bhimadoh and Lower Sileru-Bommur Transmission Lines had been taken up by APTRANSCO for strengthening of the power system in Andhra Pradesh for meeting the transmission requirements of the State. Nidadavolu-Bhimadoh Transmission Line has been completed by APTRANSCO in February, 2002. The portion from Bommur to Rampachodavaram of Lower Sileru-Bommur Transmission Line has also been provisionally completed in August, 2002. Work on remaining portion of the Line would be taken up after forest clearance and further studies by APTRANSCO.

(c) and (d) Implementation of the following transmission systems/lines has been taken up by POWERGRID for transfer of power from Eastern Region to Southern Region:

- (i) Transmission System associated with Talcher Super Thermal Power Project Stage-II located in Orissa at an estimated cost of Rs. 3865.61 crores: The Transmission System envisages a 2000 MW HVDC bi-pole from Talcher to Kolar for transmission of 2000 MW power from Talcher STPP-II (in Eastern Region) to Southern Region. The first pole of the HVDC Terminal Stations (with capacity of 1000 MW) has been

commissioned in September, 2002 and the second pole is expected to be completed in January, 2003. These links would also be used for transfer of surplus power from Eastern Region to Southern Region.

- (ii) Second 500 MW, HVDC module at Gazuwaka together with system strengthening works in Eastern Region and Southern Region at an estimated cost of Rs. 769.25 crores for transfer of 500 MW power from Eastern Region to Southern Region is under implementation. The project is expected to be completed in January, 2005.

Setting up of National Press Centre

4790. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether National Press Centre is being set up in New Delhi;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the functions proposed to be assigned to the centre; and

(d) the time by which the said centre is likely to be completed/become functional?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) A plot of land measuring 1955 acres has been allotted Raisina Road, New Delhi by Ministry of Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation for setting up the National Press Centre in the 10th Plan period. An outlay of Rs. 35 crores has been made for this project during the Tenth Plan period. The centre is to provide a platform for dissemination of information to media with the help of the State of the art facilities such as video-conferencing, library, conference halls, committee room and modern communication centre.

Investment in Renovation and Modernisation Programme in Power Utilities

4791. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government proposes to invest several crores in the next few years to renovate and modernize the existing power utilities;

(b) if so, the manner in which the funds would be mobilized for renovation and modernisation of power utilities; and

(c) the extent to which the power production in the country would be enhanced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Central Electricity Authority have formulated Renovation and Modernisation (R&M) and Life Extension Programme (LEP) for thermal power stations in the country in consultation with the State Electricity Boards/Power Utilities for implementation by them during the 10th Plan. The successful implementation of the programme is expected to yield an additional generation of 26700 Million units per year.

The States/Power Utilities and State Electricity Boards can raise loans from Power Finance Corporation and financial institutions for the programme. The Government of India provides interest subsidy to the extent of 3% of the States/Utilities on the interest for the loans from PEC & REC to be availed by the SEBs/Utilities for renovation and modernization programme under Accelerated Generation and Supply (AG&SP). The interest subsidy is available to States, which perform satisfactorily with respect to agreed from milestones.

[*Translation*]

Facilities in Shramjivi Express

4792. SHRI RAM RATI BIND: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the catering facilities in Shramjivi Express and Lichchivi Express running between New Delhi and Patna and New Delhi to Muzaffarpur are not satisfactory and the staff of Pantry Car charge exorbitant for the food items from the passengers;

(b) if so, the steps taken by the Government for providing rate list in the trains;

(c) whether he is also aware that the inferior quality of food is being supplied in both the said trains; and

(d) the number of times the food testing was conducted in Pantry Car during the last two years alongwith the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) Meals are supplied on running trains as per prescribed

menu and rates. As per records, no complaints have been received for overcharging on these trains. However, to prevent overcharging, rate list are displayed in the pantry cars of both the trains. Standard menu and their rates are also provided in Railway Time Tables.

(c) and (d) Catering services on these trains are generally satisfactory. Time to time checks are carried out on quality of food. Action is taken on the complaints received. During the last two years, nine food sample checks were conducted. On the basis of inspections, fines were levied and warnings were issued.

Kerosene Shortage in Maharashtra

4793. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT:
SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government have been drawn towards the newsitem published in 'Lokmat Samachar' Hindi, Nagpur dated November 20, 2002 under caption 'Maharashtra mein mittee tel ki killat';

(b) if so, the reasons for reducing the quota of kerosene by the Government;

(c) whether the Government are aware that Maharashtra is a tribal dominated State and the tribal people depend on kerosene as they cannot afford to have gas connection;

(d) if so, whether the Government propose to increase the quota of kerosene for Maharashtra; and

(e) if so, the time by which it is likely to be done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (e) Government have reduced the kerosene allocation to various States/Union Territories for the year 2002-2003, including Maharashtra, taking into account the number of LPG connections released during October, 2000 to November, 2001 in each of the State/ Union Territory.

[English]

Production of New Model by BHEL

4794. SHRI Y.V. RAO: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether BHEL has produced any new model for reducing power transmission losses;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the patent for new model has been obtained; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) BHEL has developed "Controlled Shunt Reactor" and put it into normal operation on the Itarsi-Jabalpur 400KV line of Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (PGCIL)/Itarsi.

(c) and (d) BHEL has applied for patent in India and is in the process of filing the patent for 'Controlled Shunt Reactor' in foreign countries, namely Russia, Brazil, Turkey and Iran.

Track Maintenance

4795. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether modern track on line Railways using 52 KG/60 KG rails laid on prestressed reinforced concrete sleepers requires maintenance by machines, leading to suspension of train for 3-4 hours each day;

(b) whether maintenance staff are provided with such time gap for maintenance of the track;

(c) if so, how the time gap is managed in a number of mail, express & other types of trains;

(d) whether most railways find it extremely difficult to maintain track; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) The track on Indian Railways is gradually being provided

with concrete sleepers and 52/60 kg. rails. The track structure is quite heavy and, therefore, has to be maintained with the track machines. As on date, about 70% of track on Indian Railways has been laid with the concrete sleepers and long welded rails.

The track machines normally operate in traffic block. Such traffic blocks are being made available through in-built maintenance corridors in the time table. Sometimes, these blocks are arranged by regulating the goods trains and/or by passing both direction trains on the other available line. Every effort is made to ensure that the planned maintenance blocks do not affect the punctuality of the trains. Asset maintenance is an integral part of the operation and, therefore, the track machines are deployed at regular frequency for track maintenance activities.

(d) and (e) Within the overall constraints, all efforts are being made to maintain the track within safe limits.

Opening of Central Film Institute at Chennai

4796. SHRI V. VETRISILVAN: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any possibility to open a Central Film Institute at Chennai keeping in view the largest film producing city;

(b) if so, whether the Government are considering any proposal in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which the final decision in this regard is likely to be taken?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The Central Government does not have any proposal to open a Central Film Institute at Chennai.

(c) and (d) Do not arise.

New Non-Conventional Power Projects

4797. SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have any proposal to set up new non-conventional power projects during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise; and

(c) the amount allocated for this sector?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) A target of 3075 MW of power generating capacity addition from Non-Conventional Energy Sources, such as Solar, Wind, Biomass and Small Hydro, has been set for the 10th Five Year Plan. The capacity addition will mainly come from commercial projects set up through private investments. No State-wise targets have been fixed.

(c) An allocation of Rs. 895 crores has been made for the 10th Five Year Plan for power generation projects from non-conventional energy sources.

Hydro Electric Project in North Bihar

4798. SHRI P.C. THOMAS: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the strength and capacity of Hydro Electric Project, Kataiyya in North Bihar;

(b) whether it is not functioning now;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether there is a long standing demand to construct a high power plant (Hydro and electric) by using water from Koshi river; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Government on the demand?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The installed capacity of Kataiyya Hydro-electric Project (4x4.8 MW) of Bihar State Electricity Board, located in Birpur, Distt. Supaul in Bihar, is 4x4.8 MW = 19.2 MW. However, the project is not running to its full generation capacity due to heavy siltation. At present, two units are functioning and two units are shut down for capital maintenance.

(d) and (e) Sapt Koshi High Dam Project proposed to be implemented on Koshi river in Nepal is a hydro-electric project involving mutual cooperation between India and Nepal. An Inception Report which defines the scope of field works, investigations and studies to be conducted jointly by India and Nepal for preparation of Detailed Project Report for Sapt Koshi High Dam Multipurpose Project and Sun Kosi Storage cum Diversion Scheme has been agreed to by the Joint Team of Experts. An

amount of Rs. 30 crore has been provided in the 10th Plan for setting up of the Joint Project Office to take up field investigations/studies and preparation of Joint Detailed Project in respect of these schemes.

Halt Station at Kurumkutti

4799. SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to provide halt station at Kurumkutti in Thiruvananthapuram-Nagercoil rail route;

(b) if so, whether the Government have made any feasibility study in this regard;

(c) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(d) the action taken by the Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) The proposal for provision of a halt station at Karumkutti between Parasala and Dhanuvachapuram on Trivandrum-Nagercoil section has been examined and not found operationally feasible.

Purchase of Medicines

4800. SHRI ADHIR CHOWDHARY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the present system of producing medicines in railway hospitals is not transparent and even spurious medicines are procured;

(b) whether some cases of irregularities in Jodhpur railway hospital have come to the notice of the Government;

(c) if so, the facts and details thereof; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by the Government to streamline the functioning of railway hospitals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) Railways have a transparent and regulated system for procurement of medicines and drugs which are being audited on regular basis. Procedures for procurement of medicines/drugs and related guidelines are elaborately given in Indian Railway Pharmacopoeia. Bulk medicines are procured by the respective Chief Medical Directors for all hospitals and health units under their jurisdiction.

However, based on the needs and urgency, at times some medicines which are not available in the hospital are purchased locally from reputed and registered firms. Samples of medicines are subjected to drug analysis in reputed laboratories. There is hardly any chance of procuring spurious drugs.

It has recently been reported that Central Bureau of Investigations have taken up one case against some officers and staff of Jodhpur Railway Hospital about some alleged irregularities in local purchase of medicines. The case is still under investigation by the Central Bureau of Investigations and details are awaited.

Adequate checks/mechanisms exist in the system to check irregularities in procurement and distribution of medicines and stores at various levels. They are departmental checks, annual stock verifications and audit/accounts inspections etc. Besides, investigations by Central investigative agencies where deemed necessary. the erring individuals are dealt suitably as per Discipline and Appeal Rules and Criminal Procedure Code provisions under the law of the land.

Utilization of Borrowed Money

4801. SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total money borrowed by the railways from the market till November, 2002;

(b) the total amount repaid by the railways, till date;

(c) the interest paid by the railways on borrowed money during the last three years;

(d) whether the railways are not utilising the borrowed money for development purpose; and

(e) if so, the facts thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Funds to the tune of Rs. 23,832 crore have been raised from the market by the Indian Railway Finance Corporation Limited (IRFC) on behalf of the Railways till end of November, 2002 for part financing the Railway Plan.

(b) An amount of Rs. 10,387 crore has been repaid by IRFC till 30th November, 2002 on behalf of the Railways.

(c) Amounts of Rs. 1,429 crore, Rs. 1,821 crore and Rs. 1,551 crore were paid towards interest by IRFC on behalf of Railways during the last three years, namely 1999-2000, 2000-01 and 2001-02 respectively.

(d) No, Sir. Borrowed money is used only for development purpose such as procurement of higher capacity better design rolling stock by the Railways.

(e) Does not arise.

Power Generation through NCES

4802. SHRI A. NARENDRA: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to make mandatory for States to generate power through non-conventional energy sources at least 10 per cent of total generation;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government have approved the draft of new policy for development of non-conventional energy;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the efforts made by the Government for providing more funds to States for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) to (d) The Ministry of Non-Conventional Energy Sources had prepared a draft Renewable Energy Policy Statement for accelerated development of renewable sources of energy in the country. The draft of the Policy Statement has been submitted by the Ministry for further approvals. The approval has not yet been accorded.

The draft Policy Statement envisages a goal of generating 10% of new power capacity addition, or 10,000 MW of power from non-conventional energy sources, in the next ten years.

(e) An allocation of Rs. 4,000 crore has been made for the 10th Five Year Plan for the non-conventional energy sector. No State-wise allocations are made. However, funds are provided on merit against proposals received from the State Government agencies as per the provisions of various schemes.

NGOs in NCES

4803. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are propose to give funds to the NGOs to set up Non-Conventional Energy Projects in the country; and

(b) if so, the norms for providing funds to the N.G.Os?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) and (b) Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are associated in the implementation of several National Programmes for non-conventional energy projects such as improved chulhas, biogas plants, solar energy and information and public awareness. Funds are provided for various projects either directly to the NGOs or through the concerned State Government Agencies, depending upon the type of projects, terms and conditions for release of funds, and other provisions of different Schemes.

Bijapur-Ugar Rail Line

4804. SHRI K.H. MUNIYAPPA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the preliminary survey/alignment work on the Bijapur-Ugar rail link has been completed;

(b) if so, the details and the outcome thereof;

(c) the expenditure incurred thereon;

(d) whether connecting Bijapur with Ugar will shorten the distance and travel time for travellers from Goa to Howrah; and

(e) the time by which the work on the said project is likely to be started and completed alongwith the expenditure likely to be incurred thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) No such survey work has been undertaken. However, a survey for a new BG line between Bijapur and Shedbal via Athani in the vicinity of the suggested line was conducted in 2000-2001. As per the results of the survey, cost of the 112.40 km. long line had been assessed as Rs. 213.85 cr. at the then prevailing price level with a rate of return of 1.03%. In view of the grossly

unremunerative nature of the project coupled with the severe resource constraints, the proposal could not be taken up for consideration. An expenditure of Rs. 5.40 lakh has been incurred on this survey.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise.

Marketing of Branded Fuels by IOCL

4805. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Limited proposes to market branded fuels in the Indian market;

(b) whether IOCL has done any test-marketing of such branded fuels recently;

(c) if so, the findings of IOCL for such a market;

(d) the expected gains for IOCL in creating a brand at huge expense; and

(e) the details of investment and income expected from such a strategy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) has already introduced the branded fuels, Motor Spirit (Petrol) under the name "IOC Premium" and Diesel under the name of "Diesel Super".

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) There are no major capital investments made for producing these premium grade branded fuels. The branded fuels benefit the consumers to improve mileage, reduce emission and lower maintenance cost.

[Translation]

Implementation of Power Projects

4806. SHRI C.N. SINGH:

SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether NTPC has proposed to implement power projects in those States where private sector has abandoned their projects;

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(c) whether it is difficult to operate power plants for private sector in some States due to huge arrears outstanding against the State Governments;

(d) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) implement their own projects located in various States. NTPC have not proposed to implement power projects abandoned by private sector.

(c) to (e) Lack of proper commitment to escrow arrangements, inability of the State Electricity Boards to provide adequate payment security cover to the private sector power projects, which is a requirement of the project developers and more particularly the financial institutional are some of the reasons due to which the majority of private sector power projects could not achieve financial closure in spite of progressing well on other fronts. Government have initiated the process of reforms with a view to improving the financial condition of the various power utilities in order to make them commercially viable. The States have accepted the need for power sector reforms. A consensus was reached in the Conference of Chief Ministers/Power Ministers held in March, 2001 on the need to depoliticise power sector reforms and speed up their implementation. It was resolved in the conference to achieve breakeven in distribution in two years time and achieve positive returns thereafter. It was also resolved that State Electricity Regulation Commissions would be made functional and tariff petitions filed and subsidy would be given, if required only to the extent of State Government's capacity to pay the subsidies explicitly through budget. The Government of India has signed Memorandum of Understanding/Memorandum of Agreement with States. These reflect the joint commitment of the Centre and the States to undertake reforms in a time bound manner. Government have launched the Accelerated Power Development and Reforms Programme to assist the States in improving their sub-transmission/distribution system in identified circles and to provide incentive grants linked to the bridging of the gap between cost of supply and average revenue per unit. With effective implementation of reforms,

commercial viability and the confidence of investors in power sector is expected to improve and make their role effective.

[English]

Development of Rail Network in Andhra Pradesh

4807. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI:
SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY:
SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:
SHRI GUNIPATI RAMAIAH:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the proposals submitted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh for development of rail network in their State during the last three years, project-wise;

(b) the action taken by the Government in this regard, project-wise;

(c) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Union Government for allocation of additional funds for the rail projects in the State during the last three years;

(d) if so, the details thereof, project-wise; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) The details of the proposals for new works submitted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in the past 3 years for development of rail network in the State together with their current status as under:—

S. No.	Name of the proposal	Current status
1	2	3
1.	Pandurangapuram-Sarapaka new line	Updating of the survey report has been taken up.
2.	Patancheru-Akanapet via Jogipet new line	As per the results of survey conducted in 1998-99, the cost of construction of 102 km. long line had been assessed as Rs. 183.44 cr with a rate of return of (-) 0.34%. The

1	2	3
		proposal could not be considered due to unremunerative nature, heavy throw-forward of ongoing works and constraint of resources.
3.	Falaknuma-Shamshabad new line	Survey for doubling of Falaknuma-Umdanagar and new line from Umdanagar to Shadnagar (near Shamshabad) has been completed.
4.	Multi modal suburban commuter transport system at Hyderabad	Work has already been included in the Budget and is in progress.
5.	Electrification of Falaknuma-Umdanagar section	Proposal not agreed, due to constraint of resources.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) As per the available records, the details of projects for which requests have been received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for allocation of additional funds for the rail projects during last 3 years are as under:-

Year	Demand
2001-02	Pedapalli-Karimnagar-Nizamabad new line-Additional funds of Rs. 20 cr. Secunderabad-Mudkhed and Jankampet-Bodhan gauge conversion-Additional fund of Rs. 30 crs.
2000-2001	Additional fund of Rs. 100 cr during 2000-2001 for Katpadi-Pakala-Tirupati gauge conversion and doubling of Gudur-Renigunta and Gooty-Renigunta projects.

Besides the above, requests have also been received from the State Government for allocation of funds during the various Budgets.

(e) Fund provision has been limited to the availability of resources. However, during 2001-2002 additional funds to the following projects have been provided:—

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| 1. Katpadi-Pakala-Tirupati gauge conversion | Rs. 65 Crs. |
| 2. Secunderabad-Mudkhed and Jankampet-Bodhan gauge conversion | Rs. 40 Crs. |
| 3. Hospet-Guntakal doubling | Rs. 20 Crs. |
| 4. Gudur-Renigunta doubling | Rs. 25 Crs. |
| 5. Ballapalle-Pullampet, Ph I of Gooty-Renigunta doubling | Rs. 15 Crs. |
| 6. Gooty-Renigunta patch doubling | Rs. 23 Crs. |

[Translation]

Scam in Parcel Booking

4808. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a scam involving lakhs of rupees in Parcel booking through computers took place in Delhi during the period from May 1996 to May 2000;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether loading of Parcels restricted under the lease is being done in connivance with rail employees; and

(d) if so, the action taken against the employees involved in it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[English]

Extortion of Money from Passengers Travelling in Long Distance Train

4809. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that the so called eunuch extort money from passengers travelling in long distance trains, particularly between Kanpur and Mughalsarai;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last one year; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to curb the menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) The maintenance of law and order and the security of passengers and their belongings in the running trains and Railway premises is the constitutional responsibility of the State Government concerned. The cases of crime on Railways are reported to, registered and investigated by the Government Railway Police (GRP). However, information available with this Ministry, a few incidents of extortion of money from passengers travelling by train between Kanpur and Mughalsarai have come to notice for which prompt action has been taken by GRP under the provision of section 144 of the Railways Act.

(c) "Policing" being a subject matter of the State Government, security to passengers is the responsibility of GRP and State Police. The Railway administration assists the Government Railway Police (GRP) in escorting the passenger trains apart from manning the stations in vulnerable sections.

Restructuring of LPG Marketing by BPCL in Delhi

4810. SHRI GIRDHARI LAL BHARGAVA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the reply given to Unstarred Question No. 656 dated July 18, 2002 and state:

(a) whether BPCL has completed the exercise of restructuring LPG market in Delhi;

(b) if so, the details of distributors given additional customers;

(c) whether transfer of customers have been factually effected; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor and steps taken against BPCL's officials/distributors for their negligence?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) has reported that it has undertaken the restructuring exercise of Delhi LPG market among its distributors, as per the guidelines of the Government. Accordingly, BPCL has drawn up an action plan under which it is proposed to give 22 distributors the additional customers to make them

viable, and the process of transfer of customers is being effected.

Coal Bed Methane

4811. SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI
CHIKHALIA:
SHRI DILEEP SANGHANI:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government of Gujarat have represented to the Union Government for sharing production level payment (PLP) under Coal Bed Methane (CBM) on 50:50 basis;

(b) if so, whether the Union Government have since considered the proposal of the State Government;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the time by which a decision is likely to be taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) The Government of Gujarat has requested for sharing of Production Level Payment (PLP) and Commercial Discovery Bonus in the ratio of 50:50 under Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Policy. The above request is under consideration of the Government for which no time limit can be fixed.

Awarding of NELP-III Blocks

4812. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the status of NELP-I and NELP-II;

(b) the reasons ONGC has not achieved result till now from NELP-I&II;

(c) the beneficiaries of NELP-III, II and I; and

(d) the plan of the department to tackle oil resource and requirement?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a)

Government of India has signed Production Sharing Contracts (PSCs) with various companies/consortia for 24 blocks under NELP-I and for 23 blocks under NELP-II. Exploration work in these blocks is in progress in terms of the PSCs.

(b) Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) is carrying out exploration activities in the blocks awarded to it as per work commitment in PSCs. Results of the exploration activities will be known only after the exploratory drilling is taken up by ONGC based on geo-scientific survey results.

(c) Following companies, either solely or as consortium member, have been awarded exploration blocks under NELP-I, II and III:—

- Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Ltd.
- Oil India Ltd.
- Indian Oil Corporation Ltd.
- Gas Authority of India Ltd.
- Reliance Industries Ltd.
- Hardy Exploration & Production (India) Inc.
- Niko Resources Ltd.
- Gujarat State Petroleum Company Ltd.
- Joshi Technologies Inc.
- Cairn Energy India (Pty) Ltd.
- OAO Gazprom
- Hindustan Oil Exploration Company Ltd.
- Mosbacher India LLC
- Energy Equity (India) Pty. Ltd.
- Geo Global Resources Inc.
- Jubilant Enpro (India) Ltd.

(d) Government has made sustained efforts to accelerate and expand the exploration of oil and gas in the country. Government has signed 47 PSCs with various companies/consortia in NELP-I and NELP-II. Further, 23 blocks have been awarded under NELP-III. The process of identifying and offering areas to explore oil and gas is an ongoing process with a view to increase exploration. Steps have also been taken to increase production of oil by applying Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) and Improved Oil Recovery (IOR) schemes. In order to supplement the domestic efforts, steps have also been taken to secure equity oil and gas from abroad.

Rail-Tel

4813. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL:
SHRI RAMSHETH THAKUR:
SHRI A. VENKATESH NAIK:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the capacity created by Rail Tel till date, State-wise;

(b) the expenditure incurred by the Railways on laying of Optical Fibre Cable, State-wise;

(c) the details of the capacity utilised by Railways itself;

(d) the details of the surplus capacity marketed by the Rail Tel, State-wise; and

(e) the profit earned by the Rail Tel therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) network, has been commissioned so far by Railways, including Rail Tel, on 9526 Route Kms. Details of the same are being maintained Zonal Railway wise and are as under:

S.No.	Railway	Route Kms.
1.	Central Railway	1444
2.	Eastern Railway	888
3.	Northern Railway	906
4.	North Eastern Railway	23
5.	Northeast Frontier Railway	492
6.	Southern Railway	980
7.	South Eastern Railway	3024
8.	Western Railway	849
9.	Konkan Railway	920
Total		9526

(b) The OFC network on Indian Railways has been commissioned on different sections over a long period of time with costing applicable at the time of commissioning. OFC network has been laid as part of other works and also with other items of work like laying of Quad Cable etc. Separate expenditure on OFC network alone is not maintained.

(c) Railways are normally utilising part of the capacity in 4 Fibres for its own use.

(d) State wise details of the surplus capacity marketed by RailTel is as under:

S. No.	State	Capacity Marketed	
		Space on Towers (nos.)	Bandwidth (2 MBPS)*
1.	Andhra Pradesh	16	6
2.	Tamil Nadu	—	11
3.	Maharashtra	5	20
4.	Gujarat	—	11
Total		21	48

*MBPS—Mega Bit per Second

(e) During the financial year 2001-02, Rail-Tel has earned Rs. 45 Lacs from marketing of surplus Bandwidth in OFC network and from leasing of surplus capacity on microwave towers for mounting antennas. However, there has been no profit for RailTel during this period.

Attacks on Security Forces in Kashmir

4814. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been spurt in attacks on security forces in Kashmir after formation of new Government in Pakistan;

(b) the details of terrorists and militants attacks on security forces; and

(c) the steps taken to revamp security forces to counter terrorists and militant attacks on security forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) While there have been several attacks on security forces in Jammu & Kashmir after the formation of the new Government in Pakistan, the period is too short to form a view establishing a linkage between the trends in terrorist activities and formation of the new Government in Pakistan. The trends will need to be monitored over a longer duration to arrive at a definite assessment.

(c) Adequate measures have been put in place by the security forces to thwart threats posed by the terrorist groups in J&K, through a continuous process of

technological upgrades and refinement in operating techniques. These measures include proper siting of camps, area domination patrols and counter measures taken along likely approaches which the terrorists could use to mount attacks on the security forces.

Gas Reserves

4815. SHRI SUSHIL KUMAR SHINDE:
SHRI Y.V. RAO:
SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the gas reserves discovered recently off the east coast and in Krishna Godavari basin is likely to meet the shortage of indigenous demand;

(b) if so, the fate of LNG project that are likely to materialize in the next five years and also those projects which are in the pipeline;

(c) whether Government proposes to go ahead with all those projects; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (d) As per the Hydrocarbons Vision 2025 the demand of Natural Gas is estimated to be 231 million standard cubic metres per day (MMSCMD) in 2006-07. The current supply is only around 65 MMSCMD. The major gas discovery by the consortium of Reliance Industries Ltd. and Niko Resources Ltd., Canada in the KG-DWN-98/3 block in Krishna-Godavari offshore basin on the east Coast is expected to produce 25-35 MMSCMD of gas as per the preliminary estimates. Despite the additionality in gas supply, there will remain a large gap between demand and supply. This may be met by import of gas through pipeline and Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG). However, LNG is under Open General Licence (OGL) list and the import initiatives will be propelled by commercial viability of the respective project.

Self-Sufficiency In Crude Oil

4816. SHRI A. BRAHMANIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to increase its self-sufficiency in crude oil from the present 30% to 50% over the next five years by tapping unexplored basins;

(b) if so, the details of unexplored basins being targetted;

(c) whether any preliminary surveys been done of such basins;

(d) if so, whether additional investment is needed; and

(e) if so, the details of fresh investment required for this purpose over the next three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Given the increasing demand for petroleum products, it is difficult to envisage self-sufficiency in crude oil in the near future. However to impart greater thrust to exploration and production of oil & gas in the country, the Government has formulated New Exploration Licensing Policy (NELP). Under three rounds of NELP, exploration blocks from onland, offshore and deepwater areas including hitherto unexplored or poorly explored basins have been offered.

(b) The blocks from the following less explored or unexplored basins can also be considered for inclusion in the future rounds of NELP based on minimum geo-scientific criteria.

- (i) Deepwater West Coast
- (ii) Deepwater Southern Tip of India
- (iii) North East Coast
- (iv) West Bengal Onshore and Offshore
- (v) Kutch-Saurashtra Onshore and Offshore
- (vi) Mahanadi Basins Onshore and Offshore
- (vii) Ganga Valley
- (viii) Himalayan Foothills
- (ix) Vindhayan Basin
- (x) Pranhita-Godavari basin
- (xi) Gondvana
- (xii) Purnia basin
- (xiii) Palar

(c) to (e) Exploration blocks from the basins are carved out based on the pre-exploratory surveys made by Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC), Oil

India Ltd. (OIL) and Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH), for which sufficient funds are available annually. Moreover, investment in the exploration blocks awarded under NELP depends upon the work programme bid by the awardees.

[Translation]

Decline in Sale of Products of IOCL

4817. SHRI TUFANI SAROJ: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether sales of the products of Indian Oil Corporation Limited have continuously declined;

(b) if so, the details of the sales registered in the above corporation during the last three years and during the current year;

(c) whether profit of the corporation has increased despite registering decline in its sales; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. There has been marginal decline in the overall domestic sales of products of Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) as per details given below:

Quantity in Million Metric Tonnes (MMT)				
	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	April-Sept., 2002
Sales	48.79	47.80	47.17	23.13

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) The details of profits earned by the IOCL for the last three years are given below:—

(Rs./Crore)

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	April-Sept., 2002
Profit before Tax	2970	2962	4599	4859
Profit after Tax	2443	2720	2885	3139

[English]

Judicial Pronouncements Undermining the Authority of Parliament

4818. SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware that on the basic policy matters of the Government, over-activism of judicial pronouncements are undermining their authority of Parliament and the Cabinet system of the Government; and

(b) if so, the steps that Government is contemplated to ensure that judicial activism is not encouraged to encroach into the authority of Parliamentary System and the Cabinet system of functioning of democratic Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) and (b) Some people have this feeling that over activism of Judicial pronouncements is encroaching into the domain of other organs of the state. However, public interest litigation, which is the outcome of judicial activism, has proved to be fruitful for purposes of redressing the grievances of the downtrodden masses, public injury, enforcing public duty, protecting social rights and vindicating public interest. It has to some extent served the purpose of helping the poor and underprivileged for getting justice.

In order to prevent misuse of public interest litigation, the Supreme Court has recently laid down certain guidelines in *Raunaq International Ltd. Vs. I.V.R. Construction Ltd.* (AIR 1999 SC 393), *Malik Brothers Vs. Narendra Dadhich & Others* (1999 (5) SCALE 212) and *Balco Employees Union (Regd.) Vs. Union of India & Others* (2001 (8) SCALE 541) which are follows:—

- (1) The public interest Litigation should not be merely a cloak for attaining private ends of a third party or of the party bringing the petition.
- (2) The court should examine the previous record of public service rendered by the organization bringing Public interest litigation.
- (3) Before entertaining a writ petition and passing any interim orders in such petition, the court must carefully weigh conflicting public interests. Only when it comes to a conclusion that there is overwhelming public interest in entertaining the petition, the court should intervene. Public interest be segregated from Public curiosity.

- (4) Even when public interest litigation is entertained, the court must be careful to weigh conflicting public interests before intervening.
- (5) Party on whose instance interim orders are obtained has to be made accountable for the consequences of the interim order. In appropriate cases, the petitioner asking for interim orders should be asked to provide security for any increase in costs as a result of delay or any damages suffered by the opposite party in consequence of any interim order. Stay orders or interim order if passed must be moulded to provide for restitution. If the public interest litigation fails, the public must be compensated for the delay in implementation of the project and the cost escalation resulting from such delay on account of the interim order.
- (6) If the court finds that in the grab of public interest litigation, actually an individual's interest is sought to be carried out or protected, it would be the bounden duty of the court not to entertain such petition.
- (7) The court should restrict the flow of cases in the name of public interest litigation, otherwise traditional litigation will suffer and courts of law, instead of dispensing justice will have to take upon themselves administrative and executive functions.

In view of the above guidelines prescribed by Supreme Court regarding Public Litigation, no measures are intended to be taken for prevention of misuse of Public Interest Litigation at the moment. In fact, it is for the courts to ensure that frivolous litigations in the name of Public Interest Litigation by persons having vested interests are not entertained.

[*Translation*]

Retrenchment of Class IV Employees

4819. SHRI RAMCHANDRA PASWAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the employees working in category IV in the Eastern Railway from the year 1985 to 1987 have been retrenched by the Railways;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the High Court, Kolkata and the Supreme Court have ordered for re-instating the said employees; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government to re-instate the said employees?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Social Activities of IOCL

4820. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indian Oil Corporation Limited has been undertaking social activities in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the number of activities undertaken or being undertaken by IOCL in different States, State-wise;

(d) the total expenditure incurred by IOCL in these activities during the last three years, State-wise; and

(e) the number of such activities at present in hand and total expenditure likely to be incurred on them?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Yes, Sir. Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOC) has been undertaking various social welfare activities, under its community development programmes, near its installations, mainly in the areas of drinking water, expansion of education, health and medical care, etc., as a measure of discharging the Corporation's social responsibility towards the neighbouring community. These programmes are undertaken by IOC in most of the States where the Corporation has its installations.

During the last three years, i.e., 1999-2000 to 2001-2002, IOC has incurred an expenditure of about Rs. 14.30 crore on such activities in different States/UT and the estimated expenditure for the purpose during the current year, i.e., 2002-2003, is about Rs. 2.77 crore.

Amendment in Advocates Act

4821. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to amend the Advocates Act, 1961 so as to incorporate therein certain suggestions given by the Law Commission of India;

(b) whether the Bar Council of India has also given any suggestions in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government propose to settle the issue amicably before introduction of above bill in Parliament; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (e) At present, there is no proposal to amend the Advocates Act, 1961. The Law Commission has undertaken study of the Advocates Act, 1961 and has circulated a Working Paper on its review to various institutions, including the Bar Council of India, for comments. The Law Commission has not yet finalised its report. Suggestions of the Bar Council of India in regard to amendment in the Advocates Act would also be taken into account.

Status of Kamalanga Thermal Power Station

4822. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated cost and capacity of the proposed Kamalanga Thermal Power Station in Orissa;

(b) the present status of the Project; and

(c) the time by which the project is likely to be completed and start commercial production?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) The Kamalanga thermal power project in District Dhenkanal, Orissa, with a capacity of 2x250 MW, was proposed to be set through private sector by the Government of Orissa. As per the detailed feasibility report submitted in December, 1994, to the Government of Orissa by M/s. Larsen & Toubro, who had proposed to develop the project, the estimated cost was mentioned at Rs. 2400 crores. Since the cost as also the resultant tariff was found to be high, the Government of Orissa asked the company to reduce the same. The project has not materialized as M/s. Larsen & Toubro did not get back to the Government of Orissa with a revised proposal reducing the tariff.

(c) Does not arise.

Generation of Wind Power

4823. SHRI P.R. KYNDIAH: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to set up wind power generation stations in Meghalaya during the Tenth Five Year Plan period;

(b) if so, whether any target has been fixed for this purpose;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken/to be taken to achieve the said target?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) Under preliminary wind resource studies carried out in Meghalaya, three sites have been identified for undertaking detailed wind surveys. Wind power projects can be considered if the technical feasibility is established.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

Tax Waiver policy for Naphtha-Based Power Projects

4824. SHRI IQBAL AHMED SARADGI: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have decided to extend the tax waiver policy for naphtha-based power projects to some of the state-run units as well;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether after exempting some of the upcoming private power projects from tax liabilities, the Government have now decided to exempt NTPC's five naphtha-based combine cycle plants from excise and customs obligations;

(d) if so, whether these exemptions are likely to bring the public sector units at par with the private power plants as far as tax obligations are concerned; and

(e) if so, the extent to which it has been helpful for the State-run units?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue) has issued

two notifications, both dated 30th January, 2002, extending waiver of Excise duty/Counter veiling duty (CVD) on the naphtha used by seven ongoing Combined Cycle Power Plants (CCPP), which includes six in the Private Sector and the 120 MW Basin Bridge CCPP of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board (TNEB), subject to certain conditions. All these are existing power stations presently based on naphtha as the main fuel.

(c) Vide two subsequent notifications, both dated 18th June, 2002, the waiver has been extended to five ongoing CCPPs of the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC). Out of these, the Kayamkulam Power Plant of NTPC in Kerala is operating exclusively on naphtha whereas the remaining 4 are based on natural gas and envisage the use of naphtha during short/non supply of gas.

(d) All the 12 CCPPs mentioned above are on equal footing in so far as the waiver of excise duty/counter veiling duty on naphtha is concerned.

(e) This tax exemption has directly benefited the 120 MW Basin Bridge project of Tamil Nadu Electricity Board, which is the only State run project based on naphtha, by way of reduced fuel cost. In addition, the State utilities have benefited by way of purchase of electricity at reduced cost from the Central or private sector power plants using naphtha since the cost of fuel, irrespective of whether the plant is in the State Sector, Public Sector or Private Sector, is generally a pass through in the tariff and is borne by the State Utility.

Shetty Commission for Higher Pay for Judiciary

4825. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHY:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:
SHRI A. KRISHNASWAMY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Justice Jagasnnadha Shetty Commission report for higher pay for judiciary pending with the Government;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of recommendations made by the Commission;

(d) whether the Supreme Court of India recently ordered for its implementation; and

(e) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (e) The Central Government have partially accepted the recommendations of Justice K.J. Shetty Commission (First National Judicial Pay Commission) in respect of Union Territories for which it is administratively responsible. Central Government's decision has been implemented vide implementation orders dated 11.10.2001 and 11.3.2002. The Commission has made wide ranging recommendations covering salary structure, emoluments and other conditions of service of judicial officers throughout the country, including higher pay for judicial officers.

The Supreme Court's judgment of 21st March, 2002, in All India Judges' Association & Ors Vs. Union of India & Ors, inter-alia, contains directions varying the decision taken by the Government. As regards the implementation of the directions of the Supreme Court contained in its Judgment of 21st March, 2002 with regard to the recommendations of the First National Judicial Pay Commission, the State Governments have expressed financial and constitutional difficulties in complying with the Judgment and the Central Government has filed applications before the Supreme Court apprising the Court of these difficulties, seeking modifications with regard to certain directions and an appropriate extension of time. The Supreme Court, in their order dated 25.11.2002, has directed that so far as the implementation of the higher pay-scales of the officers of subordinate judiciary is concerned, the same must be given effect to on or before 1st April, 2003 and for that purpose necessary budgetary provision can be made in the budget of the respective States as well as that of the Union. The matter is listed for the next hearing in the 2nd week of May, 2003 for further directions.

Auction of FM Radio

4826. DR. N. VENKATASWAMY: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of FM Radio Stations auctioned as on November 30, 2002;

(b) the number of cities for which the auction was held; and

(c) the total revenue earned on account of auction?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) 101 channels were auctioned between 1st March to 15th March, 2000.

(b) Auction was held for 40 cities.

(c) Total revenue earned so far on account of open auction of FM Radio stations is Rs. 15512.10 lakhs (which includes earnest moneys, but excludes Bank Guarantees lying with the Government).

Bio-Mass and Co-Generation Projects

4827. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposed to set up 1000 mega watt bio-mass power and co-generation projects during the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith sites identified for this purpose;

(c) whether feasibility study has been completed in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government for setting up a bio-mass project in Tamil Nadu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI M. KANNAPPAN): (a) A target of 700 MW has been fixed for biomass power and baggase cogeneration projects for the Tenth Five Year Plan.

(b) to (d) An aggregate capacity of 450 MW has already been installed in nine States, and a capacity of 518 MW is under implementation in eight States. Biomass resource assessment studies are being undertaken in 23 States to identify potential sites for setting up further projects.

(e) In Tamil Nadu, a capacity of 106 MW has already been installed, and a capacity of 124 MW is under implementation. Biomass Resource Assessment Studies have been conducted in 45 talukas to estimate the potential and to identify suitable locations for setting up of biomass power projects in the State.

Central Financial Assistance is provided for setting up of biomass power and bagasse cogeneration projects in various States, including Tamil Nadu. Financial incentives are also provided for preparation of Detailed Project Reports, awareness creation and training. Fiscal incentives including accelerated depreciation and relief from taxes, and duties, are also being provided. Soft

loans are available from Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA). State policies have also been announced for providing grid connectivity and purchase of electricity from these projects.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps in Karnataka

4828. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of petrol pumps allotted to SCs/STs in Karnataka;

(b) the number of those petrol pumps being run by the persons belonging to the SCs/STs in that State;

(c) whether some of those petrol pumps allotted to SCs/STs are actually being managed by non SCs/STs people; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) As on 1.4.2002, there were 86 retail outlet dealerships, allotted to Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes, in operation in the State of Karnataka.

(c) and (d) No such cases have been reported.

Clearance of Hydel Power Projects

4829. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Hydel Power Projects have been sanctioned by the Government in the country during each of the last three years and current year 2002;

(b) whether the proposal for Hydel Power Project is lying pending in Jharkhand State;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the survey have been conducted by the NHPC for provision of Hydel Power Project in Konar Dam in Jharkhand;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) The

project-wise details of hydro-electric projects cleared by the Central Electricity Authority during 1999-2002 are given in the statement.

(b) and (c) No project report for the setting up of Hydro-electric Project in Jharkhand is under examination for techno-economic clearance in the Central Electricity Authority. However, Detailed Project Reports (DPR) of the following hydro electric projects proposed to be set up in Jharkhand have been returned to the Project Authorities for re-submission after compliance with comments of CEA and CWC:

1. Sankh HEP Stage-II (2x90+2x3 = 186 MW)
2. Kanhar PSS (3x100 = 300 MW)

Koel Karo HE Project (710 MW) originally approved in June 1981 is an identified project to be executed by NHPC. A fresh survey of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) to identify the beneficiaries for implementing the R&R plan is to be conducted by the State Government to enable NHPC to formulate the Environment Management Plan (EMP). Jharkhand State is yet to sign Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) for the purchase of power. The tentative tariff at the estimated completion cost of Rs. 3223.68 crores would be around Rs. 7.99 per unit.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) and (f) Do not arise.

Statement

Hydro Electric Projects cleared by Central Electricity Authority during 1999-2002

Sl. No.	Name of Scheme	State	Installed Capacity	Cost Estimates (Rs. Crores)	Date of Clearance
1	2	3	4	5	6
Year 1999					
i.	Teesta Stage-V (NHPC)	Sikkim	3x170 = 510	2568.09 (Completion)	26.02.1999
ii.	Loktak D/S (NHPC)	Manipur	3x30	667.46 (Completion)	26.02.99
iii.	Tuivai (NEEPCO)	Mizoram	3x70 = 210	1258.84 (Completion)	19.02.99
iv.	Myntdu	Meghalaya	2x42 = 84	285.36 (1/99 PL)	20.09.99
Year 2000					
i.	Larji	H.P.	3x42 = 126	796.98 (Completion)	14.01.2000
ii.	Maneri Bhali St. II	Uttaranchal	4x76 = 304	1249.18 (Completion)	21.02.2000
iii.	Srinagar (Pvt.)	Uttaranchal	4x82.5 = 330	1699.12 (Completion)	14.06.2000
iv.	Bairabi Dam	Mizoram	2x40 = 80	549.43 (Completion)	09.11.2000
Year 2001					
i.	Parbati St. II	H.P.	4x200 = 800	4478.24 (Completion)	03.01.2001
ii.	Balimela Extn	Orissa	2x75 = 150	200.09 (Completion)	05.01.2001

1	2	3	4	5	6
iii.	Dhamwari Sunda (Pvt.)	H.P.	2x35 = 70	439.96 (Completion)	06.07.2001
Year 2002					
i.	Almatti Dam	Karnataka	5x55+12x15 = 90	674.38 (Completion)	28.02.2002
ii.	Kol Dam (NTPC)	H.P.	4x200 = 800	5299.52 (Completion)	30.06.2002
iii.	Allain Duhangan (Pvt.)	H.P.	2x96 = 192	922.35 (Completion)	20.08.2002
iv.	Uhl St. III	H.P.	2x50 = 100	431.56 (9/2002 PL)	19.09.2002
v.	Sewa St. II (NHPC)	J&K	3x40 = 120	675.25 (9/2002 PL)	28.10.2002
vi.	Teesta Low Dam St. III (NHPC)	West Bengal	4x33 = 132	782.22 (4/2002 PL)	28.11.2002

[Translation]

Control of Border Area

4830. SHRI MANIKRAO HODLYA GAVIT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been invited to the news-item captioned "Kashmir ke Seemavarti Ilakoan ka Niyantran Mang Rahi hai Sena" appearing in the *Lokmat Samachar* (Hindi), Nagpur on November 20, 2002;

(b) if so, whether the Government are contemplating to handover the control of border areas to the army; and

(c) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) The Government is aware of the news item, which is factually incorrect and speculative in nature. The Army has made no proposal to take over administrative control of border areas in Jammu & Kashmir.

[English]

Inquiry Report of Rail Accidents

4831. SHRI V. VETRISILVAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether inquiry report of rail accidents took place in Punjab in 1998 and in Sadhugarh in 2000 have not yet been submitted by the Commissions;

(b) if so, whether the Government have fixed any time limit in this regard;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the reasons/hurdles for not completing the inquiry by these commissions; and

(e) the amount of Government exchequer being spent on these Commissions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) The inquiry is in progress. Requests have been made to expedite the inquiries.

(e) Approximately Rs. 110.8 lakhs have been spent on both the Commissions since they were setup.

Dhanuvachapuram Railway Station

4832. SHRI V.S. SIVAKUMAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to upgrade Dhanuvachapuram contract based railway station of Trivandrum division as a full fledged railway station;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Canteen Facilities

4833. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal to extend permanent canteen facilities to the ex-servicemen association at Jath, District Sangli has so far been approved;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether permission has been granted for extension counter to the mobile canteen already in operation;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No Such proposal has been received.

(b) Not applicable in view of answer at (a) above.

(c) No. The extension counter at Kavathe Mahankal is providing Canteen Stores Departments (CSD) items to ex-servicemen of Jath.

(d) No applicable in view of answer at (c) above.

(e) Opening of CSD canteen for ex-servicemen at Jath is not economically viable.

Improvement in Judicial Infrastructure

4834. SHRI NARESH PUGLIA:
SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR:
SHRIMATI SHYAMA SINGH:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have been actively considering to review the centrally sponsored scheme for improving judicial infrastructure in the country;

(b) if so, the details of funds allotted to each State Government/UT under the said scheme during the last three years, scheme-wise;

(c) whether the Government have received reports that the State Governments have not properly utilised the funds; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme for Improving judicial infrastructure is reviewed periodically in consultation with the Planning Commission as per suggestions received from various sources. The progress of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for development of infrastructural facilities for the judiciary, which has been in operation since 1993-94 is being reviewed twice in a year in the Department of Justice. Last such review was held on 13th November 2002 in the conference of the Law/Home Secretaries of the State Governments/UT Administrations organised by the Department of Justice.

(b) A statement showing the amount released to each State/UT during the last three years is enclosed.

(c) and (d) From 1993-94 to 2001-2002 an amount of Rs. 478.05 crore has been released to various States/UTs. With the matching State's share, the States/UTs are required to spend an amount of Rs. 884.28 crore. Against this the State Governments/UT Administrations have spent an amount of Rs. 1024.53 crore so far. Such of the State Governments which have not utilised the funds fully are periodically urged to utilise the funds fully failing which are subsequent instalments of funds are not released to them. During the year 2002-2003, the States of Manipur, Meghalaya and UT of Lakshadweep were not released the first, instalment of funds under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme for this reason.

Statement*Amount released under the Centrally Sponsored Scheme to the States/UTs*

(Rs. in lakhs)

S. No.	States/UTs	during 1999-2000	during 2000-2001	during 2001-2002
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	405.05	547.71	533.43
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	25.30	15.89	85.00
3.	Assam	280.00	330.00	365.00
4.	Bihar	314.93	377.77	309.86
5.	Chhattisgarh	—	57.08	113.53
6.	Goa	39.00	58.00	58.63
7.	Gujarat	181.78	246.29	239.39
8.	Haryana	86.70	118.52	114.17
9.	Himachal Pradesh	39.00	58.00	58.00
10.	Jammu & Kashmir	39.00	59.00	59.00
11.	Jharkhand	—	52.75	104.89
12.	Karnataka	263.96	368.01	347.62
13.	Kerala	175.90	243.26	231.66
14.	Madhya Pradesh	323.82	381.09	312.93
15.	Maharashtra	347.43	474.95	457.55
16.	Manipur	45.00	0.00	85.00
17.	Meghalaya	0.00	0.00	0.00
18.	Mizoram	45.00	60.00	85.00
19.	Nagaland	45.00	60.00	85.00
20.	Orissa	284.17	282.34	272.00
21.	Punjab	92.87	126.95	122.30
22.	Rajasthan	249.47	341.03	328.54
23.	Sikkim	39.00	60.00	85.00
24.	Tamil Nadu	349.39	477.62	460.13
25.	Tripura	45.00	60.00	85.00
26.	Uttaranchal	—	25.82	51.33
27.	Uttar Pradesh	774.54	1033.00	968.71
28.	West Bengal	521.63	705.81	685.96

1	2	3	4	5
UNION TERRITORIES				
29.	A & N Islands	30.00	50.00	50.00
30.	Chandigarh	29.00	50.00	50.00
31.	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	19.00	40.00	40.00
32.	Daman & Diu	18.00	40.00	40.00
33.	Delhi	175.00	425.00	425.00
34.	Lakshadweep	0.00	0.00	0.00
35.	Pondicherry	19.06	0.00	60.00
Grand Total		5303.00**	7225.89@	7369.73*

*Excludes an amount of Rs. 120.37 lakhs transferred towards Non-lapsable Central Pool.

**Excludes an amount of Rs. 197.00 lakh transferred towards Non-lapsable Central Pool.

@Excludes the proposal of Rs. 269.11 lakhs (under submission) to transfer towards Non-lapsable Central Pool for NE and Sikkim.

Patent Related Litigation

4835. SHRI VINAY KUMAR SORAKE: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether global legal experts have commented that India needs to upgrade its legal system to handle patent-related litigation and to allow patent in all areas of technology;

(b) whether according to these experts even Japan which had a weak patent system has restructured legal education, training lawyers and creating a special pool of judges to handle patent related cases;

(c) whether WTO Doha round resolutions might work for poor countries with absolutely no technical base in the matter of special protection and concession but not for India; and

(d) if so, reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a), (b), (c) and (d) Government is not aware of any such comments of global legal experts. The Patent Act, 1970, as amended by the Patents (Amendment) Act, 2002 has fulfilled India's international obligation contained in the TRIPS Agreements of WTO Agreement. In order to ensure speedy disposal of appeals against the decisions of the Controller of Patents, which

at present lie to the High Court, the provisions relating to the setting up of the Intellectual Property Appellate Board contained in the Trademarks Act, 1999, with suitable modifications, have been made applicable to the Patent law for the Patents (Amendment) Act, 2002 (Chapter XIX). The Act provides for appointment of Technical Member having experience in matters relating to patents.

Doha Ministerial Declaration has provided a mandate to address the issue of relationship between the TRIPS Agreement and the CBD and protection of traditional knowledge and folklore as outstanding implementation issues. Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health provides for exemption to LDCs till 1.1.2016 for implementing or applying the provisions of Section 5 (Patents) and Section 7 (Protection of Undisclosed Information). Doha Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement on Public Health affirms that the TRIPS Agreement can and should be interpreted to protect public health and promote access to medicines for all. The Declaration recognizes the affordability and availability of medicines as a universal right. The Ministers agreed that the TRIPS Agreement does not and should not prevent Members from taking measures to protect public health. The Declaration reaffirms the Members' right to use, to the full, the flexibility of compulsory license and parallel import for the purpose of public health. It clarifies that the governments have freedom to determine the grounds to grant compulsory licenses. The Declaration also clarifies that each Member has the right to determine what constitutes a national emergency or other circumstances of extreme urgency for issuing compulsory license on an

expeditious basis. The Declaration also clarifies that each Member is free to establish its own regime for exhaustion of IPRs (parallel import).

Action on Molestation Incident In Kerala Express Train

4836. SHRI N.N. KRISHNADAS:
 PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM:
 SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN:
 SHRI P. RAJENDRAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether competent authority initiated any action on the molestation incident in Kerala Express (Train No. 2625) after Mathura Station on October 31, 2002;

(b) whether a prompt complaint to the train superintendent by the aggrieved failed to bring any respite to the helpless family;

(c) whether there are complaints from the passengers that policemen indulge in molestation in the running trains;

(d) whether aggrieved family filed a complaint with railway police; and

(e) if so, action taken and details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (e) An incident of misbehaviour with a lady passenger in Kerala Express has come to notice.

Inspector General of Police (Railways), Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow has informed that GRP/Mathura has registered a case vide crime No. 298/02 U/S 354 IPC and 145 Railways Act dated 19.11.2002 against 5 Civil Police personnel of Mathura and 3 accused persons, who were being escorted by them for misbehaving with a lady passenger.

Electrification of Slums In Delhi Cantt.

4837. SHRI KAMAL NATH:
 SHRI GAJENDRA SINGH RAJUKHEDI:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the unfortunate accident near Kirby Place slum cluster in Delhi Cantonment on 9th September, 2002 when eight persons sleeping on the pavement were crushed to death by a speeding truck during the night;

(b) if so, whether these persons were compelled to sleep in open because of disconnection of electric supply to Jhuggi cluster by the military authorities;

(c) if so, whether the Government are considering ex gratia payment to the families of the deceased;

(d) if so, whether any proposal has been submitted by the agency responsible for electrification in Delhi Cantt. for slum dwellers and no objection certificate issued by military authorities; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor and the steps taken to check such incidents in future?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir. A truck bearing No. MR-38-C-8852 came over the pavement on the night of 9th September, 2002 in Delhi Cantonment area leading to an accident in which 8 persons were killed and 4 persons were injured.

(b) to (e) No, Sir. Neither any electric connections have ever been provided to the said slum cluster, which is an encroachment on Defence land at Kirby Place in Delhi Cantonment, nor any such proposal for grant of 'No Objection Certificate' for provision of electric supply to these JJ Clusters has been received by Military Authorities. Therefore, the Government is not liable to pay ex-gratia compensation, etc. to the victims of such accidents.

Discriminations between A.H. Wheeler & Co. and other Bookstall Contractors

4838. SHRI RAM SAJIVAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken action to remove all the discriminations between A.H. Wheeler & Co. and the other bookstall contractors on all the Indian Railways; and

(b) the quota fixed for allotment of bookstalls at Railway Stations for the weaker section of the society?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Since the terms and conditions of the bookstall licence of M/s. A.H. Wheeler & Co. vis-a-vis other bookstall contractors are different, the question of discrimination does not arise.

(b) As per policy, bookstall licences are awarded to (i) Cooperative societies of actual workers/vendors and

cooperative societies of unemployed graduates; (ii) Partnerships and Associations of Unemployed graduates; (iii) Individual unemployed graduates who are sons/wards of railway men (existing or retired) (iv) Individual unemployed graduates other than those mentioned at (iii) above. No special quota for weaker section of the society has been prescribed in the allotment of bookstalls.

Power Connectivity in Tribal Villages of Assam

4839. SHRI SANSUMA KHUNGGUR BWISWMUTHIARY: Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken any positive scheme and action-plan to provide power connectivity to the backward indigenous tribal people in all the tribal villages in Assam with special mention to Bodoland Territory;

(b) if so, action taken in this regard so far; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) to (c) The Government has not received any specific proposal to electrify tribal villages in Bodoland Territory. However, Assam State Electricity Board (ASEB) has informed that against the target of electrification of 20 tribal villages during 2000-01, 11 villages have been electrified under Prime Minister's Package (Non-Lapsable Central Pool of Resources) leaving a balance of 9 un-electrified villages. Electrification of 260 virgin villages are proposed under Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana (PMGY) during 2002-03. Of these, 50 villages are within Bodoland Autonomous Council area (BAC). Similarly, intensification work in 936 villages are proposed for 2002-03 under rural electrification programme (Minimum Needs Programme), out of which 145 are tribal villages and 71 are within BAC area.

Assam can also have access to funds from Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF), Rural Electrification Corporation (REC) and Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS). States have been requested to utilize the funds judiciously so as to ensure that the national objective of achieving 100% village electrification by 2007 could be attained.

Halt of Kerala Express Near Mathura Station

4840. PROF. A.K. PREMAJAM:
SHRI JAI PRAKASH:
SHRI RAMJIVAN SINGH:
SHRI DINESH CHANDRA YADAV:
SHRI VARKALA RADHAKRISHNAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on September 7, 2002 the Kerala Express was halted at a station near Mathura on the basis of a hoax bomb call;

(b) whether it was revealed that the hoax call was made to enable the family members of an IAS officer to board the trains;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether any action taken against the guilty;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) if not, the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. On 7.9.2002 the Kerala Express was halted at Chhata Railway Station near Mathura Junction on the basis of a hoax bomb call. The information collected through Government Railway Police, Uttar Pradesh reveals that the train was reportedly halted for the family members of Additional Deputy Commissioner (Administrative Officer, HUDA), Gurgaon (Haryana) to board.

(d) and (e) A case has been registered at GRP Station/Mathura Junction vide General Diary No. 28 dated 7.9.2002. The DIG of Police (Railways), Uttar Pradesh has informed that the matter is under investigation and action will be initiated after its completion.

(f) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Occupying of Bertha/Seats at Railway Station by Coolies

4841. DR. M.P. JAISWAL:
SHRI BIR SINGH MAHATO:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether coolies occupy berths/seats in the stationary trains in the railway stations in advance and give those berths/seats to the genuine passengers on payment of money;

(b) if so, the details in this regard;

(c) the zone-wise number of such complaints received during the last three years and the action taken thereon alongwith the number of persons against whom such action has been taken; and

(d) the arrangements made to check such illegal activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) Some instances of occupying of berths/seats at Railway Stations by coolies have come to notice. However, Statistics regarding this are not being maintained separately. Information to the extent available will be laid on the Table of the Sabha. Regular checks are conducted by the Commercial and Vigilance Departments in association with the Police to prevent cornering of seats by coolies and other anti-social elements. In addition, unreserved coaches are brought from the yards to the platforms in a locked condition at the train originating stations and passengers are advised to follow a 'queue' system so as to prevent cornering of seats in the unreserved coaches.

Central Share on the Expenditure on Subordinate Judiciary

4842. SHRI MANIBHAI RAMJIBHAI CHAUDHRI:
SHRI K.E. KRISHNAMURTHY:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Centre for sharing the State's expenditure burden on the subordinate judiciary/lower courts;

(b) whether Government have received such requests from other States;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action being taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI

SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (d) The First National Judicial Pay Commission has, inter-alia, recommended that the Central Government must in every State share half of the annual expenditure on subordinate courts and quarters for judicial officers.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh, vide their latest letter dated 15.3.2002, has desired the decision of the Central Government with respect to sharing of half of the total annual expenditure on the Subordinate Courts/Judiciary. Most of the State Governments have also desired to know the decision of the Central Government in respect of sharing half of the annual expenditure on the Subordinate Judiciary.

The recommendation of the First National Judicial Pay Commission with regard to sharing of expenditure on subordinate judiciary in the States has not been accepted by the Supreme Court in its judgment of 21st March, 2002, in All India Judges' Association & Ors. Vs. Union of India & Ors.

Molestation and Misbehaviour with Women

4843. SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the incidents of molestation and misbehavior with women/atrocities on other passengers by Railway Protection Force personnel/Civil Security (Jail) personnel are on the rise;

(b) if so, the efforts being made to check such incidents;

(c) whether attention of the Government has been drawn towards the incident of molestation of a lady passenger by the Railway Protection Force personnel in a running train as reported on page 5 of 'Nav Bharat Times' Hindi daily dated November 3, 2002; and

(d) if so, the action taken against those officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No specific complaints have come to notice.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. No incident against RPF personnel has come to notice.

However, one such incident of misbehavior with a lady passenger in Kerala Express has come to notice.

Inspector General of Police (Railways), Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow has informed that GRP/Mathura has registered

a case vide crime No. 298/02 U/S 354 IPC and 145 Railways Act dated 19.11.2002 against 5 Civil Police personnel of Mathura and 3 accused persons, who were being escorted by them for misbehaving with a lady passenger.

[English]

**Representation from Commuters of
Delhi-Rohtak Section**

4844. SHRI KISHAN SINGH SANGWAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of representations received from commuters of Delhi-Rohtak Section for refund of illegally extorted money are pending in the offices of Northern Railway;

(b) whether railways have conducted inquiry in connection with complaints lodged one year back at the Stations of Delhi-Rohtak Station;

(c) if so, the details thereof and action taken or proposed to be taken against the guilty employees; and

(d) the time by which the commuters are likely to get the refunds?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[Translation]

Resignation of Chairman Investigating Tehelka Case

4845. SHRI CHANDRESH PATEL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chairman of the Commission investigating the Tehelka case has resigned;

(b) whether Government have accepted the resignation;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Chairman was appointed on the recommendation of the Chief Justice of Supreme Court;

(e) whether the inquiry report of Tehelka case has been submitted to the Government;

(f) if so, the details thereof; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor alongwith the time by which it is likely to be submitted?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The Chairman has resigned on his own volition.

(d) Yes, Sir.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise, in view of (e) above.

(g) The present term of the Commission is upto 31st January, 2003.

Directorate of Hydrocarbons

4846. SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:
SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL:
SHRI C.N. SINGH:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn towards the news item published in the 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated November 3, 2002 under the caption, "Hydrocarbon Mahanideshalaya Par Dalalon Ka Raaj"; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to end the nexus between officers of D.G.H. and brokers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir. Director General of Hydrocarbons has, however, informed that the Directorate is not aware of any such nexus between the officers of DGH and brokers.

(b) Does not arise in view of reply to (a) above.

[English]

Post of Law Secretary

4847. SHRI DAHYABHAI VALLABHBHAI PATEL:
Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is no post of Law Secretary in the Union Territory of Daman and Diu and the law officer has been designated as the Law Secretary;

(b) if so, the reasons and the justification therefor and the status of the present incumbent; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to appoint a Law Secretary in the Union Territory of Daman and Diu?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) to (c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Profit Sharing Ratio on Coal Bed Methane Projects

4848. SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Ministry of Finance has objected to the proposal of Petroleum Ministry in regard to sharing profits with State Government for ongoing Coal Bed Methane Projects;

(b) if so, whether the matter has been referred to the Twelfth Finance Commission for its suggestion; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (c) While concurring with the Coal Bed Methane (CBM) Policy, some State Governments have requested for Production Level Payments and Commercial Discovery Bonus in the contracts signed by the Government of India under this policy. These requests are under consideration of the Government.

Introduction of Fast Trains on Harbour Lines

4849. SHRI KIRIT SOMAIYA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railway has taken action and realigned to reduce the travel time on harbour lines in Central Railways, Mumbai;

(b) whether CST and Masjid railway stations and Railway lines are realigned;

(c) the way in which it will benefit the commuters;

(d) whether any fast train on harbour lines is likely to be started;

(e) whether any frequency will be increased; and

(f) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Railways have already carried out the re-modelling of harbour line at Mumbai CST yard whereby the lines and the cross-over points have been realigned. The speed of trains over the turn-outs has been increased from 10 kmph to 30 kmph.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) After the completion of realignment work at Kurla and Vashi stations on harbour line, the travelling time between Mumbai CST and Panvel is likely to be reduced by about 5 minutes.

(d) No, Sir. Not at present.

(e) and (f) No, Sir. Not at present.

Modular Toilet Unit

4850. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Modular Toilet Unit has been installed in two tier A.C. coach of Rajdhani Express Mumbai for trial run;

(b) if so, the result of the trial run;

(c) whether the result is satisfactory;

(d) if so, whether such units are likely to be introduced on other trains also; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Results are encouraging as the Unit has been found user friendly and easy to clean.

(d) and (e) Such Units have now been introduced on several Janshatabi Coaches. Further extension to new coaches will be done gradually with development of manufacturing capacity in the industry.

**Light and Sound Programmes for
Sitabuldi Fort, Nagpur**

4851. SHRIMATI PRABHA RAU: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether requests have been made for providing light and sound programmes in the Sitabuldi Fort, Nagpur with a view to reflect its historical importance;

(b) if so, whether the Government have considered the proposal; and

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to provide this arrangement in the Fort area?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) No Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Rail Traffic Regulator

4852. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal to appoint a "Rail Traffic Regulator";

(b) if so, the details thereof and the functions of such Rail Traffic Regulator;

(c) the extent to which such a regulator decide on the new trains to be introduced in various zones;

(d) whether the Rail Traffic Regulator will also decide on the viability of existing passenger trains; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (e) Do not arise.

**Introduction of Inter-Model Transport
System for Bangalore**

4853. SHRI S.D.N.R. WADIYAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have a proposal for the introduction of inter-model transport system for Bangalore city; and

(b) if so, the estimate cost of the project and the likely share of the Central Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) After a preliminary study carried out in 1998-99 for the city of Bangalore, M/s RITES had identified feasibility of an Inter-model Transport system based on up-gradation of existing Railway lines for running of suburban commuter trains. For detailed assessment of the revenue and cost implication of the project, a final Detailed Project Report (DPR) is to be submitted by M/s RITES to the Government of Karnataka. The estimated cost of the project would be available only after the submission of the final report. The cost of the project will be shared in the ratio of 2/3 : 1/3 between the State Government of Karnataka and the Ministry of Railways.

Appointments of Railway Ticket Agents

4854. SHRI DILIPKUMAR MANSUKHLAL GANDHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government have invited applications for appointing railway ticket agents in Maharashtra and other States in the recent past;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the time by which the decision is likely to be taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (c) Applications have been called for by the Zonal Railways for appointment of Rail Travellers Service Agents (RTSAs) at stations located in the States of Maharashtra, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Uttaranchal, Haryana, Rajasthan, Jammu & Kashmir, Kerala and Tamilnadu. The applications received will be considered as expeditiously as possible as per provisions of Authorization of RTSA rules, 1985 as amended from time to time.

Ethanol-Petrol Blending Scheme

4855. SHRI ASHOK N. MOHOL: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a meeting of ministers of excise and sugarcane development of various States has been convened by him to review the progress of the ethanol-petrol blending scheme;

(b) if so, whether the State Governments have done satisfied job in setting up infrastructure for ethanol production; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The concerned State Governments have taken action to promote the activities for setting up necessary infrastructure by the concerned Sugar Mills/Distilleries. The work is under progress.

Number of Shatabdi/Jan Shatabdi Express

4856. SHRI RAVINDRA KUMAR PANDEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Shatabdi and Jan Shatabdi Express plying on different routes of the country;

(b) whether the revenue of railways is increasing due to running of these trains; and

(c) if so, the total profit earned or loss incurred by the Government from each Rajdhani Express, Shatabdi and Jan Shatabdi Express during each of the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) At present, there are 18 pairs of Shatabdi and 16 pairs of Jan Shatabdi Expresses running on Indian Railways.

(b) and (c) Train-wise figures of profitability, earnings and expenditure are not separately maintained. Therefore, details of profitability or otherwise of Rajdhani, Shatabdi and Jan Shatabdi trains are not available.

Boards in PSUs

4857. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the changes envisaged in the constitution of boards of various PSUs after their disinvestments;

(b) the number of board level posts will become surplus;

(c) whether the Government proposes to utilise the services of the incumbents of surplus board level posts; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) In cases of disinvestment involving reduction of the Government equity in a PSU to less than 50%, the concerned company ceases to be a Government company and, therefore, the new management may take a decision in such matters.

(c) and (d) No Such proposal is presently under consideration.

[Translation]

Weapons Export Licence to India

4858. SHRI C.N. SINGH:
SHRI SADASHIVRAO DADOBA MANDLIK:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the USA has taken a decision to issue licence to India to export weapons;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the time by which it is likely to be made effective;

(c) whether the above decision is likely to strengthen the defence collaboration between the two countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Does not arise.

[English]

Grid Disturbance

4859. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI:
SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of POWER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a three member committee was appointed by the Union Government to conduct a comprehensive enquiry to ascertain the causes of grid disturbance and suggest remedial measures to avoid recurrence;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the salient feature of the report submitted by them;

(c) the steps taken by Government to implement the recommendations of the committee;

(d) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has made any request for preventing grid disturbances in the State; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the measures taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Three-member committees were appointed to conduct enquiry to ascertain the causes of grid disturbances and suggest remedial measures to avoid recurrence for the grid disturbances in the Southern Grid on 11.09.2001 and on 23.1.2002.

The Committees made a number of recommendations. The major ones were (1) Regulation of frequency, (2) Implementation of notified power cuts to contain demand, (3) Ensuring effectiveness of under-frequency load shedding scheme, (4) Provision of a df/dt (rate of change of frequency) relays, (5) Improvement of voltage profile, (6) Renovation & Modernisation of old Karnataka transmission system including protection system, (7) Provision of Disturbance Recorders and Event loggers at all important 220 kV sub-stations (8) Review of black start procedures, (9) Training of load dispatch personnel and system operators, etc.

(c) CEA has sent the recommendations to all the States in the Southern Region for implementation. CEA/SREB are monitoring implementation of the recommendations of both the Committees.

(d) and (e) Government of Andhra Pradesh requested in November, 2001 that CEA and Power Grid may be asked to scrutinize a three tier defense mechanism proposed by APTRANSCO to ensure that important Thermal Stations in A.P. & Karnataka are islanded to avoid possible grid collapses. The three-tier mechanism consisted of:

- (i) Operating frequency not less than 48.0 Hz.
- (ii) Three-stage automatic under-frequency relay operation.
- (iii) Islanding scheme encompassing A.P. system along with NTPC's Ramagundam thermal power station and Karnataka's Raichur thermal station plus matching load of Karnataka.

The proposal was examined in consultation with CEA, Power Grid and NTPC and Government of A.P. was

informed that the Southern Regional Grid was operating at a very low security level with extremely low frequency and low voltage thus operating on "razor's edge" in view of wide mismatch between generation and demand. If under frequency load shedding schemes at frequency settings, as recommended by the Committee which enquired into the Grid Disturbance of 11.09.2001, were implemented there would be no need for islanding. Further, the State Governments were also advised to install shunt capacitors on priority as per SREB studies to improve security of the grid, as well as, to carry out proper load management and regulate load within the availability of power in the State so as to maintain the frequency as stipulated by Central Electricity Regulatory Commission.

Availability Based Tariff (ABT) has been implemented in Western and Northern regions with effect from 1st July, 2002 and 1st December, 2002 respectively. ABT is proposed to be implemented in Southern Region from 1st January, 2003. This will improve the frequency profile of the Southern Regional Grid.

Visit to Foreign Countries and the Agreements Signed

4860. SHRI RAMDAS ATHAWALE: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of countries visited by him during the last two years alongwith the details of the agreements reached during his visits; and

(b) the total expenditure incurred on those foreign visits and the benefits accrued to the country from those visits?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) and (b) During the last two financial years *i.e.*, 2000-01 and 2001-02, the Minister of Petroleum & Natural Gas visited 12 (twelve) countries, namely, UK, USA, Canada, Mauritius, Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, Japan, Singapore, France, Russia, Brazil and China in connection with promoting investment in Petroleum Sector, presentation of New Exploration Licensing Policy, attending Conferences in Hydrocarbon Sector, etc. No agreement was signed with any country during these visits. However, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed with Government of Mauritius for entry of Indian oil Corporation Limited as an independent company in the petroleum sector in Mauritius and another MoU signed with Government of Brazil for technical know-how relating to blending of Ethanol with Petrol. An expenditure of Rs. 21,99,638/- was incurred on the above foreign visits of Minister (P&NG).

Unmanned Level Crossings at Post No. 125

4861. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the fact that an unmanned level crossing exists at post no. 125 near village Lahara Khana on Bathinda-Rampura line;

(b) whether the Government are also aware that a large number of people and various types of vehicle cross the level crossing every day thereby posing a danger for accident; and

(c) if so, the measures being taken by the Government to improve the present unmanned level crossing in to 'B' class manned level crossing?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir. There does not exist any level crossing at post No. 125.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Allotment of Petrol Pumps/LPG Agencies to Widows of Kashmir

4862. SHRI A. BRAHMANAIAH: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to reply given to Unstarred Question No. 646 dated November 21, 2002 and state:

(a) whether the Government have formulated a policy for the widows of martyrs in Kashmir with regard to allotment of petrol pumps and LPG agencies;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) to what extent widows from BSF and other services also obtained such assistance from the Government;

(d) the details of such applications pending with the Government; and

(e) the steps proposed to assist such widows and dependents through policy review?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): (a) to (e) Apart from the 8% reservation each provided for the Defence category and the Paramilitary/Police/Government Personnel (PMP) category in the allotment of dealerships/distributorships of petroleum products as per the guidelines

for selection of dealers/distributors and the Special Scheme for allotment of retail outlet dealerships/LPG distributorships to widows/next of kin of defence personnel killed in action in 'OP Vijay' Kargil, the discretionary quota of the Government has been introduced for allotment of dealerships/distributorships on genuine compassionate grounds and in deserving cases, to the following two categories:—

- (i) Dependents of Defence/Paramilitary/Police personnel, who are killed in action or persons permanently disabled while performing their duties and have not been suitably rehabilitated;
- (ii) Dependents of Central/State Government employees, who are killed or permanently disabled while performing their duties and have not been suitably rehabilitated.

The widows of Defence/Paramilitary/Police/Government personnel, including BSF personnel, who are killed in action while performing their duties in Kashmir and who have not been suitably rehabilitated, are, inter alia, eligible for being considered for allotment under the discretionary quota.

The Government have received 1515 applications so far for allotment of dealerships/distributorships under the discretionary quota. Nine applicants have been allotted retail outlet dealerships under the discretionary quota.

[Translation]

Allotment of Quarters in Railways

4863. SHRI RAMJEE MANJHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there are 85 quarters in type One, 315 quarters in type Two, 35 quarters in type Three and 3 quarters in type Four of railway are lying vacant since long in Delhi as reported in 'Rashtriya Sahara' dated November 12, 2002;

(b) whether rampant corruption is prevailed in the allotment of railway quarter resulting loss of lakhs of rupees monthly to the railways;

(c) whether there are number of applications pending for allotment of quarters since long;

(d) if so, the reasons for not allotting these vacant quarters to the railway employees; and

(e) the action taken by the Government against the guilty officials?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (e) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Sabha.

[English]

Commonwealth Countries Law Ministers Conference

4864. DR. M.V.V.S. MURTHI:
SHRI RAM MOHAN GADDE:

Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the conference of Law Ministers of Commonwealth Countries held recently;

(b) if so, the details with the issue raised by the participants;

(c) the details of issue raised by Indian representatives; and

(d) the outcome thereof with the final decision taken, if any?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL AND MINES AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD): (a) Yes, Sir. The Commonwealth Law Ministers Meeting was held at Kingstown, St. Vincent & Grenadines between 18-21 November, 2002. The Indian delegation to the said meeting was led by Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of State for Coal, Mines, Law & Justice.

(b) A Large number of issues, such as human rights, good governance, modernization of law of evidence, law & development, freedom of information, privacy, protection of personal information, competition law, laws relating to e-commerce & e-evidence, terrorism, extradition of offenders and mutual cooperation in criminal matters, etc. was discussed. India deeply focussed upon the menace of terrorism and emphasized upon the Commonwealth Countries to have a concerted legal action in its containment.

(c) In most of the matters discussed, India is either already having legislation in place or is in the process of making one. The Indian position on these issues was explained. India also took the stand that terrorism was a threat to humanity against which the entire civilized world should stand united; that no nation should take the plea of political exception in sheltering terrorists; that the

proceeds of terrorism should be confiscated to ensure compensation to the victims of terror.

(d) A Communiqué was issued at the end of the Meeting, the salient features of which are:

- (i) Law Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the protection of the fundamental rights of citizens.
- (ii) Law Ministers affirmed their commitment to the promotion of the fundamental Commonwealth values of freedom of assembly, association and expression.
- (iii) Law Ministers mandated senior officials to finalise their work on a Commonwealth Statement of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and present a draft to Ministers for consideration in the next meeting.
- (iv) Law Ministers condemned terrorism in all its forms and reaffirmed their commitment to work together and assist each other in combating terrorism and to protect and ensure security of our people. Law Ministers resolved to ensure that no Commonwealth country be used as a safe haven for terrorists and that no terrorist is able to evade extradition by invoking the political offence exception.
- (v) The Law Ministers amended the London Scheme for Extradition.
- (vi) Law Ministers also agreed to make immediate amendment in Harare Scheme on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters.
- (vii) Law Ministers considered a number of Modal Bills for use by Member countries. These include subjects like computer and computer-related crimes, law of evidence, freedom of information, privacy, protection of personal information, competition law, land and development, etc. While some of them were approved, the Commonwealth Secretariat was requested to do some more work on some others.

Payment of Contribution to Affected People

4865. SHRI V. VETRISILVAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Union Government are contributing towards the total cost of any plant/project unit being set up by the Public Sector Undertakings in various parts of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether project affected people are not being provided jobs in those plants/project units;

(d) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(e) the guidelines of the Union Government to the PSUs in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) By and large, formulation of projects and setting up of plants come under the purview of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs). However, if any project/plant forms part of national level plan, necessary budgetary support may be provided to the CPSUs concerned by the Government on case to case basis. As on 1.7.2002, there were 541 projects costing Rs. 20 crore and above each in the central sector. The original cost of these projects was Rs. 1,72,790 crore.

(c) to (e) The matters relating to jobs to the project affected people are dealt with by the management of respective CPSUs, and no data is centrally maintained in this regard.

Revival of N.P.P.C.

4866. SHRI SUNIL KHAN: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to refer to reply to Unstarred Question No. 2011 dated 15th March, 2002 and state:

(a) whether the Government of Nagaland filed any appeal before Appellate Authority on Industrial and Financial Restructuring (AAIFR) against the order of BIFR regarding winding up of NPPC;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith present position in this regard;

(c) the name of the Operating Agency for Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company Limited (NPPC);

(d) whether Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited (HPC) has appointed and consultant for NPPC;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the said consultant has submitted any report;

(g) if so, the details of the report; and

(h) the action taken on the report for the revival of NPPC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) and (b) The Bench passed a stay order against the winding up order of the Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company (NPPC) by Board for Industrial & Financial Restructuring (BIFR). In its hearing on 14.11.2002, the Bench granted an extension of three months time and has fixed the next date of hearing on 28.02.2003.

(c) The Board for Industrial & Financial Restructuring (BIFR) appointed the Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) as Operating Agency (OA).

(d) and (e) Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited have appointed M/s. Development Consultants Pvt. Ltd. for preparing a Detailed Project Report on Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company (NPPC).

(f) and (g) M/s. Development Consultant Pvt. Ltd. have submitted the Draft Detailed Project Report on revival and upgradation of Nagaland Pulp & Paper Company which mainly includes the following:—

- Upgradation of production projected to 45,000 Tonnes Per Annum (TPA) from 33,000 Tonnes Per Annum (TPA) of value added paper.
- Two alternative for meetings rehabilitation costs have been suggested:—

Alternative-I: Amounting to Rs. 254 crore with the assumption that the Project cost will be funded by the Government of India (GOI) as debt and equity in equal proportion.

Alternative-II: Amounting to Rs. 240 crore with the assumption that the entire project cost will be financed by the Government of India (GOI) as equity:

The key assumptions contained in the report are:—

- (i) Project implementation in 24 months and the Mill achieving 70, 90 and 100 per cent capacity utilization in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd year respectively after commercial production.
- (ii) Sustained supply of raw material.
- (iii) Development of transport, infrastructure, and reliable communication network by the Government of Nagaland.

- (iv) Attain complete self sufficiency in power steam generation.
- (v) Adopt eco-friendly process technology for beaching.
- (vi) Existing liabilities (accumulated loss of Rs. 197.4 crore as on 31.3.2002) to be written off by the Government of India.
- (vii) The financial viability of the project is most sensitive to variation in selling price, which is currently estimated at Rs. 33,800 per tonne of finished product.

(h) Hindustan Paper Corporation Limited have submitted their comments to the Government.

Investment in Public Sector Undertakings

4867. SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI: Will the Minister of HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES be pleased to state:

(a) the total amount invested by Union Government in Public Sector Undertakings in each States during the last three years;

(b) the main factor are kept in mind while deciding the investment in States;

(c) whether due to disinvestment the central investing on Public Sector has come down during the last three years;

(d) if so, whether industrial backward areas have been affected due to disinvestment and less spending on Public Sector Undertakings in States;

(e) if so, the details thereof; and

(f) the steps taken or being taken by the Government to invest more amount in industrially backward States?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): (a) The details of amount invested in Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs) in terms of Gross Block in different States is available in Volume I of Public Enterprises Survey of the respective years, which is a published document.

(b) The investment on projects is decided based upon techno-economic considerations like availability of raw materials, infrastructure including power, road, communication, proximity to the market, etc.

(c) The total investment in terms of Gross Block during last three years namely 1998-99, 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, the latest period for which information is available, are Rs. 354132 crore, Rs. 381210 crore and Rs. 411869 crore respectively which shows growth.

(d) and (e) Does not arise.

(f) In the present liberalized economic environment, Industrial Sector stands largely delicensed and private sector is, therefore, free to decide on making investment in industries anywhere in the country.

Attempt to Attack Mahalaxmi Express on South Central Railway

4868. SHRI PRAKASH V. PATIL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether there were attempts of robbery between Pune and Satara on Kolhapur-Pune route in past;

(b) whether there was an attempt to attack the Mahalaxmi Express on South Central Railway during last Diwali near Pune;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the action taken to avoid recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (d) The maintenance of law and order and the security of passengers and their belongings in the running trains and Railway premises is the constitutional responsibility of the State Government concerned. The cases of crime on the Railways are reported to, registered and investigated by the Government Railway Police (GRP). Therefore, information asked for in the question is not readily available with the Ministry of Railways.

Cooperation Sought from Panchayats by Railways

4869. PROF. UMMAREDDY VENKATESWARLU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether the railways propose to involve panchayats along side the rail tracks to assist in enhancing rail safety;

(b) if so, the details of such a plan;

(c) whether this plan has been tried out in any zone;

(d) if so, the details of areas selected for such a cooperation between the Panchayats and railways; and

(e) the results achieved from such cooperation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) to (e) The State Governments were requested in 1994 and 1995 to address the heads of every village, falling under their jurisdiction to arrange meetings with their villagers and create awareness in them how to negotiate unmanned level crossings and avoid dangers in careless driving. To educate the villagers regarding precautions to be taken for negotiating unmanned level crossing, Zonal Railways undertake campaigns from time to time in which various civic bodies, district administrations, municipalities, village panchayats and many non-governmental agencies are closely involved. These social campaigns are carried out by zonal railways primarily, to focus on the role of road vehicles users in enhancing safety. It is not feasible to quantify the result of these steps in terms of reduction in accidents.

Permission to South Central Railway to Participate in the Twins Projects

4870. SHRI RAMANAIDU DAGGUBATI:
SHRI K. YERRANNAIDU:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh has requested the Union Government to instruct the Railway Board to permit South Central Railway to participate in the TWINS project;

(b) if so, the decision taken by the Union Government thereon;

(c) whether the Government of Andhra Pradesh had requested for urgent action to include Secunderabad-Lingampally MRTS project in Railway Budget 2001-2002;

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons for delay in this regard; and

(e) the steps proposed to be taken in the near future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) A proposal has been received from the State Government of Andhra Pradesh to permit sale of Computerised Railway Tickets through computerised network of integrated citizen service centers established by them under brand name "E-Seva" which is an extended version of TWINS project.

(b) No decision has been taken on this proposal as yet.

(c) to (e) Project for upgradation of routes of Falaknuma-Secunderabad, Secunderabad-Lingampally and Secunderabad-Nampally as Phase I of the Multi Model Suburban Commuter Transport System has been included in the Railway's works programme in the Supplementary Demands for Grants for the Railways 2001-02 at an estimated cost of Rs. 69.96 crore. The cost of the project is to be shared in the ratio of 50:50 between the Railways and the Government of Andhra Pradesh. The work on the project is in progress and is targetted to be completed in the current financial year subject to timely land acquisition by the State Government.

Double Line between Bhatinda-Jakhal

4871. SHRI BHAN SINGH BHAURA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether there is any proposal for doubling of Bhatinda-Jakhal rail line;

(b) if so, the present status thereof; and

(c) the time by which the said double line is likely to be commissioned?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

Introduction of New Trains

4872. SHRI J.S. BRAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state;

(a) whether the Government propose to introduce new trains from various places to link directly the capital of India;

(b) if so, whether any request has been received from the Government of Punjab for introduction of direct train between Muktsar and Delhi;

(c) if so, the action taken by the Government in this regard; and

(d) the time by which a new train is likely to be introduced between Delhi/New Delhi and Muktsar, a renewed pilgrimage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATREYA): (a)

Introduction of trains on Indian Railways is an ongoing process subject to operational feasibility, commercial justification and availability of resources.

(b) to (d) Some representations have been received but not found feasible for implementation, at present, due to operational and resource constraints.

12.01 hrs.

OBSERVATION RE: HALF-AN-HOUR DISCUSSION

[English]

MR. SPEAKER: I have to make an observation.

Hon. Members, Half-an-Hour Discussion is listed at Sl. No. 30 in today's Order Paper, in the name of Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan.

Shri Chouhan has since withdrawn his notice for raising the discussion. Therefore, the Half-an-Hour Discussion would not be taken up.

12.02 hrs.

PAPERS LAID ON THE TABLE

[English]

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—
 - (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Container Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the Container Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.
- (2) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions):—
 - (i) Memorandum of Understanding between the Container Corporation of India Limited and the Ministry of Railways for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Memorandum of Understanding between the Container Corporation of India Limited and the Ministry of Railways for the year 2002-2003.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6734/2002]

THE MINISTER OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (SHRI BALASAHEB VIKHE PATIL): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—
 - (a) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the NEPA Limited, Napanagar, for the year 2001-2002.
 - (ii) Annual Report of the NEPA Limited, Napanagar, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6735/2002]

- (b) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Bharat Bhari Udyog Nigam Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Bharat Bhari Udyog Nigam Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6736/2002]

- (c) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the National Bicycle Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the National Bicycle Corporation of India Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6737/2002]

- (d) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation Limited, Durgapur, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Mining and Allied Machinery Corporation Limited, Durgapur, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6738/2002]

- (e) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Cables Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Cables Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6739/2002]

- (f) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Andrew Yule and Company Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Andrew Yule and Company Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6740/2002]

- (g) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company Limited, Ooty, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company Limited, Ooty, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6741/2002]

- (h) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Engineering Projects (India) Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Statement regarding scrutinization of the Comments of the Auditors/CAG and replies furnished thereto in respect of the Engineering Projects (India) Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

- (iii) Annual Report of the Engineering Projects (India) Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6742/2002]

- (i) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Bharat Leather Corporation Limited, Agra, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Bharat Leather Corporation Limited, Agra, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6743/2002]

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the Prasar-Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) (Akashvani News Reader-cum-Translator posts) Service Regulations, 2002 (Hindi and English versions), published in Notification No. N-10/19/2001-PPC in Gazette of India dated the 22nd July, 2002 under Section 34 of the Prasar Bharati (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Act, 1990.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6744/2002]

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

- (a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the National Mineral Development Corporation Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the National Mineral Development Corporation Limited, Hyderabad, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6745/2002]

- (b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the MSTC Limited and its subsidiary Ferro Scrap Nigam Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the MSTC Limited and its subsidiary Ferro Scrap Nigam Limited, Kolkata, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6746/2002]

- (c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Manganese Ore (India) Limited, Nagpur, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Manganese Ore (India) Limited, Nagpur, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6747/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): Sir I beg to lay on the Table—

- (1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

- (a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Indian Oil Corporation Limited, Mumbai, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6748/2002]

- (b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Oil India Limited, Dibrugarh, for the year 2001-2002.
- (ii) Annual Report of the Oil India Limited, Dibrugarh, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6749/2002]

- (c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6750/2002]

- (2) A copy each of the following statements (Hindi and English versions) showing action taken by the Government on the assurances, promises and undertakings given by the Ministers during the various sessions of Tenth, Twelfth and Thirteenth Lok Sabha:—

TENTH LOK SABHA

- (i) Statement No. XXXIX Second Session, 1991

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6751/2002]

TWELFTH LOK SABHA

- (ii) Statement No. XXVII Second Session, 1998

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6752/2002]

THIRTEENTH LOK SABHA

- (iii) Statement No. XIX Second Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6753/2002]

- (iv) Statement No. XIX Third Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6754/2002]

- (v) Statement No. XV Fourth Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6755/2002]

- (vi) Statement No. XIII Fourth Session, 2000

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6756/2002]

- (vii) Statement No. XII Sixth Session, 2001

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6757/2002]

- (viii) Statement No. X Seventh Session, 2001

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6758/2002]

- (ix) Statement No. VII Eighth Session, 2001

[Placed in Library. *See* No. LT 6759/2002]

(x) Statement No. V Ninth Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6760/2002]

(xi) Statement No. II Tenth Session, 2002
[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6761/2002]

12.03 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEAVY INDUSTRIES AND PUBLIC ENTERPRISES (DR. VALLABHBHAI KATHIRIA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

(a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Sambhar Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2001-2002.

(ii) Annual Report of the Sambhar Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6762/2002]

(b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Hindustan Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2001-2002.

(ii) Annual Report of the Hindustan Salts Limited, Jaipur, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6763/2002]

(c) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Cement Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

(ii) Annual Report of the Cement Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6764/2002]

(d) (i) A copy of the Review by the Government of the working of the Instrumentation Limited, Kota for the year 2001-2002.

(ii) Annual Report of the Instrumentation Limited, Kota, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6765/2002]

(e) (i) Statement regarding Review by the Government of the working of the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

(ii) Annual Report of the Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6766/2002]

(2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Fluid Control Research Institute, Palghat, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts.

(ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Fluid Control Research Institute, Palghat, for the year 2001-2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6767/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (SHRIMATI JAYAWANTI MEHTA): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table—

(1) A copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

(a) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation Limited, Shimla, for the year 2001-2002.

(ii) Annual Report of the Nathpa Jhakri Power Corporation Limited, Shimla, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6768/2002]

(b) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Power Finance Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Power Finance Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6769/2002]

- (c) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited, Tehri, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Tehri Hydro Development Corporation Limited, Tehri, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6770/2002]

- (d) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6771/2002]

- (e) (i) Review by the Government of the working of the Rural Electrification Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002.

- (ii) Annual Report of the Rural Electrification Corporation Limited, New Delhi, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6772/2002]

- (2) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Central Power Research Institute, Bangalore, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the Central Power Research Institute, Bangalore, for the year 2001-2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6773/2002]

- (3) (i) A copy of the Annual Report (Hindi and English versions) of the National Power Training Institute Faridabad, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts.

- (ii) A copy of the Review (Hindi and English versions) by the Government of the working of the National Power Training Institute, Faridabad, for the year 2001-2002.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6774/2002]

- (4) A copy of the Annual Budget (Hindi and English versions) of the Damodar Valley Corporation for the year 2003-2004 under sub-section (3) of section 44 of the Damodar Valley Corporation Act, 1948.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6775/2002]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): On behalf of Shri Tapan Sikdar I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following papers (Hindi and English versions) under the sub-section (1) of section 619A of the Companies Act, 1956:—

- (1) Review by the Government of the working of the Madras Fertilizers Limited, Chennai, for the year 2001-2002.

- (2) Annual Report of the Madras Fertilizers Limited, Chennai, for the year 2001-2002, along with Audited Accounts and comments of the Comptroller and Auditor General thereon.

[Placed in Library. See No. LT 6776/2002]

12.03 ½ hrs.

MESSAGES FROM RAJYA SABHA

[English]

SECRETARY-GENERAL: Sir, I have to report the following messages received from the Secretary-General of Rajya Sabha:—

- (i) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 17th December, 2002 agreed without any amendment to the Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2002 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 10th December, 2002."

(ii) "In accordance with the provisions of rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to inform the Lok Sabha that the Rajya Sabha at its sitting held on the 17th December, 2002 agreed without any amendment to the Companies (Second Amendment) Bill, 2002 which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 10th December, 2002."

(iii) "In accordance with the provisions of sub-rule (6) of Rules 186 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Rajya Sabha, I am directed to return herewith the Appropriation (No. 6) Bill, 2002, which was passed by the Lok Sabha at its sitting held on the 11th December, 2002 and transmitted to the Rajya Sabha for its recommendations and to state that this House has no recommendations to make to the Lok Sabha in regard to the said Bill."

12.04 hrs.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE

Fortieth to Forty-second Reports

[English]

SARDAR BUTA SINGH (Jalore): Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Public Accounts Committee (2002-2003):—

- (1) Fortieth Report on "Excesses Over Voted Grants and Charged Appropriations (2000-2001)".
- (2) Forty-First Report on Action Taken on 34th Report (13th Lok Sabha) of the Public Accounts Committee on "Export Incentives and Deductions in respect of profits retained for Export Business".
- (3) Forty-Second Report on Action Taken on 28th Report (13th Lok Sabha) of Public Accounts Committee on "Calamity Relief Fund."

12.04 1/4 hrs.

COMMITTEE ON PETITIONS

Twenty-third Report

[Translation]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, I beg to present Twenty-third Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Committee on Petitions.

12.04 1/2 hrs.

JOINT COMMITTEE ON STOCK MARKET SCAM AND MATTERS RELATING THERETO

(I) Report

[Translation]

SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI (Deoria): Sir, I beg to present the Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Joint Committee on Stock Market Scam and Matters relating thereto.

(II) Evidence

SHRI PRAKASH MANI TRIPATHI (Deoria): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy of the record of evidence tendered before the Joint Committee on Stock Market Scam and Matters relating thereto.

12.05 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

Thirty-fifth to Thirty-ninth Reports

[English]

SHRI S.S. PALANIMANICKAM (Thanjavur): Sir, I beg to present the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Agriculture:

- (1) Thirty-fifth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Thirtieth Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) relating to the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agriculture and Co-operation);
- (2) Thirty-sixth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Thirty-first Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) relating to the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Agricultural Research and Education);
- (3) Thirty-seventh Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/Observations contained in the Thirty-second Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture

(Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) relating to the Ministry of Agriculture (Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying);

(4) Thirty-eighth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/ Observations contained in the Thirty-third Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) relating to the Ministry of Food Processing Industries;

(5) Thirty-ninth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Recommendations/ Observations contained in the Thirty-fourth Report of the Standing Committee on Agriculture (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) relating to the Ministry of Water Resources.

(2) A Statement on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 8th Action Taken Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on 5th Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on "Demands for Grants of Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2001-2002"

12.06 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

Thirty-third to Thirty-eighth Reports

[English]

SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN (Sivaganga): I beg to present a copy each of the following Reports (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Finance:—

- (1) Thirty-third Report on the Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provisions) Repeal Bill, 2001.
- (2) Thirty-fourth Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Finance (Deptt. of Economic Affairs and Expenditure).
- (3) Thirty-fifth Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Finance (Department of Revenue).
- (4) Thirty-sixth Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Disinvestment.
- (5) Thirty-seventh Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Planning.
- (6) Thirty-eighth Action Taken Report on Demands for Grants (2002-2003) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

12.05 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENERGY

Thirty-first report

[English]

SHRI SONTOSH MOHAN DEV (Silchar): Sir, I beg to present the Thirty-first Report (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on Energy (2002) on "The Electricity Bill, 2001".

12.05 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Statements

[English]

SHRIMATI KRISHNA BOSE (Jadavpur): Sir, I beg to lay on the Table a copy each of the following Statements (Hindi and English versions) of the Standing Committee on External Affairs:—

- (1) A Statement on action taken by the Government on the recommendations contained in the 4th Action Taken Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) on 2nd Report (Thirteenth Lok Sabha) of the Committee on "Demands for Grants of Ministry of External Affairs for the year 2000-2001"

12.06 $\frac{1}{2}$ hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOOD, CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION

Twentieth Report

[Translation]

SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV (Jhanjharpur): I beg to present the Twentieth Report (Hindi and English

[Shri Devendra Prasad Yadav]

versions) of the Standing Committee on Food, Civil Supplies and Public Distribution on the subject 'Procurement, Storage and Distribution of Foodgrains' relating to the Department of Food and Public Distribution (Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution).

12.07 hrs.

RAILWAY CONVENTION COMMITTEE

Sixth Report

[English]

SHRIMATI BHAVNABEN DEVRAJBHAI CHIKHALIA (Junagarh): I beg to present the Sixth Report (Hindi and English versions) of Railway Convention Committee (1999) on Action Taken by the Government on the recommendations/observations contained in their Fourth Report on 'Development of alternative routes for decongesting existing routes'.

12.07 1/2 hrs.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON INDUSTRY

Ninety-second to Hundred and tenth Reports

[English]

DR. B.B. RAMAIAH (Eluru): I beg to lay on the Table a copy each (Hindi and English versions) of the following Reports of the Standing Committee on Industry:—

- (1) 92nd Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 73rd Report on Demands for Grants (2002-03) pertaining to Department of Public Enterprises, (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);
- (2) 93rd Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 75th Report on Demands for Grants (2002-03) pertaining to Ministry of Small Scale Industries;
- (3) 94th Report on MoU system in the Chemical Sectors PSEs of the Department of Public Enterprises (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);

- (4) 95th Report on Inter-PSU Cooperation in Engineering & Construction Sectors, the Department of Public Enterprises (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);
- (5) 96th Report on the Status of Khadi & Village Industries in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala (Ministry of Agro & Rural Industries);
- (6) 97th Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 74th Report on Demands for Grants (2002-03) pertaining to Ministry of Agro & Rural Industries;
- (7) 98th Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 70th Report on Demands for Grants (2002-03) pertaining to Ministry of Steel;
- (8) 99th Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 71st Report on Demands for Grants (2002-03) pertaining to Department of Mines, (Ministry of Coal and Mines);
- (9) 100th Report on Performance Review of National Mineral Development Corporation Limited (NMDC), Ministry of Steel;
- (10) 101st Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 72nd Report on Demands for Grants (2002-03) pertaining to the Department of Heavy Industries (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);
- (11) 102nd Report on MoU system in the Fertilizers Sectors PSEs of the Department of Public Enterprises (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);
- (12) 103rd Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 87th Report on the Implementation Status of Financial Assistance-cum-restructuring Package and Revival of Bharat Refractories Ltd. (Ministry of Steel);
- (13) 104th Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 85th Report on the Implementation status of Financial Assistance-cum-restructuring package and Revival of Hindustan Steel Works Construction Ltd. (HSCL), Ministry of Steel;
- (14) 105th Report on the Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 64th Report on Modernisation, Restructuring and

Expansion Programmes and Post Disinvestment Performance of Hindustan Zinc Ltd. (HZL), Department of Mines (Ministry of Coal and Mines);

(15) 106th Report on Globalisation and Capital Goods Industry, Department of Public Enterprises (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);

(16) 107th Report on Liquidated Damages and Related Issues (Ministry of Heavy Industries and Public Enterprises);

(17) 108th Report on Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 91st Report on Coir Board—A Performance Review pertaining to the Ministry of Agro & Rural Industries;

(18) 109th Report on Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 84th Report on Implementation of Prime Minister's Rozgar Yojana (PMRY) in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, Ministry of Agro & Rural Industries; and

(19) 110th Report on Action Taken on recommendations contained in Committee's 86th Report on Performance Review of Metal Scrap Trade Corporation Limited (MSTC), Ministry of Steel.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: We shall now move on to the next item, Calling Attention.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): Sir, I have given an Adjournment Motion on Tehelka. How can you proceed with the next item? The Adjournment Motion must precede every other item...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will take it up after the Calling Attention.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: You should first decide about the Adjournment Motion. Calling Attention has always to be taken after that. My notice is there for the Adjournment Motion...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You had raised this matter during the Question Hour. The hon. Speaker had then

told you that during 'Zero Hour' you will be given time for placing your Adjournment Motion. I will tell you the fate of your Motion later.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: How can you later on give the fate of my Adjournment Motion? How can it be taken up later? Adjournment Motion must have the precedence...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If I unfold everything, you will not even get a chance to speak. Therefore, kindly resume your seat.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA: Sir, do not threaten me...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I may tell you that the hon. Speaker mentioned to you during the Question Hour that after the Calling Attention, you will be given an opportunity during the 'Zero Hour' to make a mention of it. What is the fate of it, I will tell you after hearing you.

12.09 hrs.

CALLING ATTENTION TO THE MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Need for inclusion of Bhojpuri language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution

[Translation]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajanji, Bihar): Sir, I call the attention of the hon'ble Minister of State in the Ministry of Home Affairs to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon.

"The steps taken regarding the need for inclusion of Bhojpuri language in the Eighth Schedule to the Constitution."

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): The Eighth Schedule to the Constitution of India contains 18 languages (of these, 14 languages were included in the Eighth Schedule by the Constitution Assembly itself. These

[Shri I.D. Swami]

were Assamese, Bengali, Kannada, Gujarati, Hindi, Kashmiri, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Sanskrit, Tamil, Telugu and Urdu, Sindhi was included in the Eighth Schedule in 1967 as the 15th language. Three more language—Konkani, Manipuri and Nepali were included in the Eighth Schedule in 1992. The languages included in the Eighth Schedule account for languages used by 96.20 per cent of the country's population, as brought out by the 1991 Census.

The Government has been receiving requests for inclusion of additional languages in the Eighth Schedule. At present, there are requests for inclusion of as many as 32 languages including Bhojpuri in the Eighth Schedule pending with the Government.

Reference to the Eighth Schedule occurs in articles 344 (1) and 351 of the Constitution. Article 344(1) provides for the constitution of a Commission by the President on expiration of five years from the commencement of the Constitution and thereafter at the expiration of ten years from such commencement, which shall consist of a Chairman and such other members representing the different languages specified in the Eighth Schedule to make recommendations to the President for the progressive use of Hindi for official purposes of the Union. Article 351 of the Constitution provides that it shall be the duty of the Union to promote the spread of the Hindi language to develop it so that it may serve as a medium of expression for all the elements of the composite culture of India and to secure its enrichment by assimilating without interfering with its genius, the forms, style and expressions used in Hindustani and in the other languages of India specified in the Eighth Schedule, and by drawing, wherever necessary or desirable, for its vocabulary, primarily, on Sanskrit and secondarily on other languages. From this article, it would appear that the Eighth Schedule was intended to promote the progressive use of Hindi and for the enrichment and promotion of that language. However, it seems that over the years, the popular perception relating to the Eighth Schedule has changed and inclusion in it of a language is viewed by many as the symbol of a higher status accorded to that language.

In the absence of any objective criteria for inclusion of languages in the Eighth Schedule, a decision was taken by the Government to set up a Committee under the Chairmanship of Secretary, Official Language. The Committee examined various aspects and submitted its report in 1998. This Committee, *inter alia*, recommended setting up of a High Powered Body having access to

knowledge of experts from the literary, academic, social and legal fields to go in greater depth to evolve objective criteria for considering inclusion of a language in the Eighth Schedule. This body could interact with representative organisations of different languages to be able to form a concrete opinion about the criteria to be so evolved.

Considering the significance of the issue, the Government decided to appoint a High Powered Body to evolve a set of objective criteria for inclusion of more languages in the Eighth Schedule. The constitution of such a body is presently under consideration of the Government. The requests received in the Government for inclusion of 32 languages. Bhojpuri would be considered on the basis of such objective criteria evolved by the High Powered Body.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may seek clarification in this regard.

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajan), U.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we come from Bhojpuri speaking area so we should also be given opportunity to speak in this regard...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to make the Government conversant with Bhojpuri's rich culture and civilisation. I would like to tell the Government that Bhojpuri is spoken in nearly 19 districts of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. Not only this, it has also been observed in Delhi that seven and half lakh population speak Bhojpuri and the Bhojpuri speaking people in Maharashtra, Bengal, Assam and Gujarat are between seven to ten lakh. It is a sufficient number. This language is taught in colleges in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

Sir, I would like to tell for your information that Bhojpuri language is taught up to a discipline upto intermediate levels in all the inter colleges of Bhojpuri speaking districts of Bihar and it has been recognised by the Bihar Intermediate Council. Besides, Bhojpuri language is taught upto B.A. Hons in BRA Bihar University. Moreover, Bhojpuri language is taught upto MA in Vir Kunwar Singh University, Arrah (Bihar). Bhojpuri language is recognised as a paper upto MA level in Gorakhpur and Jaunpur University of Uttar Pradesh.

Sufficient published books in Bhojpuri language are available in almost all genre of literature.

The Bhojpuri Academy has been in existence for years in Bihar. The Government of Delhi has also given its approval for the establishment of Bhojpuri Maithali Academy. Sahitya Academy has instituted Bhojpuri Bhasha Samman from this year. Nearly more than 50 newspapers and magazines are published in Bhojpuri language in India and abroad. Videshia Bhojpuri dram style introduced by Padamashree Bhikhari Thakur, whom Grierson has compared with Shakespeare is being taught in National School of Drama. Famous books in Hindi, Sanskrit, Urdu, English, Bengla etc. languages have been and are being translated into Bhojpuri language. Even Ramayan has also been translated into this language. Nearly 350 registered institutions are active in the country for the promotion of this language. Vishwa Bhojpuri Sammelan which is a strong organisation at international level organises international conference and symposium in the country and abroad. The Bhojpuri language is spoken by nearly 16 crore people in India and more than twenty crore people all over the world speak this language. The programmes in Bhojpuri language are telecast from Patna, Lucknow, Varanasi, Gorakhpur, Ranchi, Darbhanga, Muzaffarpur etc. Doordarshan and Akashwani Kendras. Hundreds of Bhojpuri films, Doordarshan serials and thousands of audio and video CDs have been produced in Bhojpuri language. Today, the country is aware of the dominant position of Bhojpuri language in Hindi films and various serials produced for various channels. Even on telephones and computers Bhojpuri is spoken in Bhojpuri speaking area. Besides India Bhojpuri is spoken in other countries like Mauritius, Surinam, Trinidad, Fiji, British Guiana, Holland, Nepal some small island in South America, West Indies etc. where 40 to 60 percent population speaks this language. Bhojpuri language is recognised as the second language in Mauritius.

Mr. Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Minister has told us about the setting up of the Commission. I would like to know the criteria on which the Commission will consider? Will it be considered on the basis of the population, the richness of language, area of speaking or the Geographical background? What would be included in it? I would like to know as to what points will be considered by the commission?

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would allow Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Raghunath Jha. Now, Shri Basu Deb Acharia would speak. You have to ask a specific question.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Sir, as regards Santhali and Bhojpuri languages, there is a long standing demand for recognition of Santhali language...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I would have given opportunity to all of you. But the rules do not permit me to allow you. As a special case, hon. Speaker, has allowed only these two.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: This language is spoken by more than one crore people belonging to Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal and Assam. The Santhali language is a rich language and it is also one of the oldest languages. Its rank is 13 among the Indian languages. There are languages like Manipuri, Konkani and Nepali which are spoken by less percentage of people. These languages were recognized and we all extended our support. But this language, which is a language of a tribal community, has not been recognised. For the last two years, we have been receiving the reply from the Ministry of Home Affairs that a High Powered Committee will be appointed. But as per the statement of the Minister of State for Home Affairs, this Committee is yet to be constituted.

I would like to know from the Minister when this Committee will be constituted and whether this High Powered Committee will consider such languages like Bhojpuri which is spoken by more than 25 crore people and Santhali language which is one of the oldest languages as also a language of a tribal community spoken in four to five States. I would also like to know whether this Committee will also consider including these two languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would not like to ask any lengthy question. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister whether he will announce any specific date as to by when the High powered Committee will be constituted? As far as their inclusion in Eighth Schedule is concerned the position of Maithili is the same as the Bhojpuri, which is spoken and studied by so many people and is so rich. Will you include the people of Bhojpuri area in this commission or not? Will the scholars of this language be included in this Commission so that they may present their view related to their language? Similarly, will the Maithali people, be included therein?

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN (Hajipur): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I should also be given one minute to speak on this issue....(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The rule does not permit.

[*English*]

Shri Ram Vilas Paswan, as a special case I can allow one or two persons. Yes, you can have just a minute.

[*Translation*]

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, Shri Chandra Shekhar comes from Bhojpuri speaking region. So we should listen to his views in this regard...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The rules have been framed for conducting business of the House. How can I violate them?

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN: I support Bhojpuri and Maithali languages and demand that the Government should declare a specific date. At the time I would also like to ask the Government as to how long official language Hindi will be neglected and the English will dominate.

SHRI SALKHAN MURMU (Mayurbhanj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there are many Adivasi people in India, but till today none of Adivasi language have been included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India. Santhali language is spoken by approximately one crore people. People of Bengal, Orissa, Assam, Tripura and Bihar speak this language. Languages like Manipuri, Konkani, Nepali and Sanskrit which are spoken by a few people have been included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Earlier, the Government of India has not set any criterion to include other languages. Now, they are saying that criterion has to be decided, and commission is to be constituted. Many things are being discussed. That commission has not been constituted for last 2 years...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Ask the specific question.

SHRI SALKHAN MURMU: Why the issue of setting criterion is being raised when there was no criterion earlier? We accept it but Government are giving assurance for last two years. In these circumstances, as the case

of Adivasi language is, unless education is not imparted in these languages their literacy rate will not increase because the children of my area find other languages as difficult as foreign languages to read and write, whether it is Bengla, Oriya or Hindi in spite of big population, there is a provision in our constitution to impart education in their mother-tongue...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you want to ask the question, ask one question. Do not deliver the speech.

SHRI SALKHAN MURMU: What the Government propose to do in order to include Santhali and other languages, which deserve to be included in the Eighth Schedule?

[*English*]

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY (Calcutta North East): On 3rd December, I raised the issue under matters under Rule 377 with a request to the Union Government that the case of Maithili be considered and inducted in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Dr. Sanjay Paswan was also present at that time. It is not only spoken in Bihar alone but spoken in other parts of the country also. In the city of Kolkata itself, alongwith other cities, Bhojpuri and Maithili speaking people are there in huge numbers. Shri Acharia has said that Santhali speaking people are very much there in West Bengal also.

Maithili is famous all over the country for its rich cultural heritage with glorious past and dynamic present. The hon. Minister has categorically mentioned that 18 languages are already recognised and 32 languages are pending until now. I want to know from the hon. Minister as to whether Maithili is there in the pending list or not.

I also want to know whether any time-bound programme is there before the High Powered Committee to make its announcement and take a decision regarding these 32 languages.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The High Powered Body is yet to be appointed. It is not yet appointed. In that case, how can it be a time-bound announcement?

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: It may be a time-bound one when it would be appointed. Then when the result would be announced?

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): I would only like to put a question to the hon. Minister.

As he is in the Home Ministry, is he aware that an agitation is going on in the northern part of Bengal by a Scheduled Caste community called Rajbongshi pertaining to the language? We are not clear whether it is a language or a dialect. Will the Minister enquire into the matter and see to it that their grievances are addressed and redressed appropriately? I am talking of Rajbongshi community of North Bengal.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara): Sir, while supporting the cause of Bhojpuri language, I also want to add to it that, in the same way, Rajasthani language also traverses a lot of States and regions. Is it also being considered to be included under the Eighth Schedule?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now Calling Attention Motion is being converted into a full debate.

SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH BADNORE: Rajasthani language is as important as Bhojpuri language. So, I want Rajasthani language and Bhojpuri language to be considered and included in the Eighth Schedule. Please give a specific reply regarding Bhojpuri and Rajasthani languages.

DR. JAYANT RONGPI (Autonomous District Assam): After 55 years of Independence, not a single language spoken by the tribal communities in this country has been included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. My point is, if you follow the same criteria in respect of the languages of the tribal communities and also the languages spoken by other communities, then no tribal language will ever be included in the Eighth Schedule. If you consider the population and if you would go in for the development of the languages, then you may find that tribal languages are not taught in the schools. Then how can they be developed? I want to know from the hon. Minister whether a different criteria would be followed while including the tribal languages in the Eighth Schedule.

SARDAR SIMRANJIT SINGH MANN (Sangrur): Sir, I want to be associated with the Motion moved by Shri Prabhunath Singh.

Most people do not know that the writings of Guru Gobind Singh, our Tenth Guru, were in Bhojpuri. We would like this Motion to be adopted. We would also ask the Government to give us a Bhojpuri chair in the Punjabi University in Patiala so that we can understand the language. It is very important for our texts.

Secondly, I would like to ask the Government to give us a School of Advanced Studies for the study of

Urdu and Persian in Malerkotla because that too is very necessary for understanding the Sikh scriptures.

[Translation]

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR (Ballia, U.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, just now my colleague Shri Prabhunath was asking me to speak on the subject. I am not being able to understand the way Government is taking this country. It is being said that 35-36 languages should be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. We had promised to make Hindi as an alternative language, it has not become an alternative language, but we are trying to include 35 more languages.

Voices are emerging from every nook and corner to include their language in the Eighth Schedule. Adivasis have their own language, Bengalis are having different language, Bhojpuri area of Uttar Pradesh is having different language. I too speak Bhojpuri and I am more versed in Bhojpuri, than most of the people over here who claim to speak Bhojpuri, but I understand that to raise such a demand in the Parliament and assurance by the Government in this regard is not right. As this Government is very quick in giving assurance, therefore this kind of demand is made.

Sir, I would like to request the hon. Minister that instead of giving assurances, he should work for the development of Hindi, and people who want to develop these languages and dialects should also work for the development of these languages and dialects. Shri Prabhunath is working very well in this direction, he should continue to work for the development of Bhojpuri, but should not try to include it in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, before your reply, let me make the record straight. In this Calling Attention, only one hon. Member is always allowed. The hon. Speaker has, particularly, allowed both the two hon. Members—Shri Basu Deb Acharia and Shri Raghunath Jha—as an exception. I have extended that exception to all the other hon. Members. This will not become a precedent in future.

[Translation]

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if we take into account of all questions raised over here and the views expressed by hon. Chandra Sekhar is taken into consideration then we can easily deduce as to why that the officer's committee of High Powered Committee

[Shri I.D. Swami]

of Constitution had recommended that the official language, if any, listed in the official language of the State, could be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Similarly it has been said that.

[English]

It should be spoken by a substantial proportion of the population etc.

[Translation]

But he was of opinion that till the opinion of academicians, legal experts and experts of that language is taken, and a high power committee is constituted, many problems will come in evolving an objective criterion...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, if 25 crore people, out of the 100 crore speak this language then what criterion do you want?...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: I have said that it is under the active consideration of the Government and it is going to be finalised very soon. That is what I can assure you...(Interruptions) Any time-limit cannot be given. But, all the same, it is under the active consideration and in the final stages. Very soon, the High-Powered Committee would be formed.

This matter is not only of Santhali, Bhojpuri, Rajasthani and Dogri, but as I said earlier, that the Government have received the request to include approximately 32 languages in the Eighth Schedule from different places and therefore, it has been said to evolve objective criterion.

Sir, the Government had sent this matter to the Review Commission to look into the matter, but they did not make any recommendation in this regard and said that as far the question of substantial proportion of population is concerned, it should be termed as 10 percent, but as Shri Prabhunath ji said that this language has a good literature and it is being taught in University, as well as in many higher secondary schools. Similarly very good arrangement is available for Rajasthani and Dogri. Therefore, Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to assure the House that the stage of constitution of High Power Committee is in active consideration and in final stage and as soon as the High Powered Committee is constituted, they will decide the academicians who are likely to be included for this purpose...(Interruptions)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: By when this committee would be constituted?...(Interruptions)

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: This Committee would be constituted very soon, as I said it is in final stage. It will see all the matters, whether it is tribal...(Interruptions)

SHRI SUDIP BANDYOPADHYAY: Whether Maithali is also is those 32 language...(Interruptions)

SHRI I.D. SWAMI: These 32 languages include Bhojpuri, Maithali, Santhali, Rajasthani and Dogri too.

Hon. Member, Shri Rongpi has said to include tribal languages also. It will depend on High Powered Committee as to what criterion they fix in this regard. The main thing is that the people who have to fix the criterion, will formulate it and the languages which fulfil the criterion, will be considered to be included in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.

I would like to assure the House that High Powered Committee would be constituted very soon, which is pending for a long time.

RE: TEHELKA ENQUIRY COMMISSION—
Contd.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now we take up 'Zero Hour'. Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI (Raiganj): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I rise to point out...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN (Vidisha): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, people are dying of hunger in Madhya Pradesh. Recently two persons have died...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH (Maharajan), Bihar): Let me speak first then you will say...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Prabhunath Singh, he has already given the reply.

I do not know whether he wants to say anything more.

Mr. Minister, do you want to say anything more?

[*Translation*]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): I do not have any thing to say...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He does not want to say anything more.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have given a notice for Adjournment Motion...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, with regard to the notices for Adjournment Motion given by all of you, namely, Shri Basu Deb Acharia, Shri Prabodh Panda, Shri Moinul Hassan, Shri G.M. Banatwalla, Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Shri Sunil Khan, Dr. Ram Chandra Dome, Shri E. Ahamed, Shri Sultan Salahuddin Owaisi, Shri Rupchand Pal, — Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi has also given a notice for suspension of the Question Hour — the hon. Speaker, in the initial stage itself, said that after the Question Hour, in the 'Zero Hour' the Minister will clarify the position. So, he will give the clarification now.

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA (Bankura): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, but where is the Minister?...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: But before that, I thought it fit to hear you all.

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, people are dying of hunger in Madhya Pradesh. Two persons have died of hunger. I have given notice in this regard...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If you have given the notice.

[*English*]

I will call you. I cannot give chance to all of you together. I will call one-by-one.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, this matter was taken up before the Question Hour started and the hon. Speaker, has given preference to this matter. After him, I will call you.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan, I have given the floor to Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi now. Please take your seat.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have given notices for Adjournment Motion. Please allow us to make our submissions...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: It is a very important issue and we all intend to raise this matter in the House...(*Interruptions*)

[*English*]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we support what Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi is going to raise. But before that, there should be a reply from the Minister.

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to know whether the Minister is going to reply now. If he wants to reply, I will wait....(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister is prepared to give the reply now.

...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Prabhunath Singh, the Minister is prepared to reply now. Please take your seat.

...(*Interruptions*)

[*Translation*]

SHRI SHIVRAJ SINGH CHOUHAN: Will you give me chance after this? The situation in Madhya Pradesh is very grave.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY (Buxar): The issue of theft of idol was raised in the House and the issue like this...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon'ble Speaker has listened to it.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: There are more such issues similar to the issue that was raised by Shri Somnath Chatterjee and the Government was supposed to reply in this regard.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, hon'ble Speaker said that he would give us an opportunity to speak in 'Zero Hour' on the issue that was raised by Shri Somnath Chatterjee. You please listen to us. It is the ruling of the Chair...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Though, it is the ruling from the Chair however I will call him after listening all other Members.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Since it is the ruling of the Chair so you should listen to of us...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Lal Muni Chaubey, I do not know whether you were here in the morning.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon'ble Speaker said that the Minister should come and reply in 'Zero Hour'. He is ready for that.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: There are several such other issues about which the Government should reply. That is why importance has been given to 'Zero Hour'. He had assured me that he would listen to me in 'Zero Hour'.

So, if the hon'ble Minister wants to reply then he should listen to us.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: He should make reply after listening to all the Members.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: It is not appropriate to consider some one important to invite for speaking. Are we not so important...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you please hear me? When the Adjournment Motion was given, the hon.

Speaker, was pleased to direct the Government to give the reply. If all of you want to be heard and then he will give the reply. I have no objection. But it will take one hour. There are 10 Members.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: We are talking about the 'Zero Hour' and are speaking in 'Zero Hour'.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The reply is there. Let us know the position.

[Translation]

What is there in it.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Please listen to us also then reply...(Interruptions)

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: Mr. Speaker had told from the same Chair that he would listen to us during the 'Zero Hour'...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BASU DEB ACHARIA: Sir, you allow all those Members who have given notice...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Is he ready to reply?

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: His reply is ready. After that you may speak.

[English]

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, you hear me and then reply to the points together.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If that is so, then, I will have to allow all of you.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF

STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): The hon'ble Minister of Law is not well and he is in the hospital.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: Please listen to us. I have to submit about that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If I allow you to speak then I will have to allow other Members too. It will take one or one and half hour. His is Adjournment Motion. The issue is the same. Now the Government is to clarify as to what is the position in this regard.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we obey the Speaker...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: It has to be clarified as to what is the stand of the Government regarding Tehelka. Hon. Speaker had clarified it, therefore, there is nothing more in it.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Government will clarify the position with regard to Tehelka.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: First of all listen to us. Thereafter, reply will be given. There are so many things which are more serious....(Interruptions)

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): You please tell the Minister to make statement...(Interruptions)

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: The issues more serious than Tehelka have been discussed in the House...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You please tell what should be done.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI SOMNATH CHATTERJEE: He can make his statement...(Interruptions) Let him make the statement....(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: That is why the hon'ble Speaker had told that he would listen to us in the 'Zero Hour'.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: It is an assurance by the hon'ble Speaker...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You tell me what do you want to say.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will ask him to clarify the position.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you please resume your seat?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Prabhunath ji if you want to ask anything you may ask clarification once statement is given.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: I would like to submit to you that the hon'ble Speaker had told that he would allow us to speak during the 'Zero Hour'.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He will make reply during the 'Zero Hour'.

SHRI PRABHUNATH SINGH: He should make reply after listening to both of us.

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: While the hon'ble Member of the House, Shri Somnath ji was speaking we were patiently listening to him...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record.

...(Interruptions)*

* Not recorded.

12.45 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari and some other hon. Members came and stood on the floor near the Table.)

...(Interruptions)

12.46 hrs.

(At this stage, Shri Sunder Lal Tiwari and some other hon. Members went back to their seats.)

SHRI PRIYA RANJAN DASMUNSI: Sir, the hon. Minister has defied your directions...*(Interruptions)* Sir, it is the hon. Minister who has defied your directions...*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Dasmunsi, the hon. Minister wants to state the position in the House. Please do not accuse him. He is prepared to give the statement, but the hon. Members are not allowing him to make it. Please resume your seat.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you please hear Shri Shivraj Patil first?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

SHRI LAL MUNI CHAUBEY: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to request...*(Interruptions)* First listen to me...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is too much.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Mr. Minister, will you please ask your Members not to speak like this in the House?

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Except Shri Patil's submission, nothing will go on record.

*...(Interruptions)**

12.50 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh came and stood on the floor near the Table.)

...(Interruptions)

12.51 hrs.

(At this stage, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh went back to his seat.)

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are not even allowing the Minister.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I am calling the Minister. It is unfortunate that even then you are not co-operating with the Minister. It is very, very unfair.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He will clarify the position in one minute.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: That will bring the House into order.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Several hon'ble Members have given notices for Adjournment Motion. If I invite them all then it will take one hour time. The hon'ble Speaker had told that hon'ble Minister will tell us about the position of Tehelka in 'Zero Hour'.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You are not even allowing me to talk.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You do not allow even the Minister. I had allowed Shri Priya Ranjan Dasmunsi but

* Not recorded.

you are not allowing him also. How will the business of the House be conducted in this way.

...(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Members, there are three or four Bills to be passed today. I seek the co-operation of all sections of the House.

Ten hon. Members have given notices for Adjournment Motion and four have given notices for suspension of Question Hour. If I have to call all of them, it would take at least one-and-a-half hours. That is why I asked the hon. Minister to make clear the position of the Government with regard to the Tehelka inquiry. After that, we could have proceeded and I could have heard you.

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Chaubey Saheb I am sorry to say that you do not understand the situation. It is a very serious matter that you do not cooperate with the chair.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Members, we have three or four Bills to be passed.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House now stands adjourned to meet again at 2 p.m.

12.59 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Fourteen of the Clock.

14.03 hrs.

The Lok Sabha re-assembled at three minutes past Fourteen of the Clock.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER in the Chair]

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Sir, what about the statement by the Minister?... (Interruptions) The hon. Speaker has directed the Law Minister to make a statement... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please take your seats.

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, the hon. Speaker has directed the Law Minister to make a statement... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, the 'Zero hour' is over.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH (Uluberia): Sir, it is not a matter of 'Zero hour'. The notice for Adjournment Motion was there; the hon. Speaker, has instructed the Law Minister to make a statement... (Interruptions) We want a statement now.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: For your information, let me tell you that the hon. Minister of Law and Justice contacted me and he said he would make a statement on Tehelka tomorrow. He agreed.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: The statement was to be made today only... (Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, tomorrow is the last day of this Session. We have been waiting... (Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hon. Minister has told me and I have agreed to that.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the matters to be raised under Rule 377 may be treated as laid on the Table of the House.

14.05 hrs.

MATTERS UNDER RULE 377*

- (1) Need to declare Jhul (Chakia)-Kasaria-Dumaria-Areraj-Harsidhi-Sugauli road in Bihar as a national highway.

[Translation]

SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH (Motihari): Sir, the road connecting NH No. 104 to Sugauli National Highway

* Not recorded.

*Treated as laid on the Table.

[Shri Radha Mohan Singh]

starts from Banar Jhula (Chakia) Bihar and passes through several very important places like Kasaria, Dumaria, Sangrampur, Areraj and Harsidhi. The biggest Bodh Stup of the world Kasaria and the famous Sumeshwar temple of Areraj are located along this road. The Department of Post is going to release postal stamp in the names of both the places. The treaty of Sugauli is an important incident. The famous Chinese travellers Hieun Tsang and Fa-Hien had come to India through this way and Mahatma Buddha had departed to the final journey of his life from this place.

So, I urge upon the Government that keeping in view the historical and religious importance of this road it should be declared as national highway.

(ii) Need to provide stoppage of Indore-Narmada Express at Salka Road and Durga-Bhopal-Amarkantak Express at Bilgahja in Bilaspur Constituency, Chhattisgarh.

SHRI PUNNU LAL MOHALE (Bilaspur): Sir, Bilaspur-Indore Narmada Express fast passenger 34 UP and Bilaspur fast passenger 33 Down from Indore do not halt at Salka road railway station in Bilaspur Lok Sabha Constituency of Chhattisgarh State. However, both the said trains halt at several small and big stations from Katni to Bilaspur. Similarly Durga-Bhopal Amarkantak Express should essentially halt at Bilgahja Railway station. Several villages are located in and around Salka road railway station and Belgahja and the people do not have train facility after 7.30 hrs for Bilaspur and Katni to and fro. This area is predominantly inhabited by Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes.

So, I urge upon the Government to provide stoppage of Narmada Express 34 UP and 33 Down at Salka road and Durga-Bhopal-Amarkantak Express at Bilgahja station for the convenience of the people in Bilaspur district of Chhattisgarh State.

(iii) Need to convert Swarupsar-Sriganganagar Meter-Gauge Rail Line in Rajasthan into Broad Gauge.

SHRI NIHAL CHAND CHOUHAN (Sriganganagar): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, presently Swarupsar-Sriganganagar rail line in Rajasthan is a meter gauge rail line. The said line was taken up for gauge conversion in 1997-98 budget, however in the absence of required approval the said line could not be converted into broad gauge. While

addressing the people at Hanumangarh in 1998 the hon'ble Prime Minister had announced for the gauge conversion of the said line. However, nothing could be done as yet in this regard. Sir, this is the only meter gauge line along the frontier region. This line is extremely important from defence point of view.

So, I urge upon the Central Government that required approval should be accorded for conversion of the said line into broad gauge.

(iv) Need to clear the Proposals of Govt. of Himachal Pradesh for Development of Sports in the State.

SHRI SURESH CHANDEL (Hamirpur, H.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards my Hamirpur parliamentary constituency of Himachal Pradesh. As you are aware that Himachal Pradesh is a hilly and backward area however there is no dearth of sports talents there. There is a need to provide necessary sport facility so as to tap their sports talent.

I would like to bring to your notice that 67 proposals regarding the projects for the construction of 400 metre athletic track, in Bilaspur H.P., Indoor Stadium in Hamirpur, Indoor stadium at Tauni Devi in Bilaspur district, Swimming pool in Una and setting up of sport academy in Hamirpur and developing playgrounds in schools in rural areas and the purchasing of sports items were sent to the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs of the Government of India by the Commissioner and Secretary (Youth Affairs and Sports) Department, Himachal Pradesh Government for necessary approval and assistance, however till now those proposals are lying pending. I urge upon the Government to accord necessary approval expeditiously.

(v) Need to Introduce Indian Airlines Flights from Kullu in Himachal Pradesh.

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandi): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, through you, I would like to bring this to the notice to the Minister of Civil Aviation that it was proposed to introduce ATR flights in the event of availability of ATR planes after making necessary changes in air strip at Kullu airport. However instead of implementing the said proposal, the earlier Donier air service of Indian Airlines has been discontinued.

I have got the information that due to the technical snags Donier planes have been grounded and the Air service of Indian Airlines will be restored once technical

problem is removed. However, last week I came to know that the Indian Airlines has closed its office of Kullu airport and it has caused acute resentment among people. I urge upon the Government to restore air service of Indian Airlines immediately and make availability ATR plane service once ATR is available so that the tourism industry may be saved from losses.

(vi) Need to Declare Mehagaon-Sabalgarh-Sheopur-Sawal Madhopur Road as a National Highway.

SHRI ASHOK ARGAL (Murena): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the condition of Mehagaon-Sabalgarh-Sheopur-Sawal Madhopur road in Murena Parliamentary constituency is pathetic. The said road connects Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan.

So, I urge upon the Central Government that the said road should be declared as a National Highway.

(vii) Need for early Completion of Gas Turbine Projects in Barmer and Jaisalmer Districts, Rajasthan.

COL (RETD.) SONA RAM CHOUDHARY (Barmer): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I come from Barmer and Jaisalmer districts adjoining Pakistan border. These are very backward districts and are in the grip of famine. There is always shortage of electricity there.

The Centre had launched Gas turbine scheme with the capacity of 35.5 megawatt in January, 1996. Thereafter provision was made for one more gas turbine for which technical and financial approval was given by the Central Power Authority on 16 February, 2001.

The Central and State Governments have made huge investment on this scheme. 5 lakh SCMD additional gas is required for it for fifteen years however, the Gas Authority of India has agreed to supply SCMD gas for only 10 years. In reply to my starred question No. 3525 dated 12.12.2002 it was stated that Oil India will have to dig additional wells to supply additional gas for which Rs. 150 crore will be required.

So I urge upon the Government to take immediate decision regarding the supply of additional gas for the implementation of both the gas turbine schemes as heavy investment has already been made thereon.

I would like to request the hon'ble Prime Minister to interfere in it so that gas may be supplied thereto and the people of power deficit districts of Rajasthan may get relief.

(viii) Need to set up Industries in Pratapgarh Parliamentary Constituency, U.P. with a view to solve unemployment problem there.

SHRIMATI RAJKUMARI RATNA SINGH (Pratapgarh): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, there are no industries in my parliamentary constituency, Pratapgarh. It is a backward region with regard to industries. The inhabitants support their families through agriculture and every year their cultivation suffers in the absence of irrigation, as the canals do not have water and the tubewells can't run in the absence of power. In the absence of opportunities for cultivation, people are migrating to other States. This region produces good quality aonla, mangoes and guava. If the food processing industries are set up here, farmers will get benefit and the unemployed will get jobs. The farmers here produce sugarcane but in the absence of sugar mills they have to use cane as fuel.

Through this House, I request the Government to establish basic industries in my parliamentary constituency and to encourage the establishment of sugar mills and food processing industries, so that this backward district may develop.

(ix) Need to check the move to handover rare quality genes of paddy to a multi-national company by Indira Gandhi Agriculture University, Raipur, Chhattisgarh.

DR. CHARAN DAS MAHANT (Janjgir): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, opposition to the move of Indira Gandhi Agriculture University to handover thousands of rare variety genes of Chhattisgarh to a multinational company Singenta is increasing. The agriculture university has a unique collection of 24,000 varieties of Chhattisgarh paddy. A secret agreement is being signed with the multi-national company Singenta to handover these paddy varieties. Three meetings have already taken place in this regard. Detailed discussion took place between the two sides on Memorandum of understanding. But neither Government nor any related department or officials were given any information in this regard. Dr. R.H. Richaria of Research Foundation for Science Technology and Ecology collected thousands of domestic paddy varieties first from Rice Research Institute, Cuttack and then from Rice Research Institute, Raipur (Now Indira Gandhi Agriculture University). Dr. Richaria had opposed the handing over of paddy germ plasm in Cuttack and also of bringing high yielding variety in India. Now again efforts are being made to handover paddy germ plasm to Singenta. Singenta has already patented 'Golden Rice'. It is a sort of bio-theft and bio-robbery.

I request the Government to immediately stop this deed.

- (x) **Need for multi-pronged approach to conserve water in Punjab and other parts of the country.**

[English]

SHRIMATI SANTOSH CHOWDHARY (Phillaur): A few days ago, eminent farm scientist M.S. Swaminathan, warned that Punjab along with Rajasthan, Orissa and Maharashtra is heading for serious water crisis in 2003. This is a warning bell based on ground reality. The study says as against the requirement of some 4.90 million hectare metres of good quality water, only 3.12 million hectare metre water is available. In the past four decades, there has been a 76% increase in the State's water requirement for agriculture due to the water-intensive crops like paddy.

To tackle the impending water crisis, I request the Government to take a multi-pronged approach and protect the existing water sources. To arrest the decline in the ground water table, it is necessary to undertake water harvesting measures to conserve rain-water.

- (xi) **Need to provide stoppage of express trains at Asansol and Raniganj railway stations, West Bengal.**

[Translation]

SHRI BIKAS CHOWDHURY (Asansol): I beg to draw the immediate attention of Hon'ble Railway Minister regarding the stoppages of following trains at Asansol railway station and Raniganj railway station. There was six days stoppage of Rajdhani Expresses at Asansol railway station upto July, 2002, but surprisingly, Railway Authority reduced six days stoppage to four days stoppage at Asansol depriving the passengers of the facility of Rajdhani Expresses of the two days stoppage. Passengers become aggrieved and the Hon'ble Minister has been requested to restore six days stoppages.

The residents of Raniganj and its neighbouring locality, most of whom hail from Rajasthan State have repeatedly requested the Hon'ble Railway Minister for stoppages of Jodhpur Express up & down at Raniganj Station for the last so many months. It is urgently needed and demand the stoppage of Jodhpur Express at Raniganj, so that they may avail the facility of Jodhpur Express only to avoid mid night journey to Asansol for safety Season.

I urge upon the Hon'ble Minister to consider for the above stoppages.

- (xii) **Need to withdraw the move to change the route of Trimala Express train running between Vishakhapatnam and Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh.**

SHRI M.V.V.S. MURTHI (Vishakhapatnam): Trimala Express train running between Vishakhapatnam and Tirupati is very popular amongst the people of that area.

As per some press reports it has come to the notice that railway has proposal to change its route via Bhivamaveram-Gudiwada which is a single track route.

I, request the Railway Minister to withdraw the proposal of changing the route of this train in the interest of people.

- (xiii) **Need to provide stoppage of express trains at Nasik road station in Maharashtra and also start a new train between Mumbai and Manmad.**

SHRI UTTAMRAO DHIKALE (Nasik): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the year long Kumbh mela is being organized in Nasik city of Maharashtra from year 2003 to 2004. Lakhs of Sadhu Sants and pilgrims are expected to attend the Kumbha mela at Nasik. Therefore, I would like to request the Ministry of Railways to accelerate the renovation work of Nasik Road and Audha Station and also to provide the stoppage at Nasik road of all trains passing via that station. A new express train should also be introduced which should reach Mumbai by 10-11 in the morning and be back to Nasik by evening. Such new express train should be run between Manmad and Mumbai.

- (xiv) **Need to open a railway division at Salem, Tamil Nadu and make it functional.**

[English]

DR. V. SAROJA (Rasipuram): When Tamil Nadu has got just three Railways Divisions to manage 4,100 kms of track length, Kerala has two and Karnataka has three for a mere 1000 kms and 3100 kms respectively. Salem has five of the busiest railway lines. With the completion of Salem-Karur railway line, it will have six major lines. As a result of it Tuticorin Port will soon have direct link to major cities of the country. Salem-Mettur, Salem-Viruthachalam, Salem-Hosur, Jolapet-Erode, Erode-Trichy have started carrying more freight. Hence, it is important to ensure a direct management of this remunerative railway section. Now that Salem comes under Palghat Division, proper management and modernization of this area is neglected. This results in increasing accidents

between Jolarpet and Salem. Hence, I urge upon the Railway Minister to fulfil his promise made in March, 1999 to commence Salem railway division and give an impetus to commercial activities in this region so as to cope up with globalisation.

(xv) Need to clear the proposal of the State Government of West Bengal for promotion of tourism in Sunderbans region of the State.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL (Joynagar): Sunderban in West Bengal has a vast potential for the development of tourism. It has sixty mangrove forests and a number of small islands. Sunderban is famous for Royal Bengal Tigers. A large number of rivulets and a national park are also situated in Sundarban. Every year a large number of domestic and foreign tourists visit Sundarban. Therefore, the all-round development of Sundarban is essential to attract more tourists.

The Government of West Bengal is learnt to have sent a proposal to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India for the development of Sundarbans. Since the resources of the State Government are very limited the Centre has to play a vital role.

I would, therefore, urge upon the Government to allocate financial package for the Sundarban. Also the State Government's proposal should be immediately cleared to facilitate the development of the area.

[English]

SHRI ANIL BASU (Arambagh): What about the notice for Adjournment Motion?...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: As you know, the notices for Adjournment Motion have not been accepted, rather I put it 'rejected'.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI ANIL BASU: Sir, kindly allow us to make submissions...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Hon. Speaker rejected it. I wanted to hear you, but unfortunately, nobody could be heard in the House till one o'clock.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): This was deliberately done so that this issue could not be raised...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the statement which was to be read by...

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, you will agree that the whole country is quite agitated over the development...(*Interruptions*) The Chief Justice of India has said that he was inclined to recommend any judge for the Commission...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, you had given notice for an Adjournment Motion. As many as ten Members had given notices for Adjournment Motion. Four Members had given notice for suspension of Question Hour. Hon. Speaker, in his wisdom has allowed Members in the initial stage. At the beginning of the Question Hour, he said that the Minister would provide information with regard to the position of Tehelka inquiry. During the 'Zero Hour', that could not take place.

In the meanwhile, at 1.30 p.m. or so, I had been contacted by the Law Minister. He said that since he was not well, he had gone to the hospital and come back. He requested that he would be making the statement tomorrow. I have agreed. The statement will be made with regard to the position of Tehelka inquiry tomorrow.

Now, I would proceed with the listed items.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: We have submitted it according to the...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the hon. Minister, Shri Baalu will speak.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, we had submitted the notice for Adjournment Motion on time. The hon. Speaker...

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He has rejected it in his wisdom.

...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Okay, Sir, but the hon. Speaker has directed the Government to reply to the issue today...(*Interruptions*)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Yes. Today, it was during the 'Zero Hour'. Now, 'Zero Hour' is over. This is not 'Zero Hour'. Then, you have to wait till 'Zero Hour' tomorrow.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: The Minister had started replying...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: He was prepared to give the statement, but the House was not prepared to receive it.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: He had started the statement. How can it be stopped mid-way?...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, I have given the ruling.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, what is your ruling?...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is the ruling.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, the Minister had started the statement. He was stopped mid-way by the Members on the Treasury Benches themselves...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, I have stated the position.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI (Diamond Harbour): He was making the statement. He had started it....(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: He had started making the statement...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Do not raise this point. I have given the ruling.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The position is that tomorrow, you will hear the statement from the Minister. Now, Shri Baalu will speak.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, when Shri Banatwalla wanted to know the position of his notice for an Adjournment Motion, I said that I would hear all of you. Then, I did not state the position of your notice for Adjournment Motion. I reserved it because I thought that I would hear you and then say that the hon. Speaker had rejected it, but that position could not take place because you know how was the position here. Therefore, the Question Hour was over and 'Zero Hour' was also over.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Anil Basu, I am on my legs.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you please resume your seat?

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: First of all, you have to listen to me. You are a senior Member.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Seth, what is this?

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the position is clear. Tomorrow, you will hear the statement.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI SAMIK LAHIRI: No, Sir...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will not allow you to go on record, anything spoken by you. Now, please do not disturb.

...(Interruptions) *

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I was presiding at that time. You are narrating it to me as if I do not know about it.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: If all of you would have kept quiet, the Minister would have made the Statement.

...(Interruptions)

* Not recorded.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Hannan Mollah, I am telling you that the Minister was prepared to make the Statement, but he will not make it now. I have given the ruling that it will not be made now. This is not 'Zero Hour'. I have already given the ruling that the Law Minister will make the Statement tomorrow.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will you please resume your seat? You are a senior Member. We have two or three Bills to transact. Please do not disturb the proceedings.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal, your Adjournment Motion was rejected by the hon. Speaker and you know that.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I do not want that matter to be discussed again because everybody will start speaking and this will continue. The Minister was prepared to make the Statement, but the Members were not prepared to hear it because there was a lot of noise in the House.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Minister was prepared to make the Statement. He stood up and he wanted to make the Statement. Unfortunately, the situation was such that he could not make the Statement. Let us be fair to him.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Nothing will go on record. Shri Rupchand Pal, you are a senior Member and you should not interrupt like this.

...(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I have already stated here that the Law Minister contacted me and I have given him the permission to make the Statement tomorrow. I have already stated that.

...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: This is not fair. Now, the hon. Minister, Shri T.R. Baalu, to move Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2002 for consideration.

14.14 hrs.

WILD LIFE (PROTECTION) AMENDMENT BILL

[English]

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
(SHRI T.R. BAALU): Sir, I beg to move:

"That the Bill further to amend the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

Sir, India has been and continues to be one of the most important nations in terms of species richness and contributes eight per cent of the global biological diversity. In order to ensure protection to wild life and their habitats, several major initiatives have been taken...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Chair has protected you very well. I am telling you that the Statement will be made tomorrow. I have given the permission to the Law Minister to make the Statement tomorrow.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL (Hoogly): Sir, at what time would the Statement be made?...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Are you prepared to listen to the hon. Minister?

...(Interruptions)

[Translation]

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we have never refused to discuss anything in the House. Even today what I am saying is that hon'ble Law Minister is not well, and I can speak only after consulting him. He also wants to know. Now that Chair has issued a direction to this effect, I humbly submit that he will deliver his speech tomorrow. Please listen to that...(Interruptions)

* Not recorded.

[English]

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Sir, tomorrow is the last day of the Session. So at what time would the statement be made?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: After lunch....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: Would it be immediately after lunch?...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

What will be its time tomorrow?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SANTOSH KUMAR GANGWAR: It will be after lunch....*(Interruptions)*

SHRI RUPCHAND PAL: It will get night....*(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Rupchand Pal ji, his statement will be delivered of two and it is not night by then.

...*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the hon. Minister to move the Bill.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Sir, the hon. Minister has already moved the Bill, so when do we move our amendments?...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI G.M. BANATWALLA (Ponnani): Sir, I would like to have a clarification on procedure. How can 'one hour' be over in 'half an hour'? How can 'Zero Hour' be over within a span of 'half an hour'? It started at 12.30 p.m. but ended at 1 p.m. It was just half an hour and not one hour.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I will clarify the position. Any fraction of an hour, be it five minutes or ten minutes, constitutes the 'Zero Hour'.

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Sir, I think, the hon. Minister wants to make a statement.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: All right, let the hon. Minister make his statement.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, before I start, I would like to thank my comrades, through you, from that side for being patient now and also thank you for giving me this opportunity to make my initial remarks on this Bill.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Everybody is patient now.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, India has been and continues to be one of the most important nations in terms of species richness and contributes eight per cent of the global biological diversity. In order to ensure protection to the wildlife and their habitats, several major initiatives have been taken over the years including the enactment of Wildlife (Protection) Act in 1972, species conservation projects like Project Tiger and Project Elephant, regulating the import and export of wildlife and launching of centrally-sponsoring schemes for the development of national parks and sanctuaries. India also acceded to major international conventions dealing with wildlife, such as, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species, known as CITES, World Heritage Convention, Convention of Migratory Species etc. It is because of these sustained efforts that we have been able to conserve our precious bio-diversity despite rapid population increase in the country during the second half of the last century.

Sir, conservation of forests and wilderness areas holds the key for water and food security to millions of Indians in future. More than 600 million people and their livestock depend on forests, wetlands, grasslands and coastal areas for food and other requirements. It will not be out of place to mention that a tiny oasis of 104 square kilometers, known as Boriville National Park, in Mumbai provides more than 120 million litres of water to the city of Mumbai each day. Similarly, Gir National Park in Gujarat not only protects the only surviving population of Asiatic Lion but also provides fodder worth Rs. 10 crore annually to the local *maldharis* and others.

Though our National Parks and Sanctuaries cover only 4.7 per cent of the geographical area, they provide protection to 300 rivers and priceless animals and plants like Asiatic Lion, Tiger, One-Horned Rhino, Musk Deer and Orchids. India takes pride in possessing 50 per cent of the global Tiger and Asiatic Elephant population. 65 per cent of the One-Horned Rhino and only surviving population of Asiatic Lion are found in this country.

From 65 protected areas in 70s, we have now been able to establish 587 National Parks and Sanctuaries for the protection of wild flora and fauna. The population of tiger, elephant, rhino, crocodile, lion and others has improved satisfactorily due to the sustained efforts of the Centre and the States. Nevertheless, it has been felt that there is an urgent need to further strengthen the conservation measures in order to harmonise our future needs.

Mr. Chairman, Sir, in this backdrop, I now bring the important features of the Bill to the attention of the House.

The Bill envisages creation of two new categories of protected areas, namely, 'Conservation Reserve' and 'Community Reserve'. These reserves would preferably link the National Parks and Sanctuaries for the protection of wildlife. However, they will be managed by the local community in a transparent and participatory manner involving the members of Village Panchayats, NGOs and other experts. It is also proposed that the existing wildlife sanctuaries are managed in a participatory way with the involvement of representatives of Panchayati Raj institutions, NGOs and other experts.

The existing provisions do not prescribe any time limit to settle the claims of the people after the notification of intent is issued in respect of national parks and sanctuaries. As a result, the objectives of conservation have received a setback and several sanctuaries and national parks have been put to misuse and encroachments. It is now proposed to limit the period of settling the claims to two years.

At the time of enactment of the original Act in 1972, many persons who had in their possession wild animals and their derivatives belonging to Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II could not declare them within the limited period of 30 days. A provision to give them one more opportunity is incorporated in the Bill. Currently, persons having ownership certificates in respect of Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II animals, can sell or transfer such articles. This has encouraged illegal trade in wildlife products. In order to prevent such activities, an amendment is proposed to restrict such transactions except by way of inheritance.

we need to curb poaching and illegal trade, or else they have the potential to nullify all achievements made so far in wildlife conservation. Therefore, stringent provisions are proposed for forfeiture of the properties of criminals who have been convicted in the past for heinous wildlife crimes, which are similar to the provisions of the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act, 1985.

Sir, presently, the penalties for committing wildlife offences lack in severity. It is, therefore, proposed that these be enhanced from a minimum of one year to three years extendable to seven years besides doubling the fine from the existing Rs. 5,000/- Rs. 10,000/-.

Encroachment in the sanctuaries and national parks is a matter of serious concern for bio-diversity conservation and integrity of the area. Hence, the proposal has been made to empower the officials to evict such encroachments. Besides, some other changes of consequential and incidental nature have also been proposed in the Bill.

I hope this Bill, which seeks to further the cause of protection of wildlife of the country, is a non-controversial measure and hence, will find support of the House.

With these words, I commend the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2002 for the consideration of the House.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, in some States, animals like elephants are brought to Chief Ministers residence without permission. There should be provision of penalty for that. It has happened in Bihar.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Please speak when you are given opportunity to do so. He will reply then.

[English]

SHRI RAMESH CHENNITHALA (Mavelikara): Sir, I rise to support the Bill. It is an endeavour to protect the biological environment and ecological sectors.

The variety of flora and fauna is our national wealth. India has got a vast variety of this natural wealth. To ensure the ecological and environment security, such a legislation is highly needed. The interests of the indigenous people, who are the real guardian of the wild life, should also be protected. We are happy to note that the Minister has incorporated an amendment regarding the protection of Indigenous people who are really the protectors and guardians of the wild life.

Though it is a welcome step, we had to wait for seven long years for such an amendment. The Wild Life (Protection) Act was enacted in the year 1972. This Act was subsequently amended in the years 1982, 1986, 1991 and 1993 to make the protection more effective. Major amendments were incorporated in 1986 and 1991, particularly in respect of controlling illegal trading of endangered species of wild life and plants, and management of zoos. However, during the intervening period, many new issues have emerged and the Ministry has made a concerted effort to bring more amendments in this regard. Though it took seven long years, maybe for various reasons—I do not want to go into them—it is a welcome step. It is going to have a far-reaching effect. With this, fundamental changes are being made in the preservation of our environment and the ecological sector of our country.

More than 600 million people are dependent on the forest for their livelihood. This shows the magnitude of

[Shri Ramesh Chennithala]

its importance. So, we should be more concerned about the preservation of our environment and ecology. According to me, the most important amendment is regarding the participatory management of the protected area. Realising the fact that the subject of biodiversity cannot be handled in isolation, an amendment has been proposed to include two categories of protected area. One is conservation of reserves and the other is, community reserves.

I would like to suggest that more importance should be given to the indigenous people because they are the real protectors of the ecology and forest. Nowadays, they are completely isolated. They are slowly perishing. If you go to Andaman and Nicobar Islands, you will find that the real protectors of forests are becoming extinct. No care has been taken in this regard. So, more importance should be given to these indigenous people who are really protecting our nature. The management of these two reserves should be done in a transparent and participatory manner. Otherwise, it will not be effective.

The hon. Minister has rightly pointed out that NGOs, village panchayats and related Government departments will be involved in this process. It is a welcome step. There is no doubt about it. While selecting NGOs, we should be very careful. I do not want to cast aspersions on anybody but there are certain NGOs who are working only on papers.

Unfortunately, that kind of NGOs are getting more and more encouragement. So, that should be taken up seriously. In reality, there are so many dedicated people and organisations which are really concentrating in this field. They should be given more and more importance.

Sir, clause 17 says:

"The management of wild sanctuaries is also proposed to be made more effective and participatory by including representatives of the Panchayati Raj institutions, NGOs, experts, and members of related Departments."

It talks about effective participation by the organisations. I would like to make a submission to the hon. Minister in this regard. In practice, we are seeing that the officers dominate in such bodies. I do not want that the officers should not contribute. They should contribute. Definitely, they are experienced persons and their contribution is necessary. But at the same time, people who are really knowledgeable in this sector and are working in this area, should be given more and more preference so that we are able to have effective participation by them.

As regards constitution of National Board for Wild Life, it will be the highest statutory body for advising the Central and the State Governments. It would suggest ways and means for promoting wild life conservation and protection. Definitely, this body will be getting more teeth and it would give more and more suggestions to improve the present condition. This amendment would definitely give more impetus to this area. I would again like to suggest to the hon. Minister that the Wild Life Advisory Board should be very carefully constituted. At the State level, of course, it would be headed by the Chief Minister. If we are constituting such kind of bodies, we should give more preference to the people who are really working in this area. Unfortunately, we are always forgetting all those people and we are giving representation only to the other people who are not connected with this area. This aspect has to be taken care of because this amendment is for effective functioning of the Board. If the Board would function effectively, then only the amendment will be more effective. Otherwise, there is no need for such an amendment. If you want to really enforce this amendment, it should be given more powers. It should be made more effective.

The other day, the hon. Minister, in Answer to Q. 367 regarding peacock, mentioned that Section 43 of the Wild Life Act, 1972 provides exemptions to the owner of peacock and tail feather articles made therefrom from selling or transferring the same. Section 44 of the Act provides exemption to the dealer in peacock tail feathers and articles made therefrom by obtaining licence for dealing in the same. Now, what is really happening? In my Constituency also, there are peacocks. From my experience I would like to mention one very serious thing. The peacocks are being killed by these people. It is a very serious matter and it has to be taken care of. While replying to one supplementary in the Question Hour, he said that it will be taken care of. But this has to be enforced and dealt with very seriously.

As regards prevention of wild life crimes, I think we would be in a position to deal with this seriously with the help of this amendment. At present, the persons who have ownership certificate in respect of Schedule I and Part II of Schedule II animals, can sell or gift such articles.

This is encouraging the illegal trade in wildlife products. In order to prevent such illegal acts, this Amendment has been brought. By adopting this Amendment, I think this kind of illegal acts can be checked.

Likewise, in the forest and adjacent areas we are seeing in a large way crimes taking place. As rightly

mentioned, killing of elephants and other species has become the order of the day. I think the Government should be able to put a halt to this kind of activities after passing this Bill.

I do not want to take much time of the House. I would confine my submission to one or two issues which are directly connected with my State, Kerala. The Tiger Reserve Forest at Tekadi is one of the very important tiger reserves in our country. Actually speaking, proper maintenance of this tiger reserve forest is not taking place. A large number of complaints are coming up. As regards the functioning of the Eco Development Society, we have brought it to the attention of the hon. Minister. The Eco Development Society is supposed to help the indigenous people to sell their forest produce in the outside market so that their economic activities will be boosted. But unfortunately this legitimate activity has not been taken care of by the Eco Development Society and the officers concerned. They do not make proper programmes and implement them in this area. We have to promote their indigenous skill and ability. Unfortunately, we have failed in this regard. Therefore, more attention needs to be given to this aspect.

Coming to the Silent Valley, it is one of the prestigious places for the whole country. The hon. Deputy-Speaker knows personally about this valley. When there was an attempt to construct a dam there, the then Prime Minister Smt. Indira Gandhi intervened and said that there should be no hydro-electric project in that area. Because of her intervention the Silent Valley Hydro-Electric Project was stopped. But I doubt whether the Silent Valley which was supposed to get preference in all respects is today being properly managed or is receiving the importance that it deserves. I would request the hon. Minister to have a review of the functioning of the Silent Valley and the activities which are taking place in that area. I would also request the hon. Minister to pay visit to that valley which is one of the major forest wealth. The Central Government should have the direct monitoring of this area.

The bird sanctuary in Kumarakom, where the hon. Prime Minister spent some days a few years back, is one of the rarest bird sanctuaries. Kumarakom needs more attention. There is no proper management of the bird sanctuary and a number of complaints are coming up against it. When we are having total concentration on preserving zoos and sanctuaries, I think this bird sanctuary should get preference. As I said, there is a hue and cry against its management and proper preservation. I would request the hon. Minister to have a look into the affairs of this sanctuary.

This is a welcome step. Definitely, when our country is progressing, this aspect has to be taken very seriously. Otherwise, it will be highly detrimental to the future of our environment. By passing this Amending Bill, I hope the Government will give a boost to the wild life protection activities. I do not want to go into other details as there are other speakers from the Congress Party who would speak on various other issues. I hope this amendment will create an awareness among the people so that environmental protection will become a major agenda before us.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI (Pilibhit): Sir, I thank you for giving me this opportunity.

I would like to take this opportunity to speak on a few points while I support the Bill. It has left out a large number of things which are absolutely necessary and I would like to point them out.

One is about what the honourable speaker who spoke before me was mentioning, namely, on peacock. Peacock is our national bird. It is a matter of great shame that when all other articles of all the other wild animals and birds are not allowed to be traded, barring no exceptions, peacock is the only one whose trade is allowed in its body parts.

Man's understanding of nature grows from year to year. Till some years ago, it was believed that the shahtoosh shawl was made from the shed hair of a goat. Only now, we know that eight antelopes which are found only in the Shantoon plateau of Tibet are killed for one shawl. Likewise, when the original Act was made, it was believed that trade in peacock feathers could be allowed in 1972 because peacock sheds its feathers. Peacock does not shed its feathers enough for a trade to continue. For instance, till two years ago, 20 lakhs feathers were allowed by licence to be exported which is being stopped two years ago. However, peacock sheds its feathers only in August to early September.

In any case, peacock is a solitary bird and lives alone or in small groups of two or three. When it sheds that one feather, nobody is going to employ people to run after the shed feathers. There is no doubt that the peacock is trapped, killed and then the feathers are plucked out and sent in sackloads and truckloads to the shops and trading centres. If it becomes difficult, then mass poisoning takes place. As you know, everybody there are reports in the papers and there is something about Morena. Peacocks are poisoned in Rajasthan and even in Gujarat. In any case, they have been wiped out either by drought or by mass poisoning. In Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, they are being killed everyday.

[Shrimati Maneka Gandhi]

Now, how do we know that the peacock parts are in the market? It is because people will contest it. No traders is selling shed feathers. There is a very simple way to realise that the peacock feathers are from peacocks that have been killed. The peacock feather shaft, it is has been shed naturally, is a clear transparent shaft. If it is has been plucked from a killed peacock, in whatever manner the peacock has been killed, either by poisoning or by strangling or by shooting, then the last part of the shaft will have blood in it. Now, what a trader does is, he cuts the last 20 mm of the shaft so that you cannot see the blood in the shaft. You can see every single peacock feather in the market today. You may pick it up from anywhere in India. Now, if it has been taken from a naturally shed feather, this shaft would not be cut whereas it is cut in all feathers.

The Government, two years ago, stopped foreign trade which is a wonderful thing that has happened. However, 80 per cent of the trade is still being catered to foreigners who come here. There are peacock feathers in every shop, in every hotel, in every tourist shop, in every so-called antique and curio shop, in every monument-related shop. Foreigners come and take fans and other peacock feathers.

Now the strange thing is, peacock itself is in Schedule I of the Wildlife Act which means that if you kill, you would go to jail. It is a non-bailable offence. However, not a single person has ever been indicted or even been caught because you can sell feathers. Therefore, it is very strange that if I kill and if I have the body, then I go to jail. But if I have the feathers, then I am exempted. So, we want the Government to remove Section 43 and also 44 which is as follows:

"Provided further that nothing in this sub-section shall apply to the dealers in tail feathers of peacocks and articles made therefrom and the manufacturers of such articles...."

And Section 49(b) should be amended in conformity with that.

My second point is on zoos. Why am I saying about zoos? It is because today, zoos are the largest killers of wild animals. There are 193 large zoos and over a couple of hundred illegal municipal zoos.

Last month alone, Surat Zoo was caught buying birds illegally from a poacher in order to fill up this. Over 20,000 birds and animals die in the Zoos every year. Today, the perception of Zoos in the country has descended to the level that they are regarded as

amusement parks. Zoos are not considered centres of scientific research or centres for the preservation of wildlife with an emphasis on aspects of breeding. Zoo administration has to be seen as a specialization which cannot be done effectively without proper training and experience in the field. Due to lack of specialized personnel and a clear focus of the objectives of Zoo management, the animals dying in Zoos run into thousands every year.

The Zoo Policy presented to the Parliament in 1998 was an excellent document. However, it was pointed out at that time and several times subsequently, that the policy was non-implementable because there was no dedicated cadre in the Zoos to carry out any work. Till today, hundreds of zoos in India have no idea of what their functions are—whether it is the display of animals or scientific regeneration of the species. Animals are not being given an economic value. Therefore, their administration is typified with amateurishness, bungling and theft of their medicine and food are regarded as minor misdemeanours. As you all know, in Hyderabad, a tiger's skin was taken off while it was within the cage. Till today, not a single person has been punished for any animal dying in the Zoos. 95 per cent of animals that die in Zoos are listed as having died of gastric disorder which means either the food is bad or it is non-existent or it is stale. It is for this reason that the formation of a Zoo cadre for the management of the Zoos in the country is extremely important and needs to be properly thought out.

There are millions of problems facing the zoos. They are badly designed, ill-lit. The animals are under-fed and unhappy. We do not contribute to our own happiness or our own health or knowledge at all. The animals in the Zoos are looked after by an officer usually on punishment posting, particularly from the Indian Forest Service who has no specific expertise or experience in captivity management or in animals at all. Most of the Zoos have no doctors and even the ones that do, are usually unable to meet the needs of the animals as there is not a single doctor in any Zoo who has been trained in wildlife. They are, in effect, being run by sweepers who clean the zoo cages, feed the animals, act as guards and they are also used to medicate and handle the animals as well. They are not trained, nor literate and have no empathy with the captive animals. Not surprisingly, thousands of animals die every year.

All these animals are not bred in the Zoos. They are caught in the wild. Therefore, the Zoos become the biggest poachers of animals. Every time one animal dies another one is caught from the wild to fill the cage. In

a lot of Zoos when the rare animals are killed, they fill up with the common ones. In the Guwahati Zoo, they have crows and peacocks. In Trivandrum Zoo, they have camels and lovebirds. In Bondla Zoo, they have grass snakes. They have ducks. They have anything that you can see. A large number of animals are filling up like prisoners in the Zoos. I would like to request the hon. Minister to make a special cadre which is long overdue and which has been demanded all over the world. In fact, this has been made all over the world. All over the world, there is a trained Zoo cadre. How does that work? For instance, people working in the Zoos can be sent for re-training and education. The Government could bring in people from outside Zoos. But to make the specialised cadre, there are hundreds of people in the country who are trained in wildlife management and a few doctors who have wildlife degrees from abroad. They have not been able to use their skills for the benefit of animals because there is no employment opportunity for them in the Government structure at present. The veterinary colleges have not mainly started a degree in wildlife medicine because there has been no employment opportunity after completion of the course. If the cadre is formed, then corresponding courses will be formulated and introduced as they are all over the world. It would create employment opportunities. I would request the Government that a specific cadre of handlers is required with a minimum of 20 handlers per Zoo, who will also get their jobs after an examination. Each large Zoo should have different levels of handlers. A handler would be a rung above the cleaners or feeders etc. and then, he would be in charge of different types or groups of animals. Each one of these should have been through a course in wildlife management. All the posts must be promotion-related.

The Deputy Directors must be able to become Zoo Directors in time. The other branch of the cadre to be formed for looking after the animals is the one of the Zoo Veterinarians, with a minimum of two senior and two junior officers. They should be supported by a complement of wildlife compounders and staff. The Central Zoo Authority which already exists, could be in charge of recruitment, training and all service matters relating to promotions, posting etc. The constitution of a committed and dedicated cadre of zoo professionals is very much essential. I would be very grateful if the Government would consider this suggestion since it has been hanging fire since 1998 when this was first mooted.

The third point that I would like to make is about the creation of a special task force for wildlife crimes. Today, it has been proven again and again that the people who are smuggling arms and drugs are also involved in the

wildlife trade. If we are the last country that has elephants, tigers and lions, then these have become extremely vulnerable to our neighbours. For instance, bears are taken out to Nepal every day and sold for their hair. Tiger bones are taken to the Tibet border and exchanged for antelope skin which forms shawls. So, everywhere we are under attack, whether it is for our large bears or it is for our animals. Today, it has been quantified all over the world that wildlife smuggling or wildlife crime is as large the drug trade. Therefore, it becomes very important to have a specialised task force which will deal with wildlife crimes. Today, there is no task force and poachers are not caught. I would like the hon. Minister to tell me how many people have been convicted for poaching in this country. It is not even one per cent. There is a person called Sansar Chand who has been caught 53 times with 53 tiger skins, but he is still out in the open, he is still on bail. There are so many people like him who are given bail immediately and the cases proceed endlessly. If we have a special task force, then, we would be able to catch them quickly. So, without our own intelligence wing and a proper security system, we cannot catch such people. We have seen at Chennai airport as to how 24,000 turtles went out in one consignment. One can miss one turtle or two turtles, but how can they miss 24,000 turtles in one consignment which went to Singapore? This is happening daily. People take suitcases with butterflies. In the Frankfurt Insect Fair, which takes place every year, about 20 per cent of the insects that are sold for upwards of \$1,000 each come from India. These are mainly butterflies and three or four species of them have become extinct which used to be found near the Rohtang pass because they have all been smuggled abroad through Customs. A number of Russians and Germans have been caught smuggling these insects, but what has happened to them? Nothing has happened. The trade goes on because we have never been able to catch such people in time. Therefore, what is needed is a special task force under the Home Ministry which would respond as they respond to terrorism, as they respond to drugs' trade or as they respond to any other major threat to this country. I would request the Government to consider this suggestion as well.

The next thing that I would like to talk about is on elephant corridors. Everyday, there are reports about elephants encroaching into villages. This is happening only because the corridors through which elephants pass have been encroached by the villagers. All over the North-East, the Army has taken over all the elephant corridors. So, where would these elephants go? They are not small enough to sneak in. They need a huge amount of food to eat. Unless we leave their corridors free, it will be very difficult to protect our elephants. A proposal was

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mooted for this purpose in 1990 and money was made available, but till now, not even one acre of land has been cleared to make their corridors free. In fact, there has been more and more encroachment. The fact is that we have lost a very valuable vote in CITES this year, which has made ivory available to the world market. We won this vote last year in Africa and we won it saying that ivory should not be opened to world market because India will lose her elephants. In Africa, they are well regulated, but in India, they roam free. There is no regulation and nobody is keeping an eye on that. A person like Veerappan can kill so many elephants. So, we fought against this and won the vote last year, but we have lost this year. Having lost it, the ivory smuggling will continue in this country unless we stop encroaching of the elephant corridors. It has not been taken seriously for 12 years now. I would request the Minister and the Government to start it.

Now you have made a special Act allowing you to acquire lands immediately for making of a highway. Could we not apply this also to the making of an elephant corridor which stretches from Bhutan across to Karnataka—a small thin highway—in which they can go up and down and remain safe instead of attacking villagers.

The last thing I would like to talk about is what we call the *Madaris* or *Kalandars*. There is a mistaken belief here that these are very poor people with a traditional trade. We have done a two-year survey on this aspect. This was done about five years ago, the results of which have been shown internationally. We have seen, for instance, in the bear trade alone, one man owns between 29-30 bears. He rents them out for Rs. 150 a day. Each bear-person makes between Rs. 1,000 to Rs. 1,500. It has fallen into the hands of criminal elements. It is not a traditional trade. When these bears become three to four years old, because of the suffering they have undergone and because of the way they have been treated and fed, they are no longer capable of what is known as dancing. So, they are danced all the way past to the Nepal border where they are immediately killed and sold for their skins.

Now, there is a Government initiative to make a rescue centre and the first rescue centre has come up in Agra. I would like to request the Minister and the Government to take this far more seriously. There are fewer bears left in this country than there are tigers. If we want to save this species, then we should start picking up the *Madaris*. Of the 2,000 bears left, there are 1,200 on the road. These need to be picked up and put into the sanctuary. I would like to thank you again for giving me time.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI (Katwa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, first of all I would like to thank you that you have given me the opportunity to speak on the Bill. I would also like to thank hon. Minister that he had given all of us opportunity to speak on the subject after 7 years. Both sides have expressed their views on the Bill. This side has also participated in the debate and a number of experts have put forth their views. Manekaji was speaking on the Bill. She is an expert and she spoke at length. I would not be repeating all that.

Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the House towards a few things through you. It seems that our country is yet to have much deliberations about wild life. I mean that even wild life is a kind of life. There may be other lives also but we have to look at the budgetary provisions made for protection measures for wild life. We speak at length about doing a number of things about wild life but we need to look at the budget provisions made for their protection.

Sir, a National Board on wild life was set up in 1972 and Prime Minister was made its Chairperson, but I would like to ask the hon. Minister to tell us about the number of meetings taken by the Board. In my view, just a few meetings have taken place. In such a situation, there can be no outcome, no matter how much time we devote to discuss the issue. First thing that I would like to submit is that, wild life has been subjected to a number of calamities. A number of sanctuaries have suffered flood and sanctuaries in Rajasthan had to face drought resulting in loss of wild life. Drought has also claimed a number of domesticated animals.

15.00 hrs.

To what extent the loss of animals have been compensated. The problem was most severe in Orissa. Animals have died of hunger there. Please tell the House the extent to which losses have been compensated.

My second submission is about preservation. Manekaji was speaking on it. She asked about maintenance, food, employees strength etc. I was involved in this work in Bengal. At that time Manekaji was a Minister and she was looking after the Wild Animal Department. I had seen it all. It is useless to speak only about Nepal. Tigers, elephants etc. are smuggled into Nepal and Bangladesh etc. The Union Government is still to take a decision on the issue. All species are suffering. It includes 34 wild animals and a number of insects. A number of local species have become extinct. They can not be recovered.

What are they doing in this regard? I would like to say one thing that

[English]

these are domestic after all.

[Translation]

There are only two-four old animals remaining. Even they are getting ruined. We are doing nothing to preserve them. I am not saying that butterflies are being smuggled in Boxes. What I am concerned about is how are we going to preserve them? We will have to give special attention to it. Environment was being mentioned. I have seen it with my own eyes.

[English]

I have got vast experience in this matter. On that day, particularly, I was in Kolkata zoo.

[Translation]

I have seen how monkeys react to their environment.

[English]

How is it reacted?

[Translation]

You go to Hyderabad or Kolkata. I have never been to Delhi zoo, but he can go there too.

[English]

All the zoos at present are surrounded by sound.

[Translation]

Wild animals are the most affected. Forests do not have any sound but it is here.

[English]

All are surrounded by the terrible sounds.

[Translation]

What I want to say is zoos have been located in areas where there is too much sound. What type of food they are given? They are not getting sufficient quantity of food. Manekaji also mentioned Corridor of animals. The grazing place for animals are simply not there?

[English]

Why these animals are coming down?

[Translation]

It is happening in Orissa, in Bengal.

[English]

All the elephants are coming down from the mountains.

[Translation]

They are coming down from mountains as they have nothing to eat there. They are coming down due to that. They are encroaching farms. It is a fact that they are destroying forests and we should ponder why are they doing so? There is no use asking hon. Minister about it. Only the Forest Minister could reply to it...(Interruptions) It is good if he is present. He is the Minister both of forests and animals living there. I would like to submit that forests are getting destroyed. What elephants would eat? All of them are fleeing.

[English]

Anyway, I would like to inform the hon. Minister that this single amendment is not enough. The execution of this amendment is very important and if he does that and if he sees the situation in the States then this amendment will be very successful. For that reason, I congratulate the hon. Minister and support this Bill.

[Translation]

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, law for the protection of wild life was enacted in 1972. That law is not being implemented properly even though the responsibility of protecting wild life was given to Maneka Gandhiji. Hon. Prime Minister is the Chairperson of National Board of Wild Life. I can explain the impact of law in one sentence. People say—Taala Lagaiwa Kanoon Aur Palla Khulaiwa. Law is there but the killings of wild life is continuing without abatement. Wild life is being killed in three ways—one by rich men who have hunting as their hobby, it's like murder. Second, kill animals for their tusk and skin. The animal hides have their religious significance. As per the law enacted in 1972, hunting was banned. In spite of that, as per the information provided by the hon. Minister in comparison to last three years, corpses or hides of 201 leopards were recovered on 49 occasions in the year 2000. 176

[Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh]

kgs. of bones of leopards and tigers were recovered. Number of Black buck skin recovered was 221 while 63 Shahtoosh shawls were recovered. This shawl is very warm. A number of Members of the Cabinet wear Shahtoosh Shawls. They should also be nabbed...*(Interruptions)* They are not aware...*(Interruptions)* The residence of one Chief Minister's house various animals....*(Interruptions)*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order please, we have to pass two more Bills today.

[Translation]

SHRI MAHESHWAR SINGH (Mandi): It is a sin to cage wild animals.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Wild life should be protected. But they are dying in zoos, national parks and sanctuaries maintained by the Government. Animals like elephant, tiger, cheetah, deer do not get food or drinking water there and there is no proper arrangement of their shelter. Instructions to this effect have repeatedly been given to the Government by the Supreme Court, Delhi High Court and Allahabad High Court. I would like to prove an information to the Government. It is about vulture which flies high in the sky. It is said that Jalchar, Thalchar, Nabhchar Jag Nana, Te Jan Chetan Jeev Jahana—Some animals fly in the sky, some walk on land and some live in water, such as fish...*(Interruptions)* The there are amphibians such as crocodiles...*(Interruptions)*

Sir, it is said about dolphins that it is sensible even though it is an animal. It is friendly to humans, but is not protected. Hon. Minister informed us that law has been made more stringent and the penalty has been increased from Rs. 2000 to Rs. 25,000. He claims that law is being made stringent but this is not enough. Today wild life is under threat at all places—whether it is elephant or tiger.

First category is of rich men and the second is of poachers who indulge in illegal trade of snake and frog hides. Earlier we used to hear the voices of frogs during rain now it is scarce as most of it have been smuggled away due to its delicious meat. Even vultures are becoming scarce. It has been widely reported. Therefore, my submission is that enacting law is not sufficient, more needs to be done.

This should be linked in same way to the rural life, otherwise if wild animals stray into villages, they are killed by villagers. There was a tiger in Saldpur district in the

estate of Rajo babu which has killed three persons and has not yet been killed. It has become a menace and the police machinery with the cooperation of villagers should have nabbed it by shooting it with tranquilizers. The villagers kill small animals such as jackal if they stray into villages.

In the old times, there were more area under forests. Now it is shrinking. In the year 1947, 37% area of Bihar was under forests, now it has come down to 15 percent. Now after the efforts of Government, due to environmental control measures, afforestation and forest protection it has increased to 17-18 percent.

It was 37 percent, but then it reduced. Scientists and environmentalists say that forest cover should exist in one-third area of the land, this would keep the environment clean as also protect the wild life. How would the wild life survive if forests are cleared off. At some places this job is entrusted to the State Government, while at some other it has been under the Union Government. Corbett park in Uttaranchal and Betla Forest in Jharkhand are a home to tigers and Lions. Tigers are counted, their foot steps are taken into record, normally the officers put a mark on the tiger while it comes near the river for drinking water, so it is a very scientific system. The figures with regard to number of tigers have always shown that there has been a fall in their number. The circus people are also suffering who used to earn livelihood by showing feats performed by lions or tigers. Poor people earned some livelihood by showing small games of parrots, but are now suffering. So, keeping all these things in mind, we need to strike a balance in this regard. Wild life is diminishing due to the deforestation process. We now observe a variety of wild life only on the discovery channel. This channel gives information of all animals and birds of the world, which we normally do not see.

As per our Shastras (religious writings) there are 84 lakh yonis (varieties of life on earth). Scientists have, so far discovered only 74,000 living beings. There are colourful animals and birds as also the beautiful deer, which have a scented element—'Kasturi' in their navel. But, we humans kill them for want of this 'Kasturi'. In earlier times, people used to kill them in order to get their skin. So, people willing to have 'Kasturi' or flesh of the deer, kill them. This is leading to a massive fall in their number. Similar is the case with 'Rhinoceros'. This is also an animal with special features. We get various elements from its body, which are useful in manufacturing medicines. And that is why wild life is in danger today. This is the reason that this law has been introduced. Hon. Prime Minister is the Chairman of Advisory Board.

This Bill has been introduced in order to make State Advisory Boards more effective. But looking into the number of wild life, it seems that we are killing as their number is continuously falling. Hon. Prime Minister has, expressing his deep concern on the condition of wild animals, requested the States and associated institutions to take appropriate steps to check poaching, illegal trade of animals as also providing them with desirable protection. Around 245 tigers have died either due to poaching or unnatural conditions during four years between 1994 and 1998. One thousand Leopards are killed every year. Then why this law is not implemented at that time.

SHRI HANNAN MOLLAH: Even human beings are being killed.

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH: Human beings should also be protected. The House should be sensitive towards this issue. I wish that the Government should strictly implement this law and common man should also be made participant in this programme. It would be successful if people from rural areas are also included in it. The animals in these forest reserves can be protected only when there is an element of both conservation and community in these reserves. The Government should consider the issue of protection of animals which are in India since a long period, but are not becoming endangered species.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE (Amravati): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I heartily thank the hon. Minister for having introduced a very important Bill in the House. This law was enacted in 1972 but before that even during the British period, wild life was being killed. Then we also witnessed the period of kings and Emperors. They, in order to deck their palaces, started killing the animals especially lions and deers. Hunting and killing became their hobby. And since then, wild life in our country started diminishing.

15.19 hrs.

[DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH *in the Chair*]

But, the 1972 law had many lacunae. Provision for punishment was very less. And that is why we have not been able to protect the wild life. This amendment Bill was very much essential to be introduced in order to check such occurrences. I am very closely associated with this field of wild life. My constituency is Amravati. There is an area called Meghghat where a new tiger project is being initiated.

I have been visiting the area since last many years. In the Government records, the number of tigers has been sown as '75' but I have been in politics since the last ten-twenty years and have visited these parks, but now after so many years this new tiger project is being initiated in Meghghat area, but to my surprise—no tigers or other wild animals are seen in this forest. We used to hear that a tiger was killed, but no one was apprehended. Earlier if any tigers was killed, two or three persons were apprehended and action was taken against them, but the actual poachers were never caught. Today they are earmarking a new tiger project area. I have visited many National Parks. I had also visited the Nandan Kanan National Park with the hon. Minister. That park has all facilities and so, we had brought a lion from Africa, spending crores of rupees on their maintenance. The park has full strength of officers, but lions die due to diseases. That means, our efforts are not upto the mark and we are unable to protect them. This law therefore requires to be made more stringent. Hon. Minister has raised many issues in his speech. It is our prime duty to save and protect our wild life, but while protecting these wild animals, our problem is that the people living in vicinity incur so much loss as most of the tiger projects are in hilly regions and when these wild beasts do not get anything to eat, or water to drink, they go to nearby villages, towns etc. which results in problems faced by the people living there. Sometimes, out of difficulties, these wild animals kill human beings. Deer and other wild boar, especially in Meghghat area, sometimes come down to big villages like Paratbara, Tend bazar and Anjan and when they do not get anything, they go to towns, in agricultural fields and ruin the crops. Farmers sow the seeds and a little crop is grown, but these deers and wild boars eat and ruin this crops which causes loss to farmers. And therefore, while protecting them, a provision is required to be made in this law that what can do for those persons whose crop gets ruined by such wild animals? How can we protect farmers? We should involve the NGOs, Panchayat people, and the MPs. and MLAs of area where sanctuaries have been made, should also be included in the committees which are being set up, as the loss incurred is very high. I belong to Maharashtra. A discussion with regard to the Maharashtra farmers is being held as to how can their crop be protected from wild animals.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please finish your speech. Your party was allotted 3 minutes time and you have already spoken for 6 minutes.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: I am the only person to speak on behalf of my party. I was saying that it is essential to protect the farmers from these wild animals otherwise a

[Shri Anant Gudhe]

day would come when his law shall not be able to check anything and people would rise in revolt.

SHRI NARESH PUGLIA (Chandrapur): Farmers are facing the menace of wild bear.

SHRI ANANT GUDHE: It is really necessary to protect the farmers. We have discussed a lot with regard to the farmers in this House. Farmers have a lot of problems due to wild boars as also deers. Hon. Minister should give some consideration in this direction.

Sir, I wish to say one more thing. Forest officers sit in their air conditioned chambers. They do not perform the job of patrolling. Many suggestions have been given to the hon. Minister in this regard. I hope that the hon. Minister would pay some heed towards these suggestions. Moreover, water facilities for wild animals are required to be made at places where tigers projects have been initiated. A wild animal can live without sufficient food but cannot live without water. Water is scarce due to scanty rainfall. With this view in mind, I would say that proper water arrangements should be made for wild animals.

At the end, I, therefore wish to submit that the Department of Forests have sufficient funds from the general Budget, but those funds are not utilised for the development of forest areas. I suggest that 60 percent of the amount received by the Government under this head should be spent on the development of these areas.

With these words, I extend my thanks to you for having given me an opportunity to speak.

[English]

SHRI BIJOY HANDIQUE (Jorhat): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I rise to support the Wildlife (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2002. The Amendment Bill is more comprehensive and has gone in depth into some of the problems of conservation that appear in our day to day life. I give one instance about poisoning of wild birds not only in protected areas, not only in bird sanctuaries but in outside areas, outside sanctuaries and outside reserve forests. This is a cruel method of killing birds by offering them rice cakes mixed with pesticide. It is not only that; those poisoned birds are sent by truckloads to different markets thus poisoning the human system all over.

Our demand is that all the important bird areas need to be declared protected areas. At the same time, while extending whole-hearted support to this Bill, I take note of what the hon. Minister has stated at the outset in the Statement of Objects and Reasons. I quote:

"taking into consideration the increasing wildlife crimes and growing alienation of local communities from wildlife conservation process..."

It is very significant. In pursuance of the Joint Management of Forest Policy, I am all in for people's involvement in protection of wildlife. But it is not only that; the very important point is that if it is not people-friendly, I am afraid, the people will not cooperate and it will be difficult to protect the wildlife.

Sir with these observations, I draw the attention of the hon. Minister to the man-elephant conflict in Assam as well as in other States, which has taken such a serious dimension that it poses a threat to conservation itself. I know that this is a very delicate situation. The problem has been living with us over a couple of decades, but we failed to resolve it and allowed it to grow to a menacing size. There is a stock reply from the government that the man has encroached upon the elephant's habitat. Thus, the inference is that the man is to blame. Yes, there is no doubt about it that the man is to blame. But my question is this. Till today, in the course of last so many years, why no sustained effort has been made to meet the situation? Now, like it or not, this is the reality today and it cries for action, though belated. The most legitimate question that arises is why nothing was done to prevent such encroachments of elephant habitats right at the outset. Encroachments did not appear overnight.

Imagine a situation where human lives, houses and crops in villages are destroyed by wild elephants. The Government feels helpless and we expect the people to tolerate it and restrain themselves. In the heat of the moment, in such distress, it is too unfortunate that they retaliate and kill elephants. Here is also our failure. Here, our conservation efforts collapse and it is the Government which will be held responsible for not finding out the effective way out.

There are 5,000 wild elephants in Assam. Instances of poaching for ivory in Assam are very rare. However, there has been a spurt in the man-elephant conflicts in the past few years, which is a matter of great concern. On an average, about 50 persons are killed every year by wild elephants and there take place 50 incidents of crop-raiding every year in the State.

Due to continuance of such depredations over the years, there have been some retaliatory killings of wild elephants by people. It is terrible. During the last part of the year 2001, in one incident, the villagers in Sonitpur district killed about 17 wild elephants. It is terrible. It is horrible.

Now, I give some suggestions as to what we demand to mitigate the situation. First of all, the Government needs to take effective steps such as intensification of habitat improvement programme, including the corridors. The Government should constitute inter-State Elephant Reserves. There should be resumption of periodical *kheda* operation and enhancement of *ex gratia* payment for injury or loss of life, compensation and insurance cover for crop damage, and involvement of NGOs in the elephant conservation programme.

Sir, the State Government of Assam, besides initiating these steps, is sending a proposal for setting up a Technology Mission for Elephant Conservation. The Central Government is to provide funds, experts' counseling and do monitoring. The State Government with limited resources is not in a position to formulate all these steps. What we want is that the Government should come forward and give some incentive and take some measures in sustained manner, otherwise, we should remember that it is a failure of conservation. When it is a case of man-wildlife conflict, ultimately, the wildlife always loses out. So, it is the responsibility of this Government and society to see to it that our care and understanding restores harmony in man-wildlife relations.

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO (Kalahandi): Sir, I rise to support the Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2002, being piloted by the hon. Minister of Environment and Forests because when we talk about wild life, we talk about 75,000 species known in the country—81 species of mammals, 47 species of birds, 15 species of reptiles, 31 species of amphibians and a large number of butterflies, moths and beetles, which are in the endangered list. These have to be protected. Beside, there are other species which have been completely extinct like, for example, the cheetah. It has been extinct from the sub-continent.

Though the Wild Life Act has been amended in 1982, 1986, 1991 and 1993, we have never achieved or we have never even strived to protect our wild life. So, this bit of legislation is required to make wild life protection more efficient, to increase the penalties, to make wild life preservation more friendly to the people. Unless wild life awareness is created among the people, wild life cannot be protected.

Sir, from time immemorial, the Indian population or the Indian masses have lived in harmony with wild life. Wild life has been depicted in our scriptures, in the *Ramayana*, in the *Mahabharata*—there is a mention of *Garuda*, *Hanuman* and, in *dasavatars*, there is a mention

about *Varaha Avatar*, *Matsya Avatar* *Kachchapa Avatar*. All these *Avatars* are very symbolic to our identification with wild life and how the Indian masses lived in harmony with the wild life. This is a clear example and, till today, it is being followed.

However, in the course of time, when the wild life became a sport or a game, it was gradually destroyed. After Independence also, it took us nearly 25 years to get in a legislation in the form of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. That means, from 1951 till 1972, there was no Act or any law to protect wild life. So, wild life and environment became free for all. In the name of development, we destroyed so many species of animals and we damaged the forest. Then came the Forest Act, and now we have woken up to the situation that wild life has to be protected for survival of mankind.

We support this legislation thoroughly because the penalties have been increased, but, there is one problem. I would like to make one suggestion here that the Wild Life Crime Intelligence Cell should be created on the lines of preventive measures in the narcotic and drug trafficking. As the previous speaker Shrimati Maneka Gandhi said, people who are involved in narcotics and drug smuggling are also involved in illegal wild life trade. So, Wild Life Crime Intelligence Cell should be created so that those people who are destroying our wild life can be nabbed and our wild life can be saved.

Then, to preserve our wild life, like I said earlier, we have to keep the people happy. The tribals who live in the jungles are compensated much less, I mean, the compassionate payment is very meagre. Today, if a farmer or a tribal is killed by a wild animal or a tiger or an elephant, he is eligible for Rs. 10,000. However, if a person is killed in a road accident, he is eligible to lakhs of rupees from the insurance company.

This thing has to be changed. If wildlife protection is made people-friendly, then only wildlife would survive. For example, if a person is injured in an attack by a bear or a tiger or is hurt by an elephant, then the compensation that is given to the injured person is only Rs. 5,000. This amount of compensation should be enhanced to a minimum sum of Rs. 2 lakh.

[Translation]

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

...(Interruptions)

[English]

SHRI BIKRAM KESHARI DEO: Sir, please give me some more time since I come from a wildlife rich area.

Sir, now it has become mandatory that a person who has been killed by wild animals should be compensated properly. The compensation amount should be nearly Rs. 3 to 4 lakhs. In parts of Kalahandi forests, if the cattle of farmers are killed by wild animals, then the compensation that is paid to them is only a meagre amount of Rs. 500/-. In such a situation, why should the farmers or the tribal people be attracted to save the wildlife? It is a very common thing. If a farmer applies for a dairy loan under ERP or IRDP scheme from the banks, then the loan sanctioned to him is Rs. 40,000/- and he uses that amount to raise his farm. But when a wild animal kills his cattle or cow, why should he be given a paltry sum of Rs. 500/- as compensation? This amount should also be enhanced.

Sir, I would like to cite one example here. In countries like Nepal and Kenya, the Army is involved in the protection of wildlife. I think, in the India also we should raise a Wildlife and Environment Wing in the Territorial Army for protection of wildlife in our country. Further I would like to add in this context that one CRF battalion was guarding the Barbara forest in the Khurda district of Orissa. One would be surprised to know that the forest was brought back to its original glory, the ecology was preserved and wildlife in the forest also has increased. But this battalion now has been transferred. Therefore, I would like to submit that the Armed Forces should be involved in the protection of wildlife.

Sir, I would also like to mention about the Zoological Society of India. They are doing a very good job. They have a lot of programmes for conservation and collection of species. But this organisation is under-staffed. They should have adequate staff strength to pursue their programmes and efforts should be made to make this organisation more vibrant.

Sir, finally before I conclude I would like to make a mention, otherwise it would be a great injustice to the people of my area, on one particular aspect. Today the Zoological Society of India has chosen priority areas for development. Top on the list of their priority is the development of rich habitats, the fragile eco-systems, the Himalayan eco-system, the desert eco-system of Rajasthan and Gujarat, the marine islands in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the Lakshadweep islands and also the tropical rain forests, the Western Ghats and the

Northern region. I would like to request the hon. Minister to include the Eastern ghats also in this list.

[Translation]

SHRI RAGHUNATH JHA (Gopalganj): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I would congratulate hon. Minister for having introduced a Bill for the conservation of National wild life. The hon. Minister has made this Bill very comprehensive. I agree to the suggestions made by Maneka ji and other hon. Members with regard to the conservation of wild animals, I am of the view that many laws are enacted, but the point to be considered is that how the law is complied with and who are the persons involved in this? Law makers are law breakers. Matter of concern is that law maker is himself the law breaker.

Please go and see the rural areas, after the constitution of Jharkhand, Bihar is left with very less forest area. We have seen in areas of west Champaran, some parts of Rohtas and Monghyr that high officers of collector level, commissioner level, DIG level, or SP level visit the forests for purposes of hunting, they live there, kill deers and other wild animals and eat them, but no one raises any voice against them. They pass their time with full leisure, they eat, drink etc. but I am not willing to say anything in that connection. He must be aware that once the hon. Speaker of Bihar legislative Assembly, went to district Palamau. A deer was killed there. And in the feast organised for him there were many high officers there and these people were served the meat of deer. All newspapers had widely published this news at that time. Actually what we need is that the agency enforcing law should be powerful. Of course, a forest officer cannot dare to say anything before a collector, commissioner or an S.P., if they visit the forest, he would rather assist them. Therefore, we should provide him legal protection in certain respects and help him perform his duty. He must have observed that animals like elephant, deer, Neelgai are in majority in Bihar, and in Buxar one can see even two or four hundred neelgaais grazing in the ground, who spoil the farmer's crop, but no compensation is given to them. Elephants come out of the forests and ruin their crops, but no one is there to help them. So, the Government should take some steps viz. Fencing of the farmer's fields so that their crops could be saved from animals. If any animal enters any farmer's field and spoils the crop, then it is our duty to help them. We know that the forest officers commit irregularities even in the food given for the tigers which results in deaths of animals in the forests. The animals are neither given proper food, nor sufficient water, nor are they medicated properly. In my area, i.e. Valmiki Nagar, the stretch of forest from Nepal to Bihar is the same. There is no

fencing at all. One part of the forest opens towards Nepal. Elephants, tigers etc., very easily move towards that directions. The Government should check their movement in that direction. I welcome this Bill.

[*English*]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO (Dhenkanal): Sir, I rise to support the Bill.

Conservation and preservation is not something new to India; it is a part of our psyche. From Emperor Ashoka in 3rd century B.C., we have been protecting and conserving wild animals, wild birds and amphibians. Love for wildlife was depicted in Kalidasa's *Abhijnana Shakuntalam* also.

Year 1972 was a landmark and a watershed in conservation. As Shri Bikram Keshari Deo was saying, there were no laws before 1972. But there were a plethora of State laws, archaic from the British days. However, these were game-shooting laws, not for protection and conservation. Due to the leadership of Shrimati Indira Gandhi in 1972, all the States agreed to make this a Concurrent Subject. That is how a model legislation was enacted.

And the same lead has now come from Prime Minister Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee, which is a step in right direction because 1972 Conservation Act had a few lacunae. The biggest lacuna was, there was no community participation. The community did not have a stake. The 1991 Act made it a little more stringent. After ten years, I congratulate Shri Baalu, because this amendment is another step in the right direction but there are still a lot of lacunas. Only a fortnight back, we passed the Biodiversity Bill. It was a hastily, hurriedly, knee-jerk reaction which had left many questions un-answered. It is a bio-degradable law because we have not taken safeguards for bio-piracy, where our own indigenous people, local communities interests are subservient to IPR, TRIPS or WTO. Recently, the hon. Minister and the hon. Member, Shri B.K. Deo, also attended World Sustainable Development Submit Conference at Johannesburg...(*Interruptions*) Sir, I require a few more minutes. I will make my speech point-wise. I have 15 or 16 points which were discussed there. Therefore, this Conservation Protection (Amendment) Bill must be seen in the backdrop of that.

One was climate and effect of green house gases. This has a very significant importance to us because we are an agricultural country. Our agriculture, biosphere, environment, forest and the climatic changes are all

important to us. Shri B.G. Verghese had written a letter to all Members of Parliament that the biggest threat to the Indian economy is the climatic changes and the global warming. It is because of carbon-dioxide and monoxide emissions. This can only be curtailed if we maintain our forests apart from the agreements which the North has always been asking us to commit ourselves but they are not party to it. They expect the developing South to adhere to all the requirements but the North is not forthcoming in its commitments.

The second one is, biodiversity where, ecology, economy and equality all are absent.

The third was, desertification and the poor subsidising to the rich. This also happened in Johannesburg.

The fourth was, persistent organic pollutants.

Forest global negotiations without any mandate.

Trade and environment, which Shrimati Maneka Gandhi mentioned was more in violation than anything. But it is a step in the right direction.

Multilateral agreement on investment. This is the crux. Shrimati Indira Gandhi used to say, 'the poor out of need and the rich out of greed' have been denuding the ecology.

Commerce and Trade has depleted our forests. Today, your own Government agency, the National Remote Sensing Agency, study has a great significance. In 1952 we had 36% forests, now only 11%. After the *Rajas and Maharajas* had done their damage, there were 40,000 tigers in 1947 and today there are only 4000 of them. For the last 60 years, *Rajas and Maharajas* have not been there. Who is now cutting the forests? Who is destroying the forest and the wild life?

I come from Dhenkanal. We had a law in 1927 that if you want to cut a tree even in your backyard, you have to plant three trees and maintain them for three years, then only you can cut a tree. The same thing is happening in Andamans where you have to plant three trees and then you can cut. Sir, in the Armed Forces, where there is a fire fighting drill every week. There is a fire fighting party, fire picket and fire salvage party. Likewise, our villagers used to pay four *annas* of cess and used to get their fuel, fodder and house building materials free. But a number of villagers were designated the protection party, were designated to fight fire and a number of villagers were designated to do protection and salvage.

[Shri K.P. Singh Deo]

Therefore, the community must have stake in this. The forests and wild life should be the economic resources for them rather than anything else. As regards institutes of environment, there were plethora of institutes. But what does a developing country like India get? It gets nothing. The next point was regarding ozone depletion, hazardous waste, and prime informed concepts as also the right to information. All these are desired. One more subject was the role of zoos in the conservation and the protection of the wild life. We have a large number of zoos. Thirty years back, in this very House, it was decided that the zoos will be a model institution for captive breeding where those facing extinct or endangered species would be bred in captivity. Now we do not have any experts nor any policy or scientific management nor cadre.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Chairman, Sir, kindly start discussion under Rule 193 at four o'clock as it is a very important matter.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Member may kindly conclude his speech now.

[English]

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: One more thing is regarding raising territorial army/battalions for wild life protection. Another point is regarding game farming which will be a renewal economic source for farmers. They should be allowed to do game farming. The last point is regarding a trust to which I or anybody else can give any grant for a particular forest area or a protected area or a zoo. In the Nandankanan Zoo, we lost 17 white tigers. The largest concentration of white tigers in the world is in Nandankanan. But there are no facilities and there are no specialist doctors. These are the things which he may like to consider and reply.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI JAS KAUR MEENA (Sawai Madhopur): Mr. Chairman, Sir, I support the Wild Life Conservation (Amendment) Bill, 2002. I would like to say that 'wild life' in itself, is a very comprehensive word. It includes 84 lakh yonis (variety of living beings). I would like to draw the attention of the Government towards this aspect too. All 84 lakh yonis are as follow—"Stharvaram Vinasti Laksham Cha" i.e. there are 20 lakh varieties of our flora. "Jaljanah Navam laksham Chah" i.e. the number of Aquatic animals is nine lakhs. "Kumeesya Rudra Laksham Chah" i.e. the number of reptiles is 11 lakhs. "Triyodasham Pashu Laksham Chah", i.e. there are 30 lakh animals.

"Dasheh Laksham Pakshinaam chah" i.e. birds are 10 lakh in number and "Chaturth Laksham Vanarah Chah" and there are four lakh monkey species. Therefore, in this way, there are 84 lakh yonis. All of them are wild animals except man, who is the sole living being to rule over them and influence them. As time is less, so I would tell in short as to the importance of protecting forest and the manner as to how should they be conserved. Unless the local people, living in close vicinity of forests, are educated with regard to the conservation of forests and wild animals, we cannot keep our forests and animals safe.

Wild animals and human beings bear a close connection with each other. A kind of public awareness is required and unless we understand the significance of both man and animals, we cannot protect them. On the one hand population is increasing in multitudes while on the other, we are decreasing the number of wild animals by killing them. Tigers are becoming an extinct species today. There are three reasons behind the poaching and killing of tigers. First reason is enmity, second is hunger, as people eat them and third reason is hunting them as a hobby as was done by people like Salman Khan. Unless the people living in surrounding areas of forests, are made aware of and are handed over a proper system, the wild life cannot be protected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now please conclude. The Members who are willing to place their written speeches on the Table, may do so. Written speech of Shri Lakshman Singh ji will be considered as laid on the Table.

[English]

*SHRI LAKSHMAN SINGH (Rajgarh): Mr. Chairman, Sir, at least the Government has woken up from a deep slumber and introduced this Bill of great importance to the nation. I would rather compliment the press, people connected with the subject and NGO's who were able to put enough pressure on the Government to bring this bill.

The Government has not been very serious about this can be judged by the fact that The Indian Board of Wild Life had its first meeting in January, 2002 after a gap of 4 years. If the meetings were held regularly under chairmanship of P.M. then probably we would have saved hundreds of tigers., elephants and other wild species which feel victims to large scale poaching and smuggling for their bones, tusks and skin. The official statistics tell us that 200 tigers were poached in the beginning of the millennium. Talking about tiger population in the survey

*Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

of 1997, there were 3508 tigers in the country, although an official of the tiger project disagrees and says, "directors of tiger reserves create tigers which do not exist. In a bid to keep their seniors happy and to show that their parks are flourishing."

This view is also shared by the famous tiger expert Valmik Thaper who says the census is a scam and further adds that most are "paper tigers" living only in the imagination of the forest officials. In the meeting chaired by the Prime Minister it was pointed out by no other person than the P.M. himself that in recent years there has been an increase in killings of wild animals due to decline in standards of wild life protection. The letter on the subject was received by M.O.F. and all States Forest Departments and union territories on April 04. According to which between November 99-2000 nearly 1100 panthers were killed and 46 tigers poached. Their tigers census puts their number at about 1500.

The most important official who is directly responsible for patrolling to check poaching is the forest guard. It is most unfortunate to know that no new appointment was made in the last 20 years and 40% such posts are still vacant. The forest guards are totally unequipped and laden with duties of afforestation, manning check post and social forestry. In several States forest guards are equipped just with a stick and are supposed patrol 15 sq. Kms. on foot. Directors of Project Tiger, Mr. P.K. Sen says that ground staff should be provided sophisticated weapons, adequate mobility and effective mechanism for intelligence gathering to keep a tab for wild life offenders. He also feels that like policemen who are trained to trace criminals, forest officials too should be trained to trace smugglers and poachers. There should be special wild life courts and wild life lawyers to try smugglers and poachers.

There is also serious problem of the park area shrinking due to overgrazing and encroachments. The tiger and elephants and other wild animals are entering in to villages due to their shrinking habitat and posing serious problems to villagers living near the park. Since 1973 we have lost 50% or 150000 sq. kms. Of the tigers habitat. There are fishing mafias operating in the Pench tiger reserve, Indravati in Chhattisgarh is inhabited by the naxalites. Nagarjunsagar in A.P. is home to P.W.G. While Hazaribagh once called (the land of thousand tigers) and Palamau in Bihar are ripped apart by mines, while the bodo militants have taken over Manas. It is estimated that if these problems are not tackled seriously, then in the next 15 years we might have about 400 tigers left and pushed into small pockets, desperately seeking survival and the Project Tiger will fail.

Delicacies like Rou song (shredded dried meat) (chopped grilled meat) and are all a must on any gastronomical tour to China, containing Tiger meat. Soup of tiger genitals fetches an exorbitant prices.

Kishore Rithe member of Maharashtra wild life Board says tiger skins and bones are taken to Nagpur, an important transit point for wild life trade from where it makes its way to Nepal or Bangladesh and further to the South Asian countries, Europe and U.S.A. The illegal bone trade is valued at 30 billion \$ annually world wide.

Activities such as mining (the Kundremukh National Park, Karnataka, construction of dams (the Great Himalayan National Park, Himachal Pradesh), roads (the Kalakad Mundanthurai Tiger Reserve, Tamil Nadu) and railway lines (the Rajaji National Park, U.P.) aquaculture (the Bhitarkanika sanctuary, Orissa), tea and coffee planting (the BRT wild life sanctuary, Karnataka), and encroachments by large farming interests were cited as greatest threats to local people's livelihood. The environment support group Bangalore, made a presentation on the mining activities in the Kundramuck National Park.

Sir, this Bill would support the democratic management of parks and sanctuaries. The ideal is to have a partnership between their villages as a community and the Forest department, and not with individuals. An arrangement with individuals can create rivalries that will make a joint effort for conservation difficult. The composition of the board should ensure popular participation. There is no reason why equal membership should not be granted to the people and the administration. The Board should be the supreme policy making body, having binding authority to enforce the law. It does not have to be a state level body alone. There can be one such board for each sanctuary and park.

The term "conservation" has not been defined in the law. In making these suggestions we begin with the assumption that conservation means a clear programme of action that satisfies the basic socio economic needs of the local people, by creating in them a personal stake in the maintenance and sustainable use of plants, animals and genetic resources contained in the eco-system.

In so defining conservation, our assumption is that what needs to be practised is not the philosophy of restoration but an ethic of renewal. A painting, a piece of architecture, a building can be restored. But culture and nature have to be renewed or revived. For renewal of Wild Life to be meaningful and sustainable, one needs to work out a scheme of joint protected area management

[Shri Lakshman Singh]

built on a partnership of equals between the forest department and the communities that depend on the resources and as such have a high stake in its protection.

*SHRI VIJAYENDRA PAL SINGH BADNORE (Bhilwara): Sir, I stand to support the Wild Life (Protection) Bill, 2002.

Wild life is being endangered for quite some time. The Tiger population has dwindled in last one decade and decimated to 1000s from 4000s figures. Tiger population being dwindled in numbers means that an animal population is being dwindled as the Tiger is the epitome of the whole Forest and Eco System. It is the pinnacle of the triangle of the whole flora and fauna system and when the Tiger is endagnored the flora and fauna is being threatened.

There are many reasons for this flora and fauna being threatened. I will not go into the details of it but I hope this Bill will act as a deterrent.

Let me also say that in Rajasthan there are two 'Project Tiger' i.e. Sariska and Ranthambore and then there are quite a few other Reserves. I suggest that both these Tiger Projects should be connected by Corridors. Corridors are very important to the Project Tigers along with buffer zones. These two, if made strong, can really save the Tiger and when we talk of the Tiger, we talk of the whole forest system as I have already specified.

It is a good thing to give the statutory status to the National Board for wild life and the State wild life Advisory Body but they must meet in every 4/6 months and if they do not meet what is the purpose of the same?

May I also suggest that the Asiatic Lions are decimating in Gujarat. They are threatened due to ill-breeding and also due to drought condition. Also the Earthquake in that region also had bad affects in that region.

I suggest some sort of translocation should be done by creating Gir type of infrastructure and ambience for them to survive in other State like Rajasthan. If this is not done immediately, the only surviving Asiatic Lion will disappear totally from the face of this Earth.

Some forest areas in Rajasthan like the Sita Mata Reserves can be turned into forest heaven for the Asiatic Lions and this project which was thought about can be provided easily and must be taken up.

*Speech was laid on the Table of the House.

Sir, I also suggest that the wild life wing should be separated from the Forest Guards Cadre and to be given special training to understand also stop the poaching and going after the wild life forest. Wild life work and protection are deft and specilized work.

I also suggest that the indiscriminate growing and planting and breeding of India Flora should be restricted only in the desert areas and should not be grown in the forest areas. This India flora does not allow other trees to grow and is detrimental to the forest in many ways.

16.00 hrs.

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): Mr. Chairman, Sir, first of all, I would like to thank all the hon. Member who have participated in the deliberation of the most important Wild Life (Protection) Amendment Bill, 2002.

We can be proud to say that about eight per cent of the bio-diversity wealth lies in the Indian sub-continent when compared to the world bio-diversity wealth. What is the aim of this Amendment Bill? We want to go heavily on the culprits and criminals who are very vociferous in poaching and who have got international connections in harming and poaching animals. So, we want to deal with them with a heavy hand.

Secondly, as I said, we have got eight per cent of the bio-diversity wealth of the world. But, what is the protected area in the country as far as wildlife protection is concerned? It is only 4.7 per cent. We want to enhance and increase the protected area network to 10 per cent, which is the world average. When we compare ourselves with the neighbouring countries, Bhutan has got 20 per cent protected area and Sri Lanka has got 13 per cent of the protected area, whereas Nepal has got, just as we do, 8 per cent protected area. So, to cope with the international average, we want to increase the protected area network to 10 per cent.

16.02 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

The third most important point of the Government is that whereas we have got 48000 flora varieties and 81000 fauna species, in order to protect this flora and fauna it is essential to see that our own communities do take part in the protection activity. We want to bring about amendments to incorporate these three important items and that is the reason why the Amendment Bill is before the House.

To answer some of the points raised by hon. Members, firstly, Dr. Raghuvansh Prasad Singh has made an important point about decline in wildlife population. To be very frank with him, his projection regarding the decline is not very correct. On the contrary, from 65 numbers of national protected areas we have increased it to 587 protected areas as of now. From 1970 onwards the area under national parks and sanctuaries has been extended to 1.15 lakh sq. kms. Besides, the Prime Minister has written to all the Chief Ministers urging them to concentrate on the subject and pay personal attention insofar as the management of national parks and sanctuaries is concerned.

In the Ninth Plan we have provided Rs. 478 crore. We have increased the allocation to Rs. 828 crore now. He has also mentioned about the vulture population. To take care of the vulture population and to have a research instituted on the vulture population, we have already advised BNHS, Mumbai to take it up, so that the exact vulture population is revealed.

Shri Bijoy Handique mentioned about the man-elephant conflict. In consideration of this aspect, we have increased the compensation amount to Rs. 1 lakh in case of death and Rs. 33,000 if a person is injured in the conflict. These are the latest notifications of the Government on the subject. As far as elephant corridors are concerned, we have got four elephant reserves in Assam.

In the Ninth Plan, we have provided Rs. 30 crore for the Project Elephant. In the Tenth Plan, we have provided Rs. 60 crore. It has to be increased two-fold. As far as Assam is concerned, for the current year, we have released Rs. 20 lakh. The amount of Rs. 25 lakh is for the anti-depredation purpose and Rs. 20 lakh for the compensation purpose. We have provided rupees one crore for Project Elephant...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA (Canara): What about compensation for crop damage?...(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU: As far as time is concerned, I am compressed. I will take care of this point.

Shri B.K. Deo has raised a point. In fact, I have already answered it. Same matters have been raised by Shri Deo and Shri Handique. As far as Orissa is concerned, the compensation amount has been increased to Rs. 20 lakh. For anti-depredation, it is Rs. 25 lakh. This is included in the total amount which is Rs. 98 lakh as far as this year is concerned.

Shri Chennithala has raised some points about conservation, community reserves and the importance to be given to people. These points have been taken into consideration while making the amendments. Importance has been given to community people.

As far as the National Board for Wildlife is concerned, the Indian Welfare Board has been reconstituted like this. It has got a statutory status.

Sir, I will be concluding if I answer the points raised by Shrimati Menaka Gandhi. Sister Menaka Gandhi met me on 21.10.1999 after I took over the charge of this Ministry. She advised me to have a Zoo Cadre to take care of the Zoos in India. Taking her advice very seriously, I have advised the senior officials of my Ministry and also the Central Zoo Authority to prepare a concept paper so as to create a Zoo Cadre. I have also circulated the concept paper, proposal to the Ministries of Finance, Animal Husbandry, Department of Personnel and the Law Ministry. The DoPT has advised me to take up that concept paper to the States. I have circulated the matter to all the States and the Secretaries from all the States had been called here. We had conducted an interaction. In this interaction, no State has come forward to create such a Zoo Cadre. That is why, we are not inclined to create a Zoo Cadre.

As far as *Kalandars* and the street entertainers are concerned, they are tolling for their livelihood. They have not selected the particular profession out of their desire. It is out of despair, to win their bread every day, that they have selected this sort of a profession. With all the strength at my command, I could say that I cannot provide any licensing system for the *Kalandars* or the petty street entertainers.

As far as the issue regarding peacock feathers is concerned, I would like to say that every year, a peacock is bound to shed not less than 400 to 500 feathers. When compared to the total number of birds' population...(Interruptions)

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI (Pilibhit): The hon. Minister has said that 400 to 500 feathers are shed. It is only 110...(Interruptions)

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Actually, it is in the banned list from 1.4.1999. Previously, it was allowed by her to have an export of 20 lakh feathers. It has been banned from 1.4.1999. There is no problem at all. If at all there is an export facility available in this country, people would go for poaching. Do you say that anybody would kill the peacock, the national bird? Every Indian has got reverence

[Shri T.R. Baalu]

and esteem for that particular bird. Would anybody kill it for the petty purpose. No.

Nobody will kill peacock. It has got a cultural value and people hold it in high esteem...*(Interruptions)* Even school children keep peacock feathers in their books. So, there is no necessity to go in for any licence system with regard to peacock trade.

Sir, before I conclude, I would like to quote from the report submitted in August, 1997 by a UK based charity called, World Society for Protection of Animals. In their report they have said:

"Indiscriminate seizure of dancing bears from *Kalandars* will increase poverty and disease. It may also increase poaching of wild bear as *Kalandars* will have no other option for livelihood.

The Community is willing to change but need necessary for rehabilitation."

So, as and when the Government comes up with a proposal for rehabilitation of *Kalandars*, we would definitely consider the suggestion made by the hon. Member. But as of now, there is no rehabilitation programme as far as *Kalandars* are concerned. Therefore, the amendment to this effect may be rejected.

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say only two things. One is, perhaps the Minister is certainly not aware of how the peacock trade is conducted, because his own Wildlife Institute has informed him that peacocks are killed and I am surprised that he could say that they are not killed.

Secondly, he is saying that there is no scheme for rehabilitation of *Kalandars*. In his own Ministry, there is a scheme which has been allotted Rs. Two crore for rehabilitation of anybody who is willing to give up bears. I am again surprised that the Minister does not even know of this scheme which exists in his own Ministry.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the hon. Minister stated that the Government is not going to create any zoo cadre for the management of zoos in the country. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to why he cannot use a section of the Indian Forest Service officers for this purpose. He has the Indian Forest Service officers under his Ministry. The Indian Administrative Service officers never allow the Indian Forest Service officers to occupy high posts even in his own Ministry. Posts are all controlled by the Indian Administrative Service officers. So, the hon. Minister can at least use the services of the Indian Forest Service officers for the purpose of maintaining zoos in our country.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: Sir, as far as the first point raised by Shrimati Maneka Gandhi is concerned, I would like to inform the House that we are not going in for zoo cadre. I would also like to inform that we are not having any proposal to have a licence system for peacock trade and we also do not have any programme for the rehabilitation of *Kalandars* or street entertainers. At the same time, I would like to assure that her sentiments, views and suggestions would be examined by the Government.

The law which we are enacting is not a sacred document. Every now and then, it has to be subjected to amendments as and when necessary. I have already ordered for a peacock population drive to be taken up by SACONI Coimbatore. After finding out as to how much population of peacock is there in the country, we will decide what to do further on this matter.

As far as the suggestion of Shrimati Margaret Alva regarding utilising the service of Indian Forest Service officers for management of zoos is concerned, I would like to submit that the Indian Forest Service officers are trained for some other purpose, but for management of zoos there should be wildlife experts. Till last year, there was no subject to zoo management in the curriculum of our colleges for zoo management...*(Interruptions)* Now, I have requested them to include this in the curriculum from this year.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill further to amend the Will Life (Protection) Act, 1972, as passed by Rajya Sabha, be taken into consideration."

The motion was adopted.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The House shall now take up clause by clause consideration of the Bill.

The question is:

"The clauses 2 and 3 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clauses 2 and 3 were added to the Bill.

Clause 4 Amendment of section 3

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: I beg to move:

Page 3,—

after line 34, insert—

(iii) after sub-section (3) the following proviso shall be added, namely—

"provided that there shall be a separate cadre of officers for the efficient management of Zoological parks and gardens in the country." (2)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall now put amendment No. 2 moved by Shrimati Maneka Gandhi to vote.

The amendment was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 4 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 4 was added to the Bill.

Clause 5 was added to the Bill.

Clause 6 Insertion of new sections 5A to 5C

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: I beg to move:

Page 5,—

after line 21 insert—

"(ca) suitable grants to the recognised trusts or fund instituted for the purpose of assisting the conservation of any protected areas or any endangered species." (1)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall now put amendment No. 1 moved by Shri K.P. Singh Deo to vote.

The amendment was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 6 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 6 was added to the Bill.

Clause 7 to 26 were added to the Bill.

SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Sir, this is for enabling either the Central Government or the State Government to have trusts...(Interruptions) What is the objection? ... (Interruptions)

Clause 27 Amendment of section 42

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, I beg to move:

Page 11,—

after line 11, insert—

"provided further that no licence would be issued for the purpose of using animals in the circus houses, or by kalandars and street entertainers." (3)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: I shall now put amendment No. 3 moved by Shrimati Maneka Gandhi to vote.

The amendment was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 27 stand part of the Bill".

The motion was adopted.

Clause 27 was added to the Bill.

Clause 28 Substitution of new section for section 43

SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI: Sir, I beg to move:

Page 11,—

omit lines 25 and 26.

The amendment was put and negatived.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That clause 28 stand part of the Bill."

The motion was adopted.

Clause 28 was added to the Bill.

Clauses 29 to 38 were added to the Bill.

Clause 1, the Enacting formula and the long Title were added to the Bill.

SHRI T.R. BAALU: I beg to move:

"That the Bill be passed."

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is:

"That the Bill be passed."

The motion was adopted.

16.20 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Re: Problems being Faced by Sugarcane Growers in the Country

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Now, the House shall take up Item No. 29 of the Agenda.

[Translation]

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN (Firozabad): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, yesterday I had given a notice of Breach of Privilege. Hon. Shri Sharad Yadav made a statement on 12th with regard to Munderva Basti incident...(Interruptions) That statement has no concern with truth. The Government have reported that only one farmer died in said incident, whereas Shri Mulayam Singh mentioned the names of three farmers who had died in the incident. All the three farmers died during police firing, whereas the Government states that police did not open fire...(Interruptions) I mean facts had been distorted. It is a very serious matter. I want your ruling on this matter...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no doubt that it is a very serious matter. However, I would like to state that kindly mention all this when you raise the matter.

...(Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH (Maharajganj, U.P.): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the information furnished by the State Government...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Akhilesh ji, when you participate in the discussion on this matter you express your point of view. The Government will give a clarification in this regard during reply.

...(Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have given a notice in this regard. When I went there I was arrested...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Let the discussion start.

...(Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I have given a notice in this regard. The notices for

Adjournment Motion have been given and also under Rule 193...(Interruptions)

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): What do you want, you want discussion or not?...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAMJI LAL SUMAN: Entire House is being misled. The State Government has provided false information...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: If it is so, the hon. Speaker would examine the notice for Breach of Privilege given by you. What are you going to achieve by stalling this discussion?...(Interruptions)

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You may raise this matter while participating in the discussion.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: What will you achieve by stalling the discussion?

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The Hon. Minister will reply to all this. Kindly let this discussion be started.

...(Interruptions)

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Please inform the Hon. Speaker.

[English]

SHRI PRABODH PANDA (Midnapore): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, at the very outset, I must thank you for giving me an opportunity to initiate the discussion as this is an important issue which has been taken up for discussion under Rule 193.

On 12th December, the hon. Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Shri Sharad Yadav, made a statement in this august House regarding the problems faced by sugarcane growers in our country. He made a statement in regard to the agitation of cane growers in Basti, Uttar Pradesh and with regard to the police firing on sugarcane farmers on 11th December. The statement has come amidst the heated discussion in Lok Sabha on that day on the incident of police firing on farmers.

It was reported that three sugarcane farmers have been killed by police firing. The report generated such a

heat this House had to be adjourned for the first time in this Winter Session.

Sir, the hon. Prime Minister could realise the situation, and he kindly intervened and gave an assurance in this House. I would like to quote the assurance given by the Prime Minister. It says:

"If the police is found guilty, then they will definitely be responsible. This matter is above partisan politics. The farmers must get remunerative prices for their produce and I feel that what they are getting now is not adequate. However, I have been informed that the court has imposed restrictions on the prices. If this is correct, then all of us can sit across, the table and decide about fixing the minimum remunerative price."

But the statement made by the hon. Minister, Shri Sharad Yadav, did not reflect that assurance. It shows the attitude of the Government to the farmers and the attitude of the Minister concerned to the sugarcane farmers.

16.27 hrs.

[SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA *in the Chair*]

The situation is such that the sugarcane growers are burning their crops just like their own babies, and they are blocking the roads to get the remunerative prices. Lots and lots of sugarcane growers are facing such a serious problem as they could not save their produce.

In most of the areas in the Western UP, Uttaranchal, Bihar and even in the South, and in large parts of the country, lakhs and lakhs of sugarcane farmers are facing such problems. My point is whether the Government has realised the real plight of the farmers or not.

The farmers are not getting remunerative prices for their produce. This question is very much pertinent not only to sugarcane growers but also to the farmers of other produces. For paddy producers, jute producers, tomato producers, coconut producers and other farmers, this question of getting remunerative price is very related. My point is whether the Government is thinking to have any national policy to procure and to guarantee minimum support price for these farmers. Nothing has appeared in the Statement that has been placed in this august House. Why is the Government not taking a considered view on this?

The Prime Minister had said that all of us can sit across the table to decide about fixing of the minimum

price. Is the Government thinking on this line? Have they got such a proposal? This is not reflected in his statement. So, I think, while you reply to the debate in this august House, you will say whether you are thinking to arrange such a meeting to resolve the problem.

On the other hand, the sugarcane industries are really in a battle for survival. They are unable to bear the burden of unsold stock. It has appeared in the Press that the sugarcane industries are willing to pay the Minimum Support Price for sugarcane, as prescribed by the Central Government. It is Rs. 65 to Rs. 80 per quintal. We have seen in the newspapers what has happened in UP. Hon. Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav and other Members from UP can tell us very well. They are very much acquainted with the problem. The price recommended by the State Government of Uttar Pradesh is ranging between Rs. 90 and Rs. 95 per quintal. So, this is the difference. The Minimum Support Price offered by the State Government is between Rs. 90 and Rs. 95. The Minimum Support Price subscribed by the Union Government is between Rs. 65 and Rs. 80. I do not know how far it is true. But if that happens, it is a matter of serious concern. Yes, the Minimum Support Price is co-related with the levy price, the price at which the man sells it to the Government for public distribution. But the problem in the retail price is that it is below the levy price. So, how are they thinking to resolve this problem?

I have got a report that the Maharashtra Government had also offered a good subsidy to the sugarcane farmers. There is also a proposal to subsidise export and minimise the excise duty. I do not know how far it is true. I think the Government will think over it.

In regard to the incidents of police firing it is a matter of serious concern. It happened not only in Uttar Pradesh but also at many other places. In Delhi itself, such an incident took place. There was police lathi-charge on the demonstration led by the farmers. So, this is a serious matter. I rise to raise this point for discussion. I think the Government will think over it. This is my concrete proposal. You please arrange an all-Party meeting and invite all the *kisan* organisations, the representatives of the sugarcane industry and try to resolve the matter. The problem is that the sugarcane growers are not able to cut their sugarcane.

If the situation does not progress within a week or a fortnight or a month, it would take a very serious turn. This is a very important matter, which should be discussed here. I want the Government to treat this as the most important matter. So, I have risen here to raise this matter for an in-depth study.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA (Padrauna): Madam, Chairman, I am highly thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on the problems being faced by the farmers. The reason for today's discussion is—dharna being staged by the farmers in front of the Sugar Factory at Munderva in Basti district of Uttar Pradesh, demanding payment of outstanding arrears and firing on agitating farmers by police wherein some farmers died. If this incident had not taken place, perhaps this discussion would not have taken place. Main issue is that if this problem is not solved, every other day firing will take place. Earlier also fire was opened on sugarcane growers. It took place in Ramkola, Padrauna and now in Munderva. If this issue is not resolved immediately the problem will linger on. It is not an issue pertaining to any particular political party. When hungry farmers resort to agitation, they will not listen to anyone. I would like to know from the Government and leaders of all the political parties to cite any example where payment is not made for the goods supplied except to the sugarcane growers. It is not just the question of one or two crore rupees. Leave aside the whole country nearly Rs. 1000 crore of sugarcane growers is outstanding in UP alone and Rs. 100 crore is outstanding in my parliamentary constituency where the police resorted to firing.

Kanpur Sugar Factory is closed. This single mill owes Rs. 14 crore to sugarcane growers which has not been paid. As per the existing law if payment is not made within 15 days the mill is liable to pay 15 percent penal interest thereon. However, not to speak of interest, even principle amount is not being paid. Further, it is not clear whether the Government are aware of this fact or not. The Government constituted BIFR, but it failed to take any decision so far. This organisation is a useless body where officers are busy in merely claiming TA/DA. It is so useless that no case could be settled during the last 8-10 years.

As per the reports we have received there is resentment amongst the farmers not only in UP but throughout the country. As on 12th instant, crushing of sugarcane has started only in 305 mills out of 520 mills in the country. Mills in UP are in worst condition. 81 mills are reported to have started functioning in UP and only 5-10 mills have started in Uttaranchal and 117 mills in Maharashtra and 22 in Gujarat. Bihar is worst affected where only 2 out of 28 mills have started functioning. Thus resentment is brewing everywhere. The hon. Minister may please tell when did the sugarmills start crushing sugarcane last year and this year why there is so much delay? Farmers used to sow wheat in lakhs of acres of

land after harvesting of sugarcane is over. However, this year as the mills have not started crushing sugarcane, therefore sugarcane harvesting has not been done and wheat had not been sown too. So, it is not clear what will happen now and whether this problems will be resolved or not? I am happy that when the issue was raised by Shri Mulayam Singh ji the Hon. Prime Minister intervened in the matter.

I, too, have been actively pursuing the sugar politics for a long time, but this is the first instance that hon. Prime Minister has intervened and admitted that injustice is being done to the farmers. Therefore, injustice should not be done. The people guilty of opening fire should be punished and the problems of farmers be solved. Sugarcane arrears should be paid to the farmers and the problem should be solved once and for all. It is the first time that the Hon. Prime Minister has intervened and all our hon. Ministers may be knowing it. I hope the Hon. Prime Minister will surely translate the promise made during visit to Gorakhpur, while appreciating problems of sugarcane growers, that their arrears will be cleared and mills will start functioning soon. Incidentally same party is in power, in Centre and the State and if even now justice is not done to the farmers, then...(Interruptions)

DR. RAGHUVANSH PRASAD SINGH (Vaishali): The farmer is facing problems due to the lackadaisical approach of both centre and the State...(Interruptions)

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA: Situation in your State is even worse. Running sugar mills have become problematic. Ten-fifteen sugar mills of corporation have been closed and how long the mills could be run on subsidy? Debate would be held in future too but one thing is sure that sugar mills at Munderva, Deoria, Betalpur, Ramkola and Laxmiganj are not going to start again. Every mill is increasing loss to the tune of Rs. 3-3½ crore. Arrears are not being paid to 5-6 lakh sugarcane growers. In case of public sector sugar mills, payment is not being made at all. Private mill owners refuse to buy sugarcane at this rate. Imported sugar is cheaper and sugar producing countries give subsidy to their sugar exporters. As per the reports available with me their Governments give subsidy of Rs. 450 per quintal. I have come to know that the Government of Maharashtra is also going to give subsidy of Rs. 100 per quintal...(Interruptions)

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: Haryana is paying Rs. 100 per quintal.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA: Imparted sugar is cheap. Its landed cost is Rs. 1085 per quintal. Even in

India the situation in North is very much different from what is prevailing in South. If the Government do not pay attention, sugarcane growers of North India will be ruined. Sugar recovery in North is about 9-9 $\frac{1}{2}$, whereas in Maharashtra it is 11-12. The Government will have to ponder over it. Unless we have National Sugar Policy it is difficult to manage things. Earlier the Government used to give subsidy to the sugar mills with a capacity of 800-1000 tonne, but it has been withdrawn now. Subsidy used to be given during the Congress regime. But present Government has stopped subsidy. In my State 30-35 sugar mills of Sugar Corporation are lying closed. So the big question is whether these are to be revived now? Recovery of these mills is not even 8-8 $\frac{1}{2}$. Therefore, how these can compete with the mills where recovery is 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -10? A resolution, 8-10 years back, was passed for augmentation of crushing capacity of three sugar mills, namely Betalpur, Laxmiganj and Piprai. These factories acquired land, but so far no action has been taken in this regard. It is a question of their future and viability. Therefore, if it is not taken up now then when will it be tackled? If capacity of these mills is not augmented and these are not able to purchase sugarcane, which ultimately is to be burnt, sugarmills will get closed. I would like to urge the hon. Minister to augment capacity of mills with existing capacity of 800-1000 tonnes. Mills, including the mills belonging to Sugar Corporation, are running in loss. So, I want to know from the hon. Minister whether capacity of mills will be augmented? Leave aside everything, but even if the capacity of above three mills, whose capacity augmentation was approved earlier, is increased to 400 tonne, the problem before farmers will be over. You people will be surprised to know that I am also a sugarcane grower and only a few MPs grow sugarcane. Even mine Rs. 50-60 thousand have not been paid by the mill owners for the last 9-10 years. Situation has come to such a pass that farmers are forced to sell sugarcane at Rs. 30-35 per quintal to Kolhu (crusher) owners. Public sector mills are not working and private mill owners say that they cannot buy sugarcane at so high rates. The Government of Uttar Pradesh has taken a bold step by announcing minimum support price of sugarcane at Rs. 95 a quintal. The Government have taken a well considered decision. Experts with the Government have decided the rate of Rs. 95 a quintal. But private mills say they will not pay so high rate thereby further complicating the matter. The Hon. Minister is quite serious by nature and the State Government has given an assurance. So, it should be fulfilled. The Central Government will have to ponder over as to how the assurance is to be fulfilled and how the mills are to be revived?

Madam, I would like to add one thing more. Is it not true that there is hardly any mill which may not be paying tax of Rs. 50 lakh to the Central Government and about Rs. 14-15 lakh to the State Government. Recently, the High Court has pronounced a decision that no State Government has a right to fix support price of sugar cane because it is the prerogative of the Central Government. In this regard I would like to submit that earlier 60 percent sugar used to be under free quota and 40 percent under levy...(Interruptions) I am not deviating from the subject. Price of sugar was increased after mediation of the State Government...(Interruptions)

MADAM CHAIRMAN: Please conclude now.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA: I am speaking on the subject only.

MADAM CHAIRMAN: The list of hon. MPs who wish to participate is long and all will have to be accommodated. Had you been the only MP speaking from your party then all the time allotted to your party could have been given to you. So, please conclude now.

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA: Sugar prices were increased after mediation of the State Government. Earlier the Central Government used to fix the sugar price taking into consideration the quantum of levy sugar. Now levy sugar has been reduced to just 10 percent. I would like to urge the hon. Minister to make payment to the farmers at the rate of Rs. 95 a quintal after waiving all the taxes then only the lot of farmers will improve...(Interruptions) The State Government have fixed the price for good quality sugarcane at Rs. 100 and for low quality at Rs. 95 a quintal. The Central Government should fulfil the commitment made by the State Government.

If this issue is not resolved, it will not be a good thing for the party in power. I am happy the Government of Uttar Pradesh has suspended or removed the guilty officers and further it has stated the injustice to the farmers will not be tolerated. If this issue is not resolved by clearing levy standing arrears of the farmers and sugar mills are not started loan, the farmers are likely to resort to direct action. If they can make the Government, they can topple it also. Therefore, the Central Government should ensure that sugarcane is purchased at Rs. 95 a quintal, the price fixed by the Government, arrears of the farmers are paid and closed mills are revived. The Hon. Minister should make an announcement to this effect in the House itself. The Hon. Prime Minister and the hon. Minister should pay attention to these problems and seize this opportunity to make an announcement regarding support price of sugarcane.

[Translation]

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL (Kanpur): Madam Chairman, I am grateful to you for giving me time to speak on the problems of the sugarcane growers under rule 193. From the beginning of this session of the colleagues from all the political parties had drawn the attention of the Government towards the problems of the sugarcane growers. First of all the Government should clarify as to whether it intend to survive the sugar industry or propose to wind it up. Unless the Government make its policy, vision and the intent clear, such problems would continue to come up.

Sugarcane is a such item which the farmer cannot continue to hold for a long time. It can not be sold after an year like rice or wheat of sugarcane is not sold within a month or a half it has to be thrown out or burnt off. All the political parties had raised this point a month ago that the Government, in all condition should announce procurement price of sugarcane in the first week of November. The problems of the sugar mills should be solved so that the crushing of the sugarcane could be started timely and the farmers may sell their sugarcane to the mills.

The farmers of Eastern and Western Uttar Pradesh where sugarcane is produced abundantly, can not survive without sugarcane as it is there main crop. When the Government of Uttar Pradesh was requested to determine procurement price of sugarcane firstly, they made delay in this regard and at the same time sugar mill owners were asked to approach the High Court to take stay and also made it clear that the Government won't enhance procurement price of the sugarcane. Mr. Chairman, Sir, whichever Government would try to overlook the sugarcane growers can not continue to rule in Uttar Pradesh. This truth was well known to the Uttar Pradesh Government. The Government deceived by fixing the procurement price at the 95 per quintal at one hand and by sending the mill owners to the Court on the other.

Madam, everybody including the Government is aware that the sugarcane yield can survive for two months only and if the case in the Court drags on even two months, mill owners would fix the rate at their own will and the Government would shirk its responsibility by showing its inability to intervene in this matter on the pretext of the stay by the High Court. The same situation is prevailing in Uttar Pradesh at present. One week ago hon. Prime Minister had assured that a meeting comprising of the leaders of all the political parties, representatives of the

UP Government, leaders of the sugarcane growers and representatives of the sugar mill owner would be convened to decide that the sugar mill owners should procure the sugarcane from the farmers at the price fixed by the Government.

Madam, the crushing of sugarcane in sugar mills has been started but neither any meeting has been convened nor the farmers have been told as to on what price they would sell their sugarcane to mills. Nothing has been stated about the rate at which the farmers are selling their sugarcane to the mills. After weighing the sugarcane a slip is given to the farmers in Eastern and Western Uttar Pradesh which mentions about the weight alongwith the date of receiving sugarcane but there is no mention of the price. The farmer does not know whether he would get Rs. 95 per quintal or 75 or 65 per quintal. The support price or procurement price would be decided by the Court. If every job is to be performed by the Court then what work the Government would perform. Then there is no need of the Government. The job of the Government would be done by the Court.

Madam, Court can not fix the support price or the procurement price of sugarcane and the Government have accepted it but till date Government have neither convened the meeting to fix the price of sugarcane nor made any other effort in this matter. Consequently, the farmers are selling their sugarcane without considering about rate and what else they can do, it is their compulsion. If the farmers don't sell their sugarcane to mills then they would have to burn it. Farmer do not know as to what price he would get for his sugarcane.

Madam, I would like to submit that the Government had given the assurance while the session was on and now it would be over tomorrow and the Government would be relieved of the apprehension of the MP's gherao and agitation. The Government failed to convene a meeting during session, what can be expected from it after the session is over. Through you, I demand that the Government should take this matter seriously and immediately resolve this problem by convening meeting within two or three days and as I had urged upon in the beginning of my speech that the Government should also make its policy clear in this regard.

Madam, last year Government had sold the sugar at Rs. 900 per quintal to the exporters with the instruction that, the entire sugar would be exported but that sugar was sold in the domestic market at the rate of Rs. 1100, 1150, 1200 and s. 1250 per quintal by exporters defying

all rules and regulations. Sugar crisis had started since then only i.e., from the last year. It is really shameful that no action has been taken against those who had flouted all conditions which were put regarding this sugar and instead of exporting sugar they sold it in the domestic market. The result is that on one hand the mill owners have been complaining that they should bear losses if they procure at that rate and on the other hand farmers are also complaining like that the Government are saying that solution of this problem be found out by convening a meeting in this regard but the talks have yet to take place.

Madam, sugarcane is being procured at the rate of Rs. 100 per quintal by sugar mills in Haryana. Haryana is also a part of India. The mill owners are procuring sugarcane at the rate of Rs. 110 per quintal, and they are not suffering any loss while in Uttar Pradesh the sugar mill owners are saying that they would bear losses if they purchase the sugarcane at Rs. 95 per quintal.

17.00 hrs.

I do not know as to what the crux of the problem is. There is no difference in the rate of sale tax and Government law in Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The sugar mill owners in Haryana are easily procuring the sugarcane at Rs. 110 per quintal and their counter parts in Uttar Pradesh are expressing their inability to purchase sugar even at Rs. 95 per quintal. There is certainly a conspiracy behind it. It is unprecedented. Though the sugar mill owners would say like that but I throw a challenge that if the accounts of the sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh is checked, you will find that every private sugar mill in Uttar Pradesh has earned the profits to the tune of crores of rupees each year. What has suddenly gone wrong this year that the mill owners are not in a position to purchase sugarcane at the fixed rate.

Only six months have passed since the Legislative Assembly election in Uttar Pradesh and the sugar mill owners had provided a lot of funds to the political parties then...*(Interruptions)* You give me two more minutes. Consequently, Government have completely surrendered before the sugar mill owners. Now the Government want to oblige them. Government do not want that sugar mills should procure the sugarcane at the rate of Rs. 95 per quintal due to which sugar mill owners are threatening not to pay this rate. Now the Government be it Union Government or the Uttar Pradesh Government are in a helpless position in this matter.

I would like to say one more thing that the whenever such crisis emerged before the sugar mill owners or the sugarcane farmers in Congress regime Government used to intervene and find solution within a week which was for both the farmers and the sugar mill owners but now why no step has been taken to resolve this crisis even after so many months have elapsed? Consequently, farmer's movement is being launched everywhere be it, Basti or Mundarwa. I am of that opinion. It does not have any major contribution from any political party. Farmers are angry and agitated. Instead of resolving their problems they are being fired at and lathi charged. Had this problem been resolved in the beginning then the Basti or Mundarwa incident would have not take place. If the farmers do not sell their sugarcane to the mill owners who are giving slip without showing rate and also not to the crusher owners who are paying, then only Rs. 50, Rs. 45, Rs. 40 per quintal then how would they empty their fields for sowing next crop of wheat.

Today the sowing of wheat has been getting delayed by a month in Uttar Pradesh due to sugarcane. I can show the expert's report which mentions that the crop yield declines by 30 or 35 percent in the year of delayed sowing. The sugarcane is likely to create wheat crisis in the next crop. If the yield of wheat crop declines by 30 percent due to this one month delayed sowing, wheat crisis would certainly start in Uttar Pradesh.

Lastly, I would like to mention two or three more points. Hon. Sharad Yadav had announced that a package of Rs. 500 crore is being given to Uttar Pradesh to resolve the problems of sugar mill owners and the sugarcane growers. Rs. 250 crore out of it...*(Interruptions)* is being given for drought relief. Approximately five thousand crore rupees of the farmers are outstanding against the mill owners.

If the Government gives five hundred crore rupees out of those five thousand crore rupees then how many farmers would be benefited? Through you, I demand that outstanding dues of the farmers against the sugarmills be paid by drawing a time bound scheme in this regard. There is a practice to pay interest in all cases but it is not being followed in the matter of farmers...*(Interruptions)*

KUNWAR AKHILESH SINGH: There is a law for it.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: The outstanding dues of the farmers should be paid with interest. Unless it is done, the self confidence of the farmers would not be restored and also the farmers of Uttar Pradesh at

[Shri Shriprakash Jaiswal]

least won't believe that the Government of India are interested in the survival of the sugar industry in Uttar Pradesh. It is not a normal thing. The day the farmers turn away from agriculture on that day such grave situation would arise in the country that can't even be imagined. Disinvestment, privatization of industries are being undertaken so speedily that the number of unemployed youths keep increasing. Agriculture is source of their earning. However if the agriculture industry is wound up and there would be no option for them. In such a situation you can imagine, where would the unemployed youth find shelter.

Hence, through you I would like to submit that the Government should not repeat such grave mistake that it has committed earlier. Government should conduct a probe into the incidents of Basti and Hunda in which farmers were killed and injured in police firing. A time bound package with interest payment of the sugar cane growers should be ensured as it may take one year but time period should be fixed for it...*(Interruptions)*

MADAM CHAIRMAN: There are three more speakers from your party. You have taken fifteen minutes.

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: This is the main problem of Uttar Pradesh. You should give full time to speakers of Uttar Pradesh.

SHRI AVTAR SINGH BHADANA (Meerut): Madam Chairman, you extend his time, it is a matter of the farmers and of the country.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (Parbhani): Madam, Chairman, extending it by some time won't help...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: Madam Chairman, I respect your opinion and it is my privilege that I have got opportunity to speak when madam is in the Chair.

I submit that the Government have not awakened even after so much hue and cry on this issue and now I hope that after the discussion being held today under the rule 193, the Government would resolve the problem of the sugarcane growers and would formulate a permanent policy so that the sugar and sugarcane crisis may not emerge in future and the sugarcane growers could continue producing sugarcane with enthusiasm which may bring prosperity to the State and the country in future.

SHRI SHARAD PAWAR (Baramati): Madam, Chairman, entire country is experiencing the problem of sugarcane growers though such problem has also emerged earlier but with my past experience in this field I can say that I have never witnessed so critical situation during the last 30-35 years. It would be wrong to say that this situation has come up in a year. This process has been going on for the last two-three years.

At the time of our independence we used to produce 10 lakh tonnes of sugar and today our country produces approximately 180 lakh tonnes of sugar and after catering to the requirement of the country more than 90 lakh tonnes of sugar remains in the stock each year. It means we have a surplus production of sugar. In such a situation there was a need to take some stringent measures but no attention was paid towards this. Its price is being paid by the sugarcane growers of the country. Sugar mills at several places are being closed down due to which the labourers are being rendered jobless there. The excise duty is a main source of revenue for the Government of India and the State Government but it has adverse impact of the existing crisis. Such a critical situation demanded stringent steps to find out long term solution. I remember that when a new sugar policy was formulated in the country around 1960, Babu Jagjivan Ram was the Minister of Food at that time. During the period double release mechanism for selling a certain quantity of sugar in open market alongside the one to be distributed under the public distribution system was evolved. That system was in vogue for the last 40 years and was proving very beneficial to the farmers and the sugarmill owners alike. Today the situation has changed. It is true that the Government have amended the policy of processing sugar for public distribution system at the minimum price. Today very few States procure sugar because there is negligible difference in the rate of sugar in public distribution system and open market. Today this problem is assuming serious dimensions.

We have to see as to how can overcome it and provide relief to the farmers. It appears to me that in sugarcane sector, if sugar mill owners will not take care of the interests of sugarcane growers, then the country will face a big crisis and the country is already faced with that crisis. Today, we have a large buffer stock. This stock has been piled up for last 2 years. When we keep one quintal of sugar stored in godown, then the burden of interest of Rs. 200 per quintal is borne every year and that Rs. 200 per quintal is ultimately passed on to the farmers. As such its cost goes down and hence

we have to see as to how we can rectify the situation of stock.

I am glad that Shri Sharad Yadav has made announcement in the House to create a buffer stock of 20 lakh tonnes of sugar and probably today the order might have been issued. Till today, the buffer stock on such a large scale has never been created. However, it appears that the decision of creating a buffer stock of 20 lakh tonnes is a big one, but in view of magnanimity of the problem, it cannot provide a solution. We have to think as to what is happening all over the world. When India has got surplus stock, sugar remain in stock even after meeting the needs of the people of the country, then we have to get ready to access international market. For this the State Governments and Government of India have to make available the facilities required to have a access to the international market.

Sugar mill owners too have to play their part in this regard and the farmers should think their productivity, then only this will yield the desired result. This year, its beginning was very bad. There is a sugar mill in Uttar Pradesh owned by a capitalist, though I do not know his name, but the name of the sugar mill is 'Shakambhari'. Till date, the Government of India used to decide the release mechanism. The Government of India or Ministry headed by Shri Sharad Yadav used to decide as to how much quantity of sugar is to be purchased from sugar mill and to be sold in the market, every week or every month. The Ministry headed by Shri Sharad Yadav used to decide the quantity of sugar to be distributed under PDS. However, the owners of 'Shakambhari' Sugar Mill filed a writ application in the Allahabad High Court that the Government of India should not have right to decide the quantity of sugar to be sold in open market. He said it before the court and court gave a ruling that they can sell, whatever quantity of sugar they want, wherever they want. As a result of it, all sugar mill owners of Uttar Pradesh and northern India have got the court order and a big pool of sugar in the country has been created. Due to it, price of sugar has fallen. The capitalists who are the owners of sugar mills are the creator of this problem. They have created this problem and all of us have to pay its price. Today, we have to devise a way out. What can be that? So long we keep such a big stock of sugar, the price of sugar will not rise. So long the price do not rise, we won't be in a position to pay money to the farmers. If farmers is not paid adequately, he will resent and will opt for other crops. In next two years, the consumers will face serious consequences of sugar prices.

The Government of India should give at least Rs. 200 per quintal as subsidy to enable them to enter the international market. The State of Maharashtra has provided relief to the farmers by providing subsidy of Rs. 100 per quintal. Maharashtra Government have waived off purchase tax for one year. But this relief is not adequate. If relief is to be provided, the Government of India should take stringent measures in this regard. First step which need to be taken is that as India has surplus stock of sugar, ocean freight or export subsidy of Rs. 200-250 per quintal should be given to export sugar to the countries which are facing scarcity of sugar. When the sugar will be exported to international market, then only condition of domestic market will improve. Therefore, the Government of India should take an initiative in this regard.

The second step which need to be taken is that at present Rs. 80 or 85 per quintal is levied as excise. Mechanism need to be evolved to pass on the amount to the farmers. Arrangement should be made to give this money to the farmers after recovery. It appears to me that it will solve the present problems of the farmers to an extent. During the last many years, the Government have got increased income from the sugar manufactured as a result of the hard work of the farmers. Today, when farmers are in crisis, the Government of India should be prepared to return this income to the farmers. At this juncture, they should be helped. In the process of preparation of sugar, a great amount of Bagasse and Molassis is left. The Government of India also charges tax of Rs. 500 per tonne on that waste. The Government of India should also take initiative to give it back to the farmers for next two years. It will also provide some relief to the farmers. Today, the Government of India provides relaxation up to 4 per cent in duty exemption pass book, which is very less, it need to be further increased to 8 per cent. This policy need to be followed for next two years.

I would like to say that on one side, initiative from the Government is required and on the other hand, some measures are also needed from the Banking Ministry, Reserve Bank and NABARD. Today, the problem is that NABARD has sent circular to all the banks directing not to increase the exposure limit of the relief provided for the sugarcane. They should not provide further relief to the farmers. The result of it is that in spite of availability of funds, the banks are not ready to help the sugarcane growers, who manufacture sugar from sugarcane. Therefore, there is a need to increase exposure limit.

[Shri Sharad Pawar]

The country has to think as to how much sugar is to be produced.

Today, in countries like Brazil, in sugar mills, sugar is manufactured from 70 per cent of sugarcane juice and from rest of 30% ethanol petrol is manufactured and pollution could be reduced by mixing it with petrol, some steps are needed in regard to Ethanol. I am glad that recently the Government has decided to mix 5 per cent of ethanol, but mere 5 per cent will not do. The decision to mix at least 10 per cent of ethanol is required and NABARD and Reserve Bank should issue directives to all banks to extend help to ethanol plants. The banks are ready to help to set up ethanol plant. Banks are ready to provide economic aid and they should be ready for it. Besides the Reserve Bank took couples of decisions during last two-three days which would provide some help but I want to give a suggestion to the banks that sugarcane and sugar do not come under priority sector. All other crops come under the priority sector, but sugarcane does not come under it. Reserve bank is not ready to treat sugarcane as food. Sugarcane is grown in field, it is a crop and after going through a process, sugar is manufactured and therefore, the policy about other crops should also be applied to sugarcane also, sugarcane should also be included in the priority sector. Along with it, the bank's policy about food process sector should also be implemented in case of sugar also and attention is needed in this regard.

When I talk about exporting sugar, I talk about barter trade policy of Government of India. Today, when we do business with Malaysia, we export some goods to them and in exchange we import oil from them. We export certain goods to Russia and in return they give us defence items. We export many things under barter trade, surplus sugar is also required to be brought under barter trade and I hope that some decision would be taken in this regard. I have given two four suggestions. It appears to me that from the day country started importing sugar, the situation deteriorated.

Three years ago, Prime Minister visited Lahore and then Prime Minister of Pakistan Shri Nawaz Sharief who is the owner of sugar mill, suggested that Pakistan had surplus stock of sugar which should be permitted to be exported to India. Atalji opened the gate of our country for Pakistan and Pakistan started exporting sugar to India. Atalji went to Malaysia, the Prime Minister of Malaysia said they have surplus stock of edible oil, please get edible oil imported in your country, and Atalji opened the import gates for edible oil also and as a result of it

farmers of Saurashtra have suffered heavy losses and whenever Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee go abroad, he may agree to other things, but he should not agree to the terms which may cause harm to the farmers of India. Agreeing to these kind of terms is not in interest of the country.

In the end, I would like to say that under present circumstances, in case of sugar, a long term policy should be evolved at the earliest and the Government of India should take a decision at the earliest by calling the concerned people.

With these words, I conclude.

SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN (Basti): Madam Chairman, I am grateful to you for giving me an opportunity to participate in the discussion in the House on the problems of sugarcane growers.

Madam, recently a very unfortunate incident took place in my parliamentary constituency in view of the problem of farmers. Sugarcane growers were sitting on 'dharna' for their demands. They were holding 'dharna' very peacefully. There was no problem anywhere. Dharna started on 2nd of the month, and on 4th traffic jam took place on highway due to 'dharna'. The 'District Officer' was able to clear that jam. On 6th 'Chakka Jam' occurred on place named 'Kante' and SP was successful in clearing that also. Then on 10th 'Chakka Jam of rail' took place on Tinich, prior information about it was not given and District Administration arrested 17 farmers. After returning from that place, 50 more farmers were also arrested, who were holding 'dharna' in a peaceful manner. The farmers are agitated due to this incident. The Administration acted in a usual manner and treated the matter as closed, but this information of the incident spread immediately among the farmers over there. Next day, on 11th the farmers gathered on very large scale. Workers of farmers union contacted the people overnight and on 10 a.m., a large crowd gathered. The morale of officials who were successful in clearing 'Dharna', demonstration and 'Chakka Jam', was high. On that day they imposed section 144 and told them to return their flags. On that day lathicharge was ordered and firing took place, stones were pelted and this unfortunate incident took place. Three innocent farmers of my area became the victim of firing. I visited the houses of those farmers on 13th. The deceased are Shri Badri Choudhary from Manjharoa, Shri Dharamraj Choudhary from Mehta Purwa and Shri Tilakram Chaudhari from Changera-Magera. Shri Badri Choudhary is survived by small

children and old mother. Their condition is pathetic and are compelled to lead the life. These poor farmers were holding demonstration in peaceful manner for their demands. If Administration would have acted patiently, such an accident would not have taken place. This incident should be condemned and I express my condolences over this incident and submit that politics should not be played on dead bodies of the deceased.

The farmer over there want to lead a peaceful life. The Administrator has committed guilt, Uttar Pradesh Government has dismissed Commissioner, District Officer, S.P. and other people. The entire staff of the Police Station was called back. The Administrative action was taken with immediate effect. The atmosphere of peace is building over there, but some political people have started visiting the state devoid of any issue in search of an issue. They are trying to disturb peaceful atmosphere over there.

Madam, I request if they want to visit that place, please visit to provide help to the poor families. Please visit that place to help distressed and affected people, it would be unfortunate if people continue to visit over there to get political mileage. I would like to say it with heavy heart. I would like to urge upon the Government of India that Government of India is a sensitive Government. The farmers of Uttar Pradesh should definitely get remunerative price of sugarcane at the rate of Rs. 95-100 per quintal. When Bhartiya Janata Party was in power in Uttar Pradesh, from 1996 onwards it increased Rs. 5 every year and increased the price of sugarcane to Rs. 97/-. The Government of India decides the price and the State Government decides price after consulting farmers and mill owners. This year, they declared the price as Rs. 95. It is definitely a very serious issue and if any fault lies in it, it is very unfortunate. The Government supports State Governments at some points. Mill owners are compelled to give prices as decided by the State and he gives it, but unfortunately this time it has not been possible.

Madam, I demand from the Government of India to provide economic compensation of at least Rs. 5 lakh to the families of deceased and injured should also be provided compensation, their treatment should be undertaken free of cost. The cases have been registered over there, some have been released, the rest of the farmers should also be released. The case of murder should be registered and lawful action to establish peace over there should be taken. Through you, I would like to request the sugarcane growers of Basti district not to let their sugarcane crop dry up because it will result into a

very unfortunate incident if sugarcane will get dried, it will give no juice and it will lose weight and the farmer would get deprived of Rabi crop. The farmers should cooperate in running the mills and should cooperate in building peaceful atmosphere by agreeing to the genuine demands of agitators and nobody should come in between to spoil that cordial atmosphere. While making this submission and thanking you. I conclude.

17.34 hrs.

[MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER *in the Chair*]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV (*Sambhal*): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, it is really a matter of grief and sorrow that we are taking part in this unfortunate debate. There was no need to debate over this matter had the State Government not unleashed cycle of retrogressive measures leading to murder. Later on a conspiracy was hatched to conceal these murders so as to protect the police-I am deliberately terming it a conspiracy. In such circumstances Samajwadi Party cannot remain a mute spectator.

A good debate was going on here. I am glad to say that hon'ble Sharad Pawarji and Ram Nagina Mishraji who have an experience of Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh respectively, initiated a very good debate but in the end a political colour has been given to it and a particular political party has been blamed for it. I am raising all these points because it was not at all expected that Hon. Shri Sharad Yadavji would give such a wrong statement. That day also I said that he has committed a sin. We are saying that three farmers have been murdered and their dead bodies are in custody of police. Shri Ramkiranji Arya, MLA and Dayanand Choudharyji, President of the district Council some how succeeded in getting dead body of one of the farmer and brought it to the hospital, two dead bodies are still not given. They were murdered on 11th of this month and on 12th public itself snatched those dead bodies from police custody and get the postmortem done in the hospital. It means that committing murder, taking repressive measures, hiding the dead bodies and then giving protection to guilty police officials. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, the debate would have been good and meaningful if this wrong statement would not have been made. Good suggestions have been given. I was glad that hon'ble Prime Minister intervened in this debate but it does not result any good. I would like to know from the hon'ble Minister as to what is happening? Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, we are compelled to raise this issue here because some questions were raised in the statement made here and in reply to it we also want to

[Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav]

raise some questions. We also want to express our views in this regard.

Today not only sugarcane growers but all the farmers are facing problems. Potato growers are also going to face problems after 15 days. Wheat growers are already facing this problem. Wheat is being imported at a rate of Rs. 800 per quintal whereas farmers of the country are not even being given Rs. 610 per quintal. Our country is facing this serious situation continuously for the last three years. At present, sugarcane growers, potato growers, paddy growers and even wheat growers, all are in miserable condition. Our Government are contemplating to enter into similar agreements with foreign countries in regard to fruit, milk and maize. We all know that there is huge buffer stock of foodgrains imported from foreign countries. Now it is being proposed to import maize and all type of grains, pulses, vegetables and fruit etc. This agreement is proposed to be signed we will discuss that also. Hon'ble Prime Minister is present here. Farmers are continuously raising demand since August for payment of their outstanding amount, to restart the closed sugarmills and payment of remunerative price for their sugarcane. Condition of farmers in other districts is also more or less the same. In Uttar Pradesh police had opened firing on farmers and students. A farmer was shot dead in Ramkola. Hon'ble Ram Nagina Mishra has an issue. He said that he had gone to Ramkola but nothing happened then how I suffered. I told him that I was arrested at 2 a.m. and I had gone there to attend a condolence meeting. I was arrested at Deoria at 2 a.m. and sent to Varanasi jail. A question has been raised regarding sugarcane policy of the country, we also want to raise that. I thank Shri Ram Nagina Mishra and associate with his views. I need not to speak much on this issue.

Sir, the farmers of Basti had been submitting their three demands through memoranda to the District Magistrate, continuously since August last but their plea fell on deaf ears, no action was taken to solve their problems. On 2nd December farmers staged a peaceful demonstration at Munderva sugarmill. Since this mill is lying closed, the farmers raised demand for restarting the mill and for making payment of the outstanding amount. They were staging the demonstration very peacefully. He is saying that politicians had insisted for arrest of farmers. Whether those politicians belong to Samajwadi party and if so, whether Samajwadi Party is in power in Uttar Pradesh. Whether Samajwadi Party had asked to put 50 farmers behind the bars and then given the orders to throw them away. Whosoever went to meet them in prison

he was not allowed. The officers in the entire area were receiving wireless message to reprimand farmer. Was that order given by farmers of Samajwadi Party?

Sir, on 2nd December farmers staged a peaceful demonstration and on 6th December after holding discussion with farmers for the whole night they reached to an agreement. D.M. promised to adhere to that but later on the peaceful dharna was banned. On 7th December, the Commissioner and District Magistrate held a meeting with factory workers of Basti and decided that payment of outstanding amount of Rs. 4 crores would definitely be paid to the farmers by 8th December. But when payment was neither made on 8th nor on 9th December, then farmers again staged a dharna on 10th December where 50 farmers were arrested and sent to jail. It provoked farmers. On 11th December when this news broke up in the entire area, farmers were beaten by PAC. Instead of arresting them police opened firing on them which resulted in death of three farmers namely— Badri Choudhary, Dharmraj Choudhary and Tilak Raj and hundreds of farmers injured in this incident.

Sir, I have a list of names of injured with me. I read out names of injured—Ram Singh S/o Ram Karan Yadav, Shri Mehta S/o Balraj, Nainsu Yadav, Ramshankar, Balai, Ram Bhuvan Choudhary, Antu S/o Jai, Subhash Chand Dharu Ram, Hari Ram, Ram Pyare, Ajit Ahmed, Shri Ram, Kanaihya Lal, Lakshmi Yadav, Sanjay Kumar, Gunam Yadav S/o Lakshmi Yadav, Somnath Choudhary, Ramnath Choudhary, Dhanai Choudhary, Ram Singh Choudhary, Ram Ujagar Choudhary, Santap Prajapati, and several others. I do not want to take much time of the House in reading out the names. It has been correctly stated in the statement made by hon'ble Minister that shops of traders were looted and again on 11th December three farmers were shot dead in the same area. On 12th December MLA, Shri Ram Karanji, and Shri Rajaram were not allowed by police to go near the dead body of farmer Badri Choudhary who was shot dead by police. But he insisted and took the dead body from custody of police and got the postmortem done. Is it wrong. A Parliamentary Committee can be constituted, or hon'ble Prime Minister can get the matter inquired and if they reach to a conclusion that what I have said is wrong, I am ready to withdraw my words.

Sir, our workers were not playing politics rather we were supporting the farmers. We have supported farmers and will always support them in their difficult time. This whole incident took place within a radius of 2 km from Munderva station. I do not want to waste the time of the

House as several hon'ble Members want to speak on this issue.

Sir, you will be surprised to know that farmers came on their cycles and motor-cycles and police burnt their vehicles. I would like to tell the number of one of the motor cycle burnt by police. Its number is 75711. You can imagine that why farmers would have brought cycles and motor cycles if they had come there to protest. It is very much true that police have burnt cycles and motor cycles of farmers and I have given number of one of the motor cycle burnt.

I have told about motor cycle only. In this manner on 12th PAC and the police entered the village and resorted to lathicharge and firing. On 12th, when hon'ble Minister was making statement here and hon'ble Prime Minister was intervening the debate in sympathy with sugarcane growers at the same time lathicharge was going on in the village. On 13th again villagers were forced to come out and beaten with lathis. Whether this all happened on our orders or Kunwar Akhilesji's orders. Not only workers of Samajwadi party but workers of several other parties have also stated that atrocities are being committed and injustice is done to farmers. Were these orders issued by Samajwadi party? Hon'ble Prime Minister, Sir, the situation would have not been so serious if it was left on district administration. I will tell you in last about what were the reasons behind it.

All these instructions were issued by DM, DIG, SP. Now commissioner has been transferred on the orders of the Chief Minister. They had to obey the instructions as these orders were issued by Chief Minister office, otherwise such a serious incident would not have occurred there. This incident could have been avoided. Such incident have taken place continuously. In Pune also firing has been opened on farmers and in this incident also three four farmers have died and several injured. Farmers were shot dead in Padrauna also...*(Interruptions)* She was a girl. She did not get fee from her house. Students staged a peaceful demonstration and there also one youth was shot dead by police. Now farmers of Munderava and Basti have also been shot dead. Why the farmers are being shot dead in the country?

It is really unfortunate for the country that the farmers who comprise 70-72 percent of the population and the agriculture labourers who constitute 4 percent of the population are subjected to police firing. I would like to say to hon'ble Prime Minister that in such situation our country cannot make progress in spite of signing various

agreements with foreign countries. The country can progress only when farmers are prosperous and happy. Gandhiji had said that day will be the happiest day in our life when we will see the farmers are prosperous and there is greenery in fields. I have given here figures regarding the outstanding amount of farmers and do not want to repeat that. I would like to tell that an amount of Rs. 1000 crores of farmers is outstanding. The Government officials visit to check the greenery of parks created by hard earned money of farmers whereas greenery of fields should be taken care of by the Government. Farmers are subjected to firing and lathicharge whereas parks are created by their hard-earned money only and hon'ble Prime Minister went there to see the beauty and greenery of park. Has he ever visited to see the dry fields of farmers? I would like to repeat that the park is for those persons who believe in luxurious life.

It is a question of policy, leader and intention. You can formulate a very good policy but without good intentions of the Government it cannot be successful nor it can protect interests of the country. The country can make progress only if the intentions of the Government are good no matters its policy is wrong. But country would get ruined if intentions of the Government are not good. This is the question before us. Hence we want to express our views that atrocities are being committed on farmers.

Hon'ble Prime Minister you can conduct inquiry in case of atrocities committed on farmers and then you would realize that it is true but to what extent the remedial measures will be implemented? I do not understand as to what are your compulsions in this regard. Sometimes, we feel that hon'ble Prime Minister is thinking in right direction when such statements are issued to improve the image. We do admit that despite so many failures on the part of Government he has been successful in improving his image. I feel that such incidents never occurred earlier, the country never suffered such a set back, situation never deteriorated to such an extent that farmers were compelled to commit suicide. Country had faced severe drought even during British rule but farmers did not commit suicide, although they died of starvation at that time. But the number of suicides committed by farmers during the last three four years has been unprecedented in the history of India. 74-75 farmers have committed suicide in Maharashtra alone.

I can read out the names of 74 persons if Mr. Speaker wants that. Not only in Maharashtra but farmers

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of Punjab, Andhra Pradesh and Orissa also committed suicide and now farmers of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh have also been forced to commit suicide. Country had suffered severe drought during British rule, people died of starvation but farmers never committed suicide and I would like to know from the Government that why farmers have been forced to commit suicide in independent India. On 15th December farmers were driven out and killed. There is a detailed story that how farmers saved their lives from PAC and police. Farmers who were beaten and injured in police firing remained in hidings due to fear of PAC and police and some of them who got help somehow went to other hospitals for treatment. It was not reported. Brijlal Singh, Subhas Vishwakarma, Peer Mohammad, Umesh Singh, Balmini Verma, Ram Shankar remain in hiding upto 15th December, I am not stating the name of village and police station so as to save the time of the House. Indrajit Jakim, Joginder Jakim remained in hiding upto 16th December and terror of PAC and police continued in villages. Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, would you have not intervened, it was difficult for us to organize a meeting there. PAC and police had dismantled the stage at 4 P.M. where a condolence meeting was to be held. I was supposed to give speech in that condolence meeting. Had we not attended that condolence meeting, Ram Nagina Mishraji might have asked me whether I was present at that occasion, or not. I would like to tell him that the meeting was banned and it could be held only due to the intervention of the hon'ble Speaker. It may be so that this matter would have been brought to the notice of the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs and hon'ble Prime Minister because only between 12.00 hrs. to 2.00 a.m. we got the permission to hold the meeting and use loud Speaker. Have we provoked farmers by holding that meeting or violence broke out there due to politicians. Peace prevailed in that area only after we had held the condolence meeting. The Uttar Pradesh Government want to suppress the truth. I have said that farmers are committing suicide only due to Government's policies and not due to terror of police or PAC. Committing suicide by farmers and incidents of firing are the result of Government policies only.

Jaiswalji has raised the issue of policy and it is a correct decision that hon'ble Prime Minister convened a meeting of leaders of all political parties on the issue of WTO. I personally met hon'ble Prime Minister and requested him to save the farmers from World Trade Organization otherwise the country will be ruined and we might have to face not only the economic slavery but also the political slavery. Mexico had made a world record

in wheat production 30 years ago but fell prey to this policy. Due to liberalization policy, Mexico has been continuously importing wheat from USA for the last 30 years.

Won't they learn a lesson from this? The Hon'ble Minister can go through the 400-450 years old history of America and other developed countries of the world. Sometimes my colleagues as well as the hon'ble Prime Minister say that we should not compare our country with China. Why should not we do so? What was China in 1949 and what was India in 1947? We were much ahead of China. But today, their production has increased around two and half times as against the increase in population by 1.25 times. China's present status is the result of the hard work done by the farmers there. This Government is acting under the pressure of the USA. The Government says that it will not buckle under the pressure of any country, then under whose pressure the Government have taken this decision of liberalisation policy which has ruined the farmers. Today, America is dominating the world on the basis of its bumper wheat production. All the rich and powerful countries in the world today, are those which paid attention towards the requirements of the farmers, gave priority to the development of agriculture, extended benefits to farmers and paid remunerative price to them for their produce. Here, in India, the farmers are subjected to police firing when they demand a right price of their produce. The hon'ble Food Minister quoted the figures of outstanding amounts in respect of all other States. However, I have got a list of outstanding amounts in regard to Uttar Pradesh. It's a serious problem. Sir, through you, I can give this list to hon'ble Prime Minister so that he could go through it. He is very sensitive person. I am sure he will definitely go through that list and take some action.

I am quoting the figures of dues against the private sugar mill owners upto the year 2002, which comes to Rs. 126 crore. Similarly Rs. 138 crore are outstanding against the mills of co-operative federation and Rs. 95 crore against the sugar mills of the Corporation. Thus, a total of Rs. 359 crore have been outstanding against them for the last two years. Industrialists get interest on their deposits in the banks but the farmers are denied their due. Moreover the interest on the loans taken by them is never waived off. Many farmers are neither in a position to get their daughters married, not in a position to buy shoes or cloth in bitter cold, nor medicine for getting their family members treated nor fees for their wards. Poverty and illiteracy prevail among them. Even after this, we are not helping them get their money and the government is rather seeking the help of Supreme

Court. The Government did a good job by helping the farmers of Punjab and Andhra Pradesh, but I fail to understand why the Government is not helping the farmers of Uttar Pradesh. This should be made clear today itself. It is with this view that we are forwarding these figures to you. These figures extracted from Government records reflect the amount outstanding against the mill owners as well as the period since when it has been outstanding.

As far as the question of policy is concerned, we want to convey to the hon. Prime Minister that the liberalisation policy has ruined the farmers and when he was in the opposition and we were in the ruling side, he himself used to oppose such a policy...*(Interruptions)* I will conclude soon. I am happy that the Hon'ble Prime Minister is sitting here and he has participated in the discussion. Even today, he is listening our views with all seriousness, hence I may be allowed to speak 2-4 minutes more. I will conclude my speech at the earliest. Though there are many points for raising, there could be nothing more important than the issue of farmers.

I would like to submit that farmers have thousands of crores of rupees outstanding against the private sugar mills. I am giving their names Maijapur, Majhawali, Dhampur, Etah, Agota, Roza, Kaptanganj, Shivhara, Ramkola and Basti having four sugar mills, against whom an amount of Rs. 13.5 crore is outstanding. Now, 11-12 sugar mills have been closed down and 11-12 mills are on the verge of closure, among which Lakhimpur Khari is stated to be closed very soon. Sarju co-operative Sugar Mill, Belraya Khari Sugar Mill and Farmer Co-operative Sugar Mill Sampooranand Nagar, Khari, all these mills are on the verge of closure. The policy of liberalisation adopted by the Government has rendered 20 lakh farmers landless. It all has happened during the last four years. On the other hand, their contribution in the overall national income is about 40 percent. Our country is importing wheat from foreign country at the rate of Rs. 800 per quintal, while the Indian farmers though they are contributing a lot in the development of country, are not getting even Rs. 610 per quintal for the wheat grown by them.

18.00 hrs.

This way the property of the farmer is being looted. In Karnataka about 50,000 acres of land belonging to farmers has gone into the hands of foreign companies. Shri Deve Gowda, who is sitting here, knows everything. Likewise, in Punjab, farmers have lost 26,000 acres of land to foreign companies. As a result, production is

declining. On the other hand, many other reasons have also been cited. As Shri Sharad Pawar said just now, there will be more loss. Shri Jaiswalji was also saying that now farmers cannot sow seeds because the seasons of sowing of wheat is already over. Even if the sugarcane is crushed, wheat cannot be sown and it is one of the reasons for low production.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Shri Mulayam Singh, you please wait for a minute. Let me seek the opinion of the House for extending the time further.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Sir, you can extend the time, there is no problem.

[English]

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Is it the pleasure of the House to extend the time of the House till the discussion under Rule 193 is over?

SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: Yes, Sir.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: So, the time of the House is extended till the discussion under Rule 193 is over.

Shri Mulayam Singh Yadav, please conclude your speech.

...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today the condition of farmer is becoming bad to worse. I like to suggest some immediate measures the Government should take to improve their condition. Since you have asked me to conclude early, I will not go into the long term policy. I request Shri Sharad Yadav, that as an immediate measure, the Government should effect recoveries from the Private Sugar Mills. The Central Government has decided to give Rs. 75 per quintal and UP Government Rs. 95 per quintal. In case the mill owner fail to make the payment they should be sent to jails and Government receivers should be appointed in the mills.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: You have been speaking for the last half-an-hour. Now, please conclude.

SHRI MULAYAM SINGH YADAV: I am coming to the last point. Shri Jaiswal did not say clearly that there had been a deal. The people holding responsible positions

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in the Government were part of this deal, which was struck at Rs. 8 per bag of sugar from sugar mill owners. I am saying all these things with full knowledge. Rs. 30 crore have already been taken by them as first instalment, as part of a deal amounting to Rs. 100 crore. I request the hon'ble Prime Minister to get a CBI inquiry done in this regard. If, in CBI investigation, my allegation is proved wrong, I will immediately resign from my Lok Sabha membership. All these acts have ruined the farmers. I openly declare in the House that deal has taken place and I will prove this. Rs. 30 crore have already been taken by them as first instalment, as part of a total deal amounting to Rs. 100 crore. That is why, farmers are being fired at by the police. All these instructions have been given by the Government. If my allegation is proved wrong, I am ready to tender my resignation. One hon'ble Member has said that all parties take money from sugar mill owners. But, Samajwadi Party never takes money, nor has it taken in the past, whether it was 1993 election or 1996 election. Our party never took money from sugar mill owners. It is the people on the other side who take money and everyone knows this thing. Money has been taken in this deal. That is why, I have asked for a CBI investigation. Farmers will be done to death and such incidents will go unreported. Moreover, the Chief Minister of the State is giving protection to the police.

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE): Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I would like to speak very briefly. I have not risen here to reply to the discussion. The reply would be given by my colleague Shri Sharad Yadav. I am taking your time to clarify one or two issues.

As the House is well aware that the Union Government fixes the Statutory minimum price of the sugarcane. It is the minimum price below which no sugar mill can procure sugarcane from the farmers. Sugar mills with mutual consent, can give more than the minimum price fixed to the farmers and it has also been the case. This year the Union government have fixed the statutory Minimum Price at Rs. 64.50 per quintal where the recovery level is 6.4%.

As the statutory Minimum Price is linked with recovery, for the farmers in the areas of those mills where recovery is better, it is fixed at higher rate. At present, the average statutory Minimum Price is approximately Rs. 74 per quintal in Uttar Pradesh.

We are aware of the problems being faced by the farmers and to provide them relief we have decided that the Union Government would increase the Minimum

Statutory Price of sugarcane by five rupees per quintal which would be applicable in all the States.

Besides, the Government of Uttar Pradesh have also taken some steps to provide relief to the Sugarcane farmers. The Government is providing a relaxation in purchase tax and the entry tax of sugar and providing grant of Rs. 4 per Quintal on the commission of Sugarcane societies. The States Government is providing this relaxation and grant to the sugar mills with the objective that they would include these four rupees in the payment made to the farmers. This way the sugarcane farmers of Uttar Pradesh would get an increase of nine rupees per quintal.

All of us are aware that the prosperity of the sugarcane farmers is linked to the development of the sugar industry, through which large number of needy persons in rural areas get employment. Hence it is imperative that we keep the sugar industry in good condition. As the sugar industry is facing a crisis, we need to take steps to overcome the present crisis as soon as possible. The prices of sugar have declined a lot in recent months and one of the reasons for it is that several sugar mills have, through judicial intervention received orders to release sugar besides the quota assigned to them by the Government of India. It has led to increase in supply of sugar and decline in prices. In these circumstances, the need is to continue with and effectively implement the current 'release' system. Accordingly, the decision has been taken to continue the 'release system' and to make meaningful efforts to restore stability in the market price of sugar.

As the hon'ble Minister of Food told us, the Central Government have decided to create a buffer stock of 20 lakh tonnes of sugar. It will yield Rs. 786 crore which will be used in the payment of the outstanding dues of sugarcane farmers.

In my opinion, the above mentioned action would provide substantial relief to the sugarcane farmers and the condition of sugar industry would improve.

SHRI SAIDUZZAMA (Muzaffarnagar): Only yesterday the hon'ble Prime Minister had announced postponement of the recoveries due on account of kharif crops. But despite that 15 farmers have been sent to jail in Muzaffarnagar...*(Interruptions)* for defaulting in payment of arrears on account of kharif crops...*(Interruptions)* Even the orders of the hon'ble Prime Minister are not being complied with...*(Interruptions)*

SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE: We will decide after thoroughly considering the issue, which you have raised...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI SHRIPRAKASH JAISWAL: The State Government of UP has already declared the rate as Rs. 95 per quintal and according to the figures, which the hon'ble Prime Minister has presented, they will get only Rs. 81 per quintal. So, what is the use of such an announcement? The UP Government has already declared Rs. 14 per quintal more...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI MAHBOOB ZAHEDI (Katwa): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am thankful to you for giving me an opportunity to speak on such an important issue. Just before Shri Mulayam Singhji spoke on this issue. I have just returned from Munderwa and yesterday, whole day, I visited the houses of Joseph, Badri Prasad, Dharmraj and Tilakram.

In this House, we are discussing the problems of farmers and there, in Munderwa, farmers have been fired at. Earlier, it was said in the House that the person, whose unclaimed dead body was found lying at a distance of 15 kms, did not fall prey to the bullet fired by the police. After hearing this in the House, we went there to know the facts. You would be surprised to know that it was police bullet which hit him. Had he been taken to the hospital then and there, he could have been saved. But he was dragged upto a distance of half a kilometer, though he was bleeding profusely. As a result he died there. I have brought the catridge which had hit Badri Prasad. By the numbering on the catridge, it can be ascertained whether it belong to the police or not. Had the Prime Minister been present in the House, I would have handed over the catridge to him as a sample. It bears a numbers.

In the speech of the hon'ble Prime Minister, there was nothing new. The price was fixed at Rs. 95/- during previous year and it has again been fixed at the same level for this year also. Here a mention has been made about Allahabad High Court...(*Interruptions*) The SAP i.e. State Advisory Price are not obligatory at all. These may or not be agreed. In Haryana, procurement is being made at a rate of Rs. 110, while in Uttar Pradesh, the rate is between Rs. 55-60. About buffer stock, it has been said in the House that 20 lakh tonnes of buffer stock will be created. The Hon'ble Minister also said that if they had the funds, they would provide it. The position is that Rs. 3012 crore is already lying with the Government as tax collections. This money should be used for the

development of mills. But since the hon'ble Prime Minister has said one new thing just now, I would like to know as to where that money has gone?

We as well as our farmers want to know as to where the amount of Rs. 3000 crore collected at the rate of Rs. 140 per quintal has gone? It is the Government which has to decide as to what amount of compensation should be given to the victim. It's a mockery that Rs. 1 lakh have been given as compensation, though he has six children. Now-a-days, what can one do with one lakh rupees. My demand is that atleast Rs. 10 lakh should be given as compensation and job should also be provided to one of his children. When the farmer is in debt and he is unable to repay his debts, cases are filed against him and for fighting those cases he has to part with his property also. But when the mill owners are in debt, the relevant laws applicable to them are not implemented. If the mill owners keep the amount of farmers and do not pay them their dues within 15 days, then the District Magistrate can arrest mill owners and deal with them as per the law. Further, they will have to pay the outstanding amount alongwith interest...(*Interruptions*) There was a case. The mill owners are talking about sugarcane only and not other things. Many things can be prepared from the husk (Khoi), even thermocol and liquor is prepared from that. Shri Sharad Pawar has also said this thing. Its cost is not being included in it. If we add all those things, one will find that they neither incur loss nor earn profit. The mill owners were saying that they suffered losses. They also went to the court. The Government have to look into this. As regards the firing incident, it was said that it all happened within two kms distance and here it has been said that it happened 15 kms away. Why the fact was concealed, they should not conceal anything and reveal the truth. They must coincide the fact and then see how it is decided. We should think about this, but they are concealing the facts.

Sir, we have seen the farmers bleeding. The Hon'ble Minister is sitting here, he can see the blood stains. It's the blood of farmers...(*Interruptions*) The farmers do not belong to this region only but Maharashtra and other places also. Earlier also, farmers have committed suicide on various issues. Now the doors have been opened with the signing of the WTO. The farmers have stood up to face the challenge in a spirit of do or die. If they do not take a decision at the earliest, the farmers will themselves respond. The ruling side can defeat us here in the House by cutting our votes, but they cannot defeat us outside because the farmers are against them. When we compete outside, then everything will be clear. Mr.

[Shri Mahboob Zahedi]

Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am giving you this bullet* which a child has given to us saying it was found near his father's body.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (Parbhani): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, today the problems of sugarcane farmers are being discussed in the House. The problems of all the farmers whether he is a sugarcane farmer, wheat farmer or cotton farmer are discussed here. I am also a farmer and I know that how many times discussions were held on farmers in this House during last three years. I would like to ask all of you to introspect that how many problems of farmers have been solved by us till date. I am asking to the entire House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: Sugarcane is not produced in my area.

SHRI SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV: I would like to ask that through these discussions how many problems of these farmers have resolved what mistake these farmers have committed that they are compelled to hold dharna, they are lathi charged and fired at.

80 percent of the people of our country are farmers who feed the entire country yet they are being fired at. I would like to know as to how their condition has become so bad? Even elapsing 55 years of independence the condition of farmers is deteriorating day by day. Whenever the issue of sugarcane farmer is arised, the farmers of Maharashtra and U.P. are particularly mentioned. But I would like to submit that today the sugarcane farmer of entire country is worried and their condition is serious. The reason behind this is that the Government be it Central Government and State Governments have not formulated good policies and guidelines for them till date. When our farmers grow sugarcane it costs Rs. 600 per quintal and at some places it costs Rs. 800 per quintal.

Sir, sugarcane costs Rs. 800 per tonne to a sugarcane grower in Maharashtra but unfortunately State Government is paying them just Rs. 550 per tonne on one hand in the entire country the rate of sugarcane is Rs. 110 and at some places it is Rs. 95 or Rs. 65 per quintal on the other the Government is paying just Rs. 550 per tonne in Maharashtra. Through you, I would like to ask the Government that when the production cost of sugarcane in Maharashtra is Rs. 850 per tonne then why the Government of Maharashtra is paying Rs. 550 per tonne and why the farmer there is compelled to sell his sugarcane at such a low price.

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, sugar mill owners are paying Rs. 110 per quintal to sugarcane farmers in Haryana and even a single rupee is not outstanding against any sugar mill. The rate of sugarcane in Uttar Pradesh is Rs. 65 and at some places it is Rs. 95 per quintal whereas in our Maharashtra it is only Rs. 550 per tonne. Why is it so?

SHRIMATI REENA CHAUDHARY (Mohanlalganj): Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I am on a point of order. There is no quorum in the House.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The bell is being rung.

[English]

Hon. Members, according to our rules, three times quorum bell can be rung and even after that if the quorum is not there, the Chair has no other alternative but to adjourn the House. Therefore, the House stands adjourned to meet tomorrow, the 20th December, 2002 at 11.00 a.m.

18.39 hrs.

The Lok Sabha then adjourned till Eleven of the Clock on Friday, December 20, 2002/Agrahayana 29, 1924 (Saka)

*As there is no provision in the Rules/Directions by the Speaker, permitting laying of objects by the Members, the used bullet was not treated as laid on the Table of the House.

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